Achievements and Challenges

Annual Report 2013 | Jerusalem

www.yadvashem.org
Yad Vashem, on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, is the world’s acclaimed center of Holocaust education, remembrance, research and documentation. Its state-of-the-art museums, world-class research and education centers and unrivaled Archives and Libraries provide an unparalleled place of intergenerational learning and reflection. For over six decades, Yad Vashem has been meeting the challenges of each new generation by integrating technological innovations into traditional methods of learning in order to reach an ever growing global audience interested in learning about the Shoah and grappling with its implications. Dedicated to passing on the legacy of the survivors and perpetuating the memory of the Jewish men, women and children who were murdered, Yad Vashem continues to develop and expand its pedagogical tools, scholarly resources, and innovative methods for meaningful commemoration in the years ahead.
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Dear Friends,

During 2013, Yad Vashem marked the passage of 60 years since its official establishment. My perspective on the year’s events, achievements and challenges is informed by this milestone anniversary. Our lasting mission of Holocaust remembrance, in a changing world, is like no other: To keep the memory of the Shoah relevant and essential for our generation and for those to follow.

Even in an increasingly virtual world, actual personal experiences at authentic historical sites are, and shall remain, profoundly significant. This is certainly so at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Poland, visited by over one million persons annually, but previously lacking an appropriate expression of the unique Jewish narrative of the Holocaust. Yad Vashem was instrumental in correcting this deficiency during 2013, with the opening at Auschwitz of our landmark permanent exhibition “Shoah,” which I was privileged to curate. Yad Vashem's team painstakingly transformed the entire Block 27 in Auschwitz into an incomparable place of remembrance and learning, which has already gained widespread acclaim as an exemplar of what an on-site historically-grounded museum can and should be.

This achievement is an outstanding, but by no means solitary, example of how memory is restored and re-infused with vital meaning by Yad Vashem.

Our endeavors continue to be founded upon comprehensive, accurate, historical research about the Shoah. This research was furthered significantly this past year by a wide range of incisive Yad Vashem studies, publications and academic events. The Holocaust-related findings and insights brought by our own historians, along with many others around the world, are based upon the huge and ever-growing repository of documentation, testimonies, victims’ names and personal effects amassed by the Yad Vashem Archives and made digitally accessible to our ever-expanding global audience.

Our unparalleled International School for Holocaust Studies empowers young people of all backgrounds to learn meaningfully about the Shoah and integrate what they have discovered into their lifelong consciousness and identity. Yad Vashem's graduates form an extensive worldwide network of “educational emissaries” who gain mastery of our innovative, customized tools, thus enabling them to advance Holocaust remembrance in their own communities.

Easy, effective access to our vast and ever-increasing storehouse of Holocaust-related knowledge is open to almost anyone, anywhere, via the Internet. Year by year, worldwide exposure to our wide-ranging website and far-reaching social media grows sizably.

Yad Vashem’s community of dedicated staff and volunteers is now entering its seventh decade as mankind’s leading Shoah remembrance institution. Inspired and nurtured by devoted Holocaust survivors, the State of Israel and loyal supporters around the world, we have been instrumental in embedding Holocaust remembrance within the collective consciousness of Jewish and human civilization. Ensuring the ongoing, sustained impact of Shoah remembrance upon future generations demands every effort and resource that we can muster. I know that you, our friends and partners, will be continue to be at our side as we fulfill the timeless goal that the victims, the survivors and Yad Vashem's founders set before us.

Avner Shalev
Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate
FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

Dear Friends:

When the people of Israel emerged from the darkness of Egypt, they had to wander 40 years in the desert to shed the trauma of their experience before being able to enter the Land of Israel and begin building a society. Yet, at the same time, they were urged always to remember what had happened in Egypt, and their Divine liberation from slavery and bondage. Over three millennia later, when the Jewish people emerged from the darkness of the Holocaust, there was little time between liberation and the urgent task of building a new life, a new state, and a new society. While the survivors of the cataclysm chose rebirth and focused on life and the future, again the past was not forgotten. Just five years after the creation of the State of Israel, Yad Vashem, the central place for remembering the Shoah in all its aspects, was established with a special law by the Knesset. For six decades, Yad Vashem, working with survivors, has ensured that the events will not only not be forgotten, but that they will be meaningfully remembered in future generations, and that the names, stories and experiences of the martyrs will be forever recorded for the sake of the Jewish people and humanity.

When my brother Naftali and I arrived on the shores of Eretz Israel in 1945, we knew that it was not enough to build new lives; we had to continue the legacy of our forefathers by infusing our lives with their heritage. Countless other survivors did the same, on an individual level, and the nation of Israel did so too. Focusing on memory, not trauma; on education, not slogans; and on the personal within the klal (collective), over the years Yad Vashem has continued the tradition of Jewish remembrance, concerned both with Jewish continuity and universal values.

Every time I come to our Mount of Remembrance campus in Jerusalem, I am struck by how many young people bring passion and energy into their Shoah research, guiding, education, documentation and more. Now, as the torch of remembrance passes from the generation of survivors to those who will be the link to future generations, the groundwork for continued meaningful commemoration - that asks difficult questions, confronts the dilemmas, and forthrightly faces the challenges - has been set by Yad Vashem which guides a path forward.

Rabbi Israel Meir Lau
Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council
Yad Vashem's Activities in 2013

The New Permanent Exhibition "Shoah," designed, built and curated by Yad Vashem, opened in Block 27 at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

Holocaust Education – The International School
- 306,000 students from Israel and abroad, soldiers and officers of the IDF and other Israeli security forces participated in seminars and programs of the International School for Holocaust Studies.
- 63 long-term seminars were held at Yad Vashem for 1,460 educators from abroad.
- 1,150 foreign educators participated in 57 teacher-training days at the School.
- School staff members were active in 34 different countries around the globe.
- 92 seminars were held at Yad Vashem for 3,000 Israeli educators.
- 10,000 Israeli educators attended 334 teacher-training days at Yad Vashem and throughout Israel.
- 1,200 educators from across Israel attended the 5th National Teachers' Conference.
- 3,000 teachers across the US received training as part of “Echoes and Reflections,” a joint multimedia project of Yad Vashem, the ADL and the USC Shoah Foundation Institute.
- Educational material in 15 different languages was uploaded to the Virtual School.
- 740 individuals participated in online courses in 6 languages.

Research and Publications
- The Research Institute hosted 29 international research workshops and symposia.
- 29 fellowships and awards were granted to scholars from Israel and abroad.
- 36 new publications were released by Yad Vashem, including memoirs and research studies.

Artifacts & Artwork
- A new exhibition "I Am My Brother’s Keeper: 50 Years of Honoring Righteous Among the Nations," was displayed at the Exhibitions Pavilion.
- Traveling exhibitions were shown in 9 countries. 41 versions of 13 exhibitions are available in 13 languages.
- 1,670 artifacts were added to Yad Vashem's Artifacts Collection, which now comprises some 27,500 items.
- 200 works of art were added to Yad Vashem's Art Collection, which now totals 9,100 pieces.

Visits and Commemorative Events
- 900,000 people visited the Mount of Remembrance.
- 800 world leaders, dignitaries and official visitors toured Yad Vashem.
- 80 events and 290 memorial services were held across the campus.

Righteous Among the Nations
- 454 individuals were recognized as Righteous Among the Nations. More than 25,270 individuals have so far received the honor.
Internet Activity
- 13.6 million visits were recorded on the Yad Vashem website from some 220 countries and territories worldwide.
- 8.1 million video views have been recorded on Yad Vashem's YouTube channels in English, Hebrew, Spanish, Farsi, Russian, Arabic and German since their launch.
- 25,700 individuals joined Yad Vashem's Facebook page, bringing the total number of members to 73,100.

Documentation, Photographs, Names, Testimonies and Films
- 15 million pages of documentation were added to the Yad Vashem Archives, bringing the total number to some 169 million pages.
- 2 million pages of original Holocaust documentation and 15 million pages of microfilmed documentation were digitized.
- Yad Vashem's Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names reached some 4.3 million names.
- 33,000 items - documents, diaries, photographs, artifacts and artworks - were handed to Yad Vashem for safekeeping by 1,300 individuals, as part of the "Gathering the Fragments" national campaign to rescue personal items from the Holocaust era.
- 7,000 photographs were added to the Photo Archive, and 3,100 to the Hall of Names. Yad Vashem currently houses more than 430,000 images.
- 1,000 new Holocaust survivor testimonies were filmed and 7,000 recorded elsewhere acquired. The Archives now hold 120,000 video, audio and written testimonies.
- 31,000 public inquiries were answered by the Reference and Information Services Unit: 21,000 written and 10,000 from visitors to the Library and Archives Reading Room.
- The Library collection now numbers over 141,000 publications.
- 500 new films were acquired by the Visual Center. The Center now holds 8,500 Holocaust related films, with 6,000 films available for immediate viewing.
- 50 groups of students, teachers and film directors visited and attended varied activities and programs of the Visual Center.
- The Center granted the 8th annual Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman's Award for artistic achievement in a Holocaust-related film.
Since its establishment two decades ago, the International School for Holocaust Studies of Yad Vashem has become a world center for Holocaust education. Teaching professionals from around the world gather at the International School to enrich their pedagogical knowledge and learn its unique interdisciplinary and age-appropriate approach to teaching about the Holocaust in classrooms of varying cultures and age groups. With educational materials in 15 languages, hundreds of yearly seminars and online courses and resources, the School’s graduates form an international network of trained specialists who have become emissaries for the School’s educational philosophy.

During 2013, the International School for Holocaust Studies engaged with more than 306,000 students and soldiers from Israel and abroad and 20,000 educators. Among its scores of pedagogical activities, the School conducted more than 150 long-term seminars and 390 teacher-training days.
"Echoes and Reflections," the award-winning Holocaust education program created by Yad Vashem, the ADL and the USC Shoah Foundation for Visual Testimony, is currently receiving a facelift. The multimedia program, which includes all the necessary resources for educators to teach the complex issues of the Holocaust, will be updated with new historical and pedagogical materials, as well as a new resource guide for teachers. Additionally, the accompanying website is being redesigned and overhauled, with a new look to be completed during 2014. During 2013, close to 3,000 American middle- and high-school teachers participated in over 130 training programs across 38 states, and senior educational staff from Yad Vashem initiated and participated in more than 30 teacher-training workshops. Since its inception a decade ago, the "Echoes and Reflections" program has reached over 20,000 teachers throughout the US. The updated program is expected to double the number of participants in 2014, extending its reach across North America.

"This is one of the best workshops that I have ever attended. I have taught about the Holocaust for several years and I just wish I could have been in your workshop sooner."

English teacher, Middleburg, Kentucky, USA
In June 2013, Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies coordinated the first-ever seminar for a delegation of educators from Cyprus. The 25 Greek-speaking Cypriots gave encouraging feedback on the customized itinerary, and were quick to acquaint their colleagues with Yad Vashem's effective educational practices upon returning home. In cooperation with the Cyprus Ministry of Education, the seminar graduates shared their experiences at Yad Vashem with other teachers at their schools, and Yad Vashem is discussing subsequent steps for future cooperation. Potential follow-up programming includes a graduate seminar in 2014, together with the Cyprus Ministry of Education and with the support of Israel's Embassy in Nicosia. The International School continues to expand the number of countries with whom it cooperates. During 2013, with the collaboration of Israel's Foreign Ministry and its embassies around the world, programs were initiated with Macedonia, South Korea and New Zealand, and new relationships with other countries are expected to be established throughout the coming year.

"IT'S REALLY HELPFUL THAT YOU HAVE PROVIDED US WITH TOOLS AND PEDAGOGICAL METHODS FOR TEACHING [THE HOLOCAUST], AND THAT YOU FAMILIARIZED US WITH THE VARIOUS SOURCES THAT ALLOW US TO TRANSMIT HISTORY IN AN ENGAGING AND OBJECTIVE MANNER."  

PARTICIPANT IN THE CYPRiot EDUCATORS' SEMINAR
RENEWING THEIR COMMITMENT – CANADIAN ALUMNI CONFERENCE

Educators from across Canada converged in Toronto in July 2013 for the inaugural “Then and Now” Alumni Educators’ Conference. Sixty graduates of the International School for Holocaust Studies shared their successful teaching practices and learned new pedagogical tools for teaching the Holocaust’s universal meanings. Participants heard inspiring lectures, participated in practical workshops and took part in roundtable discussions on topics such as modern-day antisemitism and using the Internet and social media to teach about the Holocaust. A Canadian online educators’ network was launched to help participants and their colleagues continue to share ideas on an ongoing basis. At the conclusion of the conference, educators signed a declaration affirming their commitment to carrying the torch of remembrance through the teaching of the Shoah in their classrooms and communities.

I HAVE NEVER ATTENDED A CONFERENCE WHERE EVERY SPEAKER WAS ENGAGING AND GAVE ME SOMETHING USEFUL THAT I CAN IMMEDIATELY BRING TO THE CLASSROOM – UNTIL THIS ONE.”

BRENDA BALL, PARTICIPANT IN THE CANADIAN “THEN AND NOW” EDUCATORS’ CONFERENCE

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS STRENGTHEN COOPERATION

In October 2013, a delegation of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder (states) in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK) attended a day-long seminar at the International School for Holocaust Studies. The seminar culminated in the signing of a memorandum of understanding by KMK President Stephan Dorgerloh, Israel’s Minister of Education Rabbi Shay Piron and Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev. The agreement aims to foster sustained comprehensive cooperation in the realm of Holocaust education among all 16 federal states of Germany, and to increase cooperation between Yad Vashem and German pedagogical institutions, Holocaust memorial sites, museums and organizations. This memorandum constituted one of nine educational agreements which Yad Vashem signed in 2013: over the course of the year, Yad Vashem fortified relations with educational institutions and government ministries in Croatia, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. Yad Vashem plans to sign additional understandings in 2014 with Denmark, France, Hungary, Italy, Moldova and Romania.
Yad Vashem launched the Yad Vashem-ICHEIC (International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims) Partner School Network at an "Israel Day" symposium in March 2013 in Germany. The event was organized by the Bavarian Parliament, and was attended by Bavarian Prime Minister Barbara Stamm and Israeli Consul Tibor Shalev Schlosser. At present, a total of five schools from three German federal states have joined the network: three from Bavaria and one each from North Rhine-Westphalia and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. As part of the initiative, the schools receive pedagogical resources with German-language materials to help their staff incorporate Yad Vashem's methodological approaches into their lesson plans. Each Partner School's staff of active classroom teachers includes at least one Yad Vashem seminar graduate, who is able to model Yad Vashem's pedagogical resources and expand the program's reach exponentially. Plans have begun to extend the program to other countries across Europe.

"Though so many years have passed, he still remembers the pinch on the cheek that the rabbi gave him... He must have been a very special rabbi!"

This quote is taken from a "Travel Journal" which accompanies Talmud Torah students in Israel throughout a specially designed project entitled "These I Shall Remember," a new informal learning environment for ultra-Orthodox schools in Israel (grades 6-8). The project encourages students to explore the attempts made by Jews during the Holocaust to uphold Jewish life and traditions. Stories told by eyewitnesses who were their age during the Holocaust emphasize the struggles of Torah-practicing Jews in the ghettos. The project's three-hour activities take place in the classroom, where the decor is changed to create a sharply different educational atmosphere, enabling an experiential learning process. Students break up into groups and work through a series of "stations." Each station deals with a different aspect of daily life in the ghetto: Sabbath observance, prayers, learning Torah and performing acts of Hesed (benevolence). The new learning environment has been introduced with much success at many Talmud Torah schools, as well as schools for ultra-Orthodox girls. Requests for additional sessions continue to pour in from educational institutions across Israel.
Some 1,200 educators from across Israel gathered at Yad Vashem during the first week of their summer vacation to attend the 5th National Educators’ Conference at Yad Vashem. Among the participants of the two-day conference in July 2013 was Israel’s Education Minister Rabbi Shay Piron, who addressed the teachers regarding the importance of Holocaust instruction and its implementation in Israel’s education system. The conference included meetings with survivors to hear their testimonies firsthand, as well as over 140 workshops and lectures dealing at length with the appropriate methods by which educators may endow the universal implications and memory of the Holocaust for future generations. Among the animated discussions were the use of Holocaust imagery in political cartoons, Holocaust in the media, theater and the performing arts during the Holocaust, and the choice of music played during Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Day.

"THERE IS NO ORGANIZATION OF SIMILAR TYPE THAT HAS A STRUCTURED EDUCATIONAL PROCESS LIKE YAD VASHEM."

RICHARD UECHTRITZ, IN THE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH NEWS
A unique project developed by Yad Vashem for the IDF Officers’ Training Base equips commanders with meaningful and relevant content about the Shoah and trains them to conduct ongoing dialogue with their soldiers about the Holocaust and its implications as a universal event. As part of the program, the officers actively participate in seminars at Yad Vashem with their IDF officer cadets, and are given tools to help them act as educational leaders and become emissaries dedicated to Holocaust remembrance.

The seminars for cadets consist of tours of the Yad Vashem campus, including the Holocaust History Museum, and address ethical and moral dilemmas, such as the concepts of “dehumanization” and retaining human dignity; formal and informal leadership during the Holocaust; free choice vs. fulfilling orders; and passing on the torch of remembrance to future IDF officers. During 2013, over 150 groups of cadets attended programs at Yad Vashem, and commanding officers participated in a dozen seminars. The program is expected to grow significantly during 2014, and will include additional activities at the IDF Officers’ Training Base.
THE VOICE OF THE SURVIVORS: WORKSHOP FOR WITNESSES

In May 2013, twenty-one survivors attended a five-day seminar at the International School for Holocaust Studies, providing them with the tools and confidence to retell their stories of survival to groups visiting Yad Vashem. The survivors were trained in various techniques that enabled them to maintain a strong and articulate storyline while speaking before a group, and to answer difficult questions that may arise. The seminar helped the survivors incorporate stories of their lives prior to the Holocaust, as well as how they rebuilt their lives afterwards, helping provide a full picture of their experience. Survivors were also guided on adapting their stories to the age-appropriate emotional level of their audience. Since its inception, some 500 survivors have participated in this program helping create a cadre of witnesses to share their personal stories. Throughout the years, these personal testimonies have become an essential part of Yad Vashem’s ceremonies, educational resources and exhibitions, as well as a source of living history.

LEARNING PROGRAM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Learning about the Holocaust has become a formative experience within Israeli culture and part of consolidating one’s Jewish identity. As an integral part of society, special needs adults and children living in Israel also participate in the various activities held at Yad Vashem. Under the auspices of the “Dorothy’s Hope” Holocaust Education Project for Individuals with Special Needs in memory of Dorothy Jolson z”l, the International School for Holocaust Studies contacted a variety of institutions and organizations dedicated to special needs, and organized their participation in subsidized activities customized to each group’s specific requirements and challenges. Last year, Yad Vashem was visited by a wide variety of special needs groups who benefitted from its guiding services and programs, including students of a youth rehabilitation-special education center; visitors from a home for young women; youth from a school for students with emotional difficulties; and mainstreamed hearing-impaired students.

“THANKS TO THIS INITIATIVE, OUR STUDENTS EXPERIENCED A COMPLETE PREPARATORY PROGRAM BEFORE THEIR TRIP TO POLAND, INCLUDING CUSTOMIZED GUIDANCE.”

HAGAR BURKMAN, TEACHER AT THE BEIT EKSTEIN SCHOOL AT BEIT YANAI FOR STUDENTS WITH MENTAL-EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES
PROMOTING YOUNG JEWISH LEADERSHIP IN THE FSU

For the last three years, in conjunction with Nativ (the Liaison Bureau of Israel’s Prime Minister’s Office), 20 young people from the FSU have taken part in a 10-day seminar that included study and training days at Yad Vashem, tours of Israel and visits to museums showcasing issues pertaining to the preservation of memory. They then returned home to implement projects targeting youth in their own Jewish communities: Tatyana Gurevich of Novosibirsk, Russia, created the exhibition “A Visa for Life,” dedicated to the subject of diplomats who were recognized as Righteous Among the Nations; Yulia Shteynlukht of Donetsk, Ukraine, organized guided tours of Jewish Donetsk for university-age students; and Eva Brodskaya, of Tomsk, Russia, established a film society promoting debates following the screening of films, in order to preserve the memory of the Holocaust and develop Jewish identity among the Jews of Tomsk. Since the inception of the program in 2011, sixty young leaders have participated in the initiative.

In May 2013, a total of 84 Jewish youth from the FSU and 10 Israeli students took part in the “Phoenix Project,” a joint program of the Jewish Agency, the JDC, the Israel Experience and Yad Vashem. The participants came from Moscow, St. Petersburg, Almaty, Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa and other cities in the FSU to take part in a Jewish heritage journey to Ukraine and Poland. The program included a preparatory seminar in Lvov as well as an educational journey in which Holocaust history was woven into the overall historical context. The route of the trip passed though Lublin, Warsaw, Krakow and Rzeszów, and included memorial sites, ghettos, synagogues, Jewish cemeteries and concentration camps. Following the seminar, participants submitted proposals for educational projects that they plan to execute back in their home communities with the direction and support of the Project’s partners.
The “Mu-Zika – Israeli Youth Sing Songs of the Holocaust” performance, the fruit of cooperation between Yad Vashem and Israel’s Ministry of Public Diplomacy and Diaspora Affairs, is now in its tenth year. The show is based on poems written by survivors and victims of the Holocaust that have been set to music and performed by youth for whom music is their primary form of expression. The participants first study and discuss central topics related to the Holocaust guided by a team from the International School for Holocaust Studies, and are then supervised by a musical producer, a voice development teacher and other professionals who contribute to creating a professional and moving performance. The 2013 show took place in the city of Ashdod, where dozens of young people from different creative backgrounds - music, poetry and the visual arts - performed for high school students and youth group members and educators, as well as Holocaust survivors and their families.

The “Keeping the Memory Alive” International Poster Design Competition, now in its second year, aims to make Holocaust Remembrance accessible to students across the globe. The 2013-14 competition saw hundreds of entries submitted by students of art and design from the UK, the Czech Republic, Canada, Israel, Austria, Slovenia, Russia and Indonesia - the vast majority of whom have no personal connection to the Holocaust. The designated theme of the United Nations for International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2014 was “Journeys through the Holocaust,” and the best 16 designs were selected by the jury for display in governmental, civic and educational settings in over 50 countries around the world. The displays were officially opened at the UN Headquarters in Vienna on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27, 2014, and are promoted by the UN Holocaust Program (UNHOP), the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), the London Jewish Cultural Centre, the European Shoah Legacy Institute, and the Canadian IHRA Chairmanship. An online lesson plan has been created by Yad Vashem to accompany the posters.

For the fourth year running, the International School held a competition to design Israel’s official commemorative poster for Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Day 2013. The winning poster was chosen from among more than 100 professionals and students of design as well as members of the general public. The judges noted that “the upside-down family tree creates an individual and collective void, thus expressing the great difficulty of speaking of what is not.”
NEW VIDEO PORTAL FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATORS

The Holocaust Education Video Toolbox is the first video portal designed specifically for Holocaust teachers and educators. The project currently includes six films, totaling 70 minutes of video, divided into succinct chapters. Ranging from introductory topics like "What is the Holocaust?" to more advanced subjects such as "Poetry in Holocaust Education," the video portal provides a practical tool for educators who might have a wealth of information available to them, but are unsure where to begin. Built from the fundamentals up, the videos offer the basics of Holocaust history and Yad Vashem’s pedagogical approach, and continue with hands-on methods for using existing online and print materials, testimony films and more in the classroom. Each video, accompanied by additional materials on Yad Vashem’s website, is designed for seasoned Holocaust educators, teachers broaching the field for the first time as well as interested learners. The project is expected to include several new specially-produced videos by the end of 2014.

THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Yad Vashem’s Virtual School, and the online learning it provides, offers a wealth of information and learning experiences to teachers, educators and the general public. Featuring thousands of web pages with materials in 20 languages, the Virtual School’s online courses, interactive learning tools, videos, survivor testimony films, lesson plans and more enable educators around the globe to enrich their historical and pedagogical knowledge.

The International School has integrated online learning with practical pedagogy, making it a fundamental part of its educational programs. Recently recognized as eligible for academic credit in several European universities, as well as for Israeli teacher’s continuing education programs, the Virtual School’s prestigious courses continue to demonstrate the essential value of online learning.
During 2013, some 900,000 visitors came to Yad Vashem on the Mount of Remembrance to tour the world’s foremost Holocaust education and remembrance center. Throughout the year, a wide range of commemorative activities take place on the campus, including memorial events, guided tours for public and private organizations, assemblies of survivors and next generations, concerts, exhibition openings, academic symposia and other cultural happenings. The varied programs are rich with intellectual and experiential content so that members of the public of all ages, religions and nationalities may continue to find relevance and meaning in their ongoing encounters with Holocaust remembrance.

Yad Vashem held some 80 events during 2013, from Israel’s official Holocaust Remembrance Day and VE Day events to more intimate commemorative gatherings, as well as over 290 memorial services in conjunction with more than 40 Holocaust survivor and next-generation organizations.
NEW PERMANENT EXHIBITION "SHOAH" INAUGURATED

"Open your heart, visitor. And your mind. And your soul. As you walk through the exhibition ‘Shoah’ and are enveloped by the sights and sounds of the past, hear the voices of the victims, see the drawings of the children, touch the names of the murdered. Be this place’s messenger. Take with you a message that only the dead can still give the living: that of remembrance." Elie Wiesel

In June 2013, the new Permanent Exhibition "Shoah" at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Block 27, opened in the presence of Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Minister of Education Rabbi Shay Piron, Minister of Strategic Affairs Yuval Steinitz, Minister of Culture and Sport Limor Livnat, Minister for Senior Citizens Uri Orbach, Minister of Science, Technology and Space Yaakov Perry, Poland’s Minister of Culture and National Heritage Bogdan Zdrojewski, Director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Piotr Cywinski, Yad Vashem Chairman and Exhibition Curator Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council Rabbi Israel Meir Lau and Holocaust survivors. The former exhibit, dating to the communist era, had become neglected and outdated, and following a visit of then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in 2005, Yad Vashem was mandated by the State of Israel to undertake the renewal of the exhibit. "Shoah" was curated, designed and built by Yad Vashem, in coordination with the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

"Shoah" presents the main elements of the Holocaust, placing the murder at Auschwitz-Birkenau in the larger context of the Nazis’ systematic attempt to exterminate the Jewish people. Towards this end, the display presents the fundamental aspects of the Holocaust, not necessarily chronologically, but rather by conveying a profound ethical-cultural perspective of Holocaust remembrance.
At the entrance to the new exhibition is a clear definition of the Holocaust, after which the visitor’s senses are suffused with the words and melody of prayer - a Jewish and universal expression of the human spirit. In the adjoining space, a 360-degree cinematic montage of original footage of Jewish life between the two world wars engulfs the visitor. Following this sweeping panorama, the visitor is confronted with the central tenets of Nazi-German racist ideology, the main motivation behind the Germans’ imperative of annihilating the Jewish people. A space depicting the mass murder contains a unique map illustrating the vast geographic dimensions of the genocide. The following area presents the human struggle with this terrifying new reality, as millions of individuals fought to maintain their personal and communal dignity.

“Traces of Life” is devoted to the 1.5 million Jewish children murdered during the Shoah - a heartrending artwork comprised of fragments of authentic drawings sketched by Jewish children during the Holocaust, copied onto the surrounding walls by an artist. This is followed by the monumental “Book of Names,” containing 4.2 million names of murdered Jews gathered over the past 60 years by Yad Vashem and created especially for this exhibition. At the end of the book are empty pages, leaving room for additional insertions as the task of collecting names of victims continues. Finally, 12 frames hang on the wall opposite the Book, as if in a family home, with a rotating display of 250 photographs of Holocaust survivors and their families, illustrating the restored lives of the survivors. Two rooms adjoining the exhibition provide a quiet place for contemplation and reflection.

The new exhibition combines powerful visual displays with short texts that provide a profound experience for the over one million annual visitors to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

MARKING 70 YEARS SINCE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE VILNA GHETTO

On the eve of the Holocaust, the Jewish community of Vilna was the spiritual center of Eastern European Jewry, the heart of enlightenment and Jewish political life, and the hub of Jewish creativity and daily Jewish existence. It was a community bursting with cultural and religious activity, movements and parties, educational institutions, libraries and theaters; a community of rabbis and gifted Talmudic scholars, intellectuals, poets, authors, artists, craftspeople and educators. Known as "The Jerusalem of Lithuania," the Jewish community of Vilna that had flourished for hundreds of years was decimated during the Holocaust, leaving only some 2,500 survivors.

In October 2013, a gathering was held at Yad Vashem to mark 70 years since the liquidation of the Vilna ghetto. Participating in the event were Lithuanian Vice Minister of Culture Darius Mazintas, Lithuanian Ambassador to Israel H.E. Mr. Darius Degutis, Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak, Chairman of the Association of Jews from Vilna and Vicinity in Israel Michael Schemiavitz; Chairman of the Organization for Perpetuating the Memory of the Victims of the Landsberg-Kaufering-Dachau Concentration Camps Uri Chanoch; Holocaust survivors and members of the next generation, as well as members of Israel’s navy. Tenor Rafailas Karpis, who came from Vilna especially for the event, sang songs in Yiddish, accompanied on the piano by Vice Minister Mazintas.
DEDICATION OF NEW YAD VASHEM SQUARE

In May 2013, a ceremony was held in the presence of Jerusalem’s Mayor Nir Barkat to unveil the new Yad Vashem Square, situated adjacent to Mount Herzl and the Mount of Remembrance. The Square, chiseled out of local Hebron stone and inscribed with the Hebrew words “Yad Vashem,” serves not only as a directional guide for the thousands of daily visitors to Yad Vashem, but also adds an aesthetic element to the Jerusalem cityscape. The square, designed in a modest and minimalist fashion, is a welcome new connection between Jerusalem daily life and the unique atmosphere on the Mount of Remembrance for the thousands of visitors from Israel and abroad who cross this square every day to begin their journey of Holocaust study and remembrance.

75 YEARS SINCE KRISTALLNACHT

A memorial ceremony and symposium were held in November 2013 to mark 75 years since the Kristallnacht pogrom. Attending the event, which was held in cooperation with the Association of Israelis of Central European Origin, were hundreds of members of the Association, Holocaust survivors, members of the next generations, representatives of the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (ARSP), IDF soldiers and students at the Kfar Hayarok High School. Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak, Chairman of the Association of Israelis of Central European Origin Reuven Merhav, Chairman of the Lobby for Holocaust Survivors MK Dov Khenin and ARSP representative Naomi Roth addressed the participants. Yad Vashem Chief Historian Prof. Dina Porat gave a lecture on 1938 as a turning point in history, and a stimulating dialogue with Holocaust survivors entitled “My Kristallnacht: A Scorched Memory” was moderated by Prof. Yoram Yovel.

"I was deeply shaken and moved by my visit to Yad Vashem... The faces that look at us from the past leave a stamp on our hearts forever." 
Polish Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek
HOLOCAUST MARTYRS’ & HEROES’ REMEMBRANCE DAY 2013

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2013 VISITS
Yad Vashem's comprehensive collections of original artifacts and artworks emphasize the unique human stories of the Jewish population before, during and after the cataclysm of the Holocaust. The items that comprise these vast collections are the foundation for the displays in the Holocaust History Museum, the Museum of Holocaust Art, the Synagogue and the Exhibitions Pavilion, as well as Yad Vashem's host of traveling exhibitions, and facilitate the teaching about the Holocaust and its universal implications.

During July 2013, TripAdvisor, the foremost travel website driven by reviews and comments of tourists and travelers, announced that Yad Vashem was ranked fourth in the top 25 museums in the world. Visitors applauded the "moving and informative displays" and the "incredible use of architecture, photos and actual items to recreate a time in history that should never happen again," calling it an "unbelievably moving experience" that is a "must-see" for any traveler to Israel. This summer, TripAdvisor also awarded Yad Vashem its 2013 Certificate of Excellence Award - an honor given to establishments that consistently achieve outstanding traveler reviews. To qualify for a Certificate of Excellence, sites or businesses must maintain an overall rating of four or higher out of a possible five, as reviewed by travelers on TripAdvisor. Yad Vashem is currently listed as first among 165 recommended sites to visit in Jerusalem.
NEW EXHIBITION: "I AM MY BROTHER'S KEEPER"

The new exhibition "I Am My Brother's Keeper: 50 years of Honoring Righteous Among the Nations" opened at Yad Vashem's Exhibitions Pavilion in June 2013. The exhibition comprises five short films that depict the varying efforts taken by non-Jewish rescuers who came to the aid of Jews during the Holocaust. Each of the films presents a unique account, providing an artistic visualization that succeeds in characterizing the different types of rescue stories and highlights the risky decisions with which the rescuers were confronted. An online exhibition complementing the exhibition includes touching photo galleries featuring Righteous Among the Nations and those they rescued, various themes depicting dilemmas, choices and issues facing the Rescuers and the Jews they attempted to help, and milestones in the five decades of the Righteous Among the Nations endeavor. "I Am My Brother's Keeper" has also been adapted into a traveling format, bringing this unique exhibition to audiences around the world.
THE ART COLLECTION

The uniqueness of Yad Vashem’s Art Collection, the largest and most comprehensive of its kind in the world, lies not just in its magnitude but also in the different perspective of the Holocaust it provides – that of the individual’s experience. Most of the collection’s pieces were produced during the Holocaust, between 1933 and 1945. Prewar works, including portraits, commemorate artists and individuals later murdered in the Holocaust. Others were created by survivors wishing to commit their experiences to paper and tell the world their story and that of those who were murdered.

Yehezkel Streichman (1906-1993)
Portrait of the artist’s mother, Chase Streichmanas, 1931–1935
Oil on canvas
Collection of the Yad Vashem Museum of Holocaust Art, Jerusalem
Gift of Erela and Giora Streichman, Tel Aviv

A RARE VISUAL TESTIMONY

Yehezkel Streichman, one of Israel’s major artists and among the founders of the “New Horizons” movement, was born in Kovno, (today Lithuania) in 1906. In 1926, he immigrated to Eretz Israel, where he studied at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem, continuing later in Paris and Florence. In 1931, after completing his studies, he returned to his hometown. There, he painted a number of portraits of his family members, which he brought with him when he settled in Tel Aviv in 1935. He married, and began his artistic career in earnest. Until his death in 1993, Streichman was among the leading figures in the Israeli art scene, both as a painter and as a teacher.

The artist’s parents, Itsik and Chase, and his brother Wolf were murdered in Lithuania during the Holocaust. These last portraits, unique to Streichman’s oeuvre and donated to Yad Vashem in 2013 by the artist’s son Giora, provide a rare visual testimony to his family.

Yehezkel Streichman (1906-1993)
Portrait of the artist’s father, Itsik Streichmanas, 1933
Oil on canvas
Collection of the Yad Vashem Museum of Holocaust Art, Jerusalem
Gift of Erela and Giora Streichman, Tel Aviv
The Artifacts Collection at Yad Vashem, now including more than 27,400 items, is a sweeping mosaic of personal memories. Each artifact is connected to the life story of an individual who personally experienced the events of the Holocaust, thereby reflecting the identity and individuality of the survivors as well as those who were murdered during the Holocaust.

A LITTLE GIRL’S DRESS IN THE FOREST

Less than two months before the outbreak of World War II, Tzila was born to Batia and Szachne Marcus in Rowne, Poland. After her husband was murdered by the Germans, Batia fled to the forest with her young daughter and joined the partisans. Tzila was the only child in the group, and she recalls being made to walk in the rear, keeping her distance from the others. One day, some of the partisans placed Tzila in hiding with a Polish man who was giving refuge to other Jews. During a raid of the home, the other Jews in hiding fled, and her Polish protector took Tzila, wrapped her in a coat, and left her in the forest. For six weeks, Tzila remained on her own until she was discovered by partisans who returned her to her mother. Batia and Tzila remained in the forest with the partisans until liberation.

During their time with the partisans, Batia had to kill a Ukrainian man in self-defense. Using the Ukrainian's shirt, she sewed a dress for young Tzila. Tzila wore the dress during her time in the forest, and after the Holocaust brought it with her to Eretz Israel, where it remained in a small suitcase. This year, as part of the “Gathering the Fragments” campaign, Tzila donated the dress to Yad Vashem where, along with the story of her time in the forest, it will be preserved for generations to come.
YAD VASHEM ONLINE

Yad Vashem's comprehensive websites in seven different languages have helped make knowledge about the Holocaust available and relevant to a global audience. In addition to continuously developing meaningful content for the websites, Yad Vashem continues to expand its online presence in social media. This strong and active participation in Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest offers unprecedented opportunities to instantaneously communicate ideas, share content, and be actively engaged with and connect to a broad and diverse public. By optimizing the unique features found in the different social media platforms, the potential reach of the information shared can easily reach hundreds of thousands of people within a 24-hour period.

ONLINE REMEMBRANCE ENGAGES THOUSANDS

For International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Yad Vashem launched the IRemember Wall on Facebook. By joining the wall, one’s Facebook profile was randomly linked to the name of a Holocaust victim from the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names and then posted to the wall together with the photo and name of the Holocaust victim. Thousands participated in this online commemorative project.

"IT IS SUCH A SIMPLE YET EFFECTIVE AND VERY MOVING WAY TO HONOR THE VICTIMS OF THE SHOAH. THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING US TO DO SO."

DAVID TAYLOR, ON FACEBOOK
WEBSITE IN GERMAN CONTINUES TO EXPAND

Four new online exhibitions were added to the Yad Vashem website in German in 2013. The site was launched in January 2013 to mark 75 years since Kristallnacht. In addition to offering comprehensive resources about the Holocaust and extensive educational materials, the site also features 20 online exhibitions with related video testimonies, film excerpts, original documents, personal artifacts, artworks and more. Many of the exhibitions were created especially for the website in German.

REACHING OUT TO ARABIC SPEAKERS

The Yad Vashem website in Arabic offers a comprehensive online resource about the Holocaust, including a 30-chapter thematic and chronological history with related photos, video, documentary footage, articles and artifacts. Also featured is a timeline of Holocaust history with over 200 events, online exhibitions about the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp, and stories and exhibitions of the Righteous Among the Nations who risked their lives to save Jews. In order to reach a wider Arabic-speaking audience, Yad Vashem has used different social media platforms to provide greater visibility and interest in the site, including YouTube, Twitter and targeting specific demographics with links to relevant content through Facebook. As a result of this outreach campaign, the number of visits to the site grew exponentially: in 2013, there were over 250,000 visits to the Arabic website, up from 94,000 in 2012.

THE STORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF BRATISLAVA

A new online exhibition was recently launched exploring the dynamic religious and cultural life of the Jewish community of Bratislava, Slovakia before the Holocaust, its fate during the war, and efforts to commemorate it afterwards. A significant part of the exhibition is the story of the rescue efforts of the Working Group, an underground organization of public figures that formed in the summer of 1941. Two narrated short films comprising video testimonies and photos visually tell the story of both the Jewish community of Bratislava and the actions of the Working Group.
VOICES FROM THE INFERNO

The captivating exhibition "Voices from the Inferno: Holocaust Survivors Describe the Last Months in the Warsaw Ghetto" brings together excerpts from hours of video testimony given by the survivors of the Warsaw ghetto and former combatants in the uprising. Some of the Jews of the ghetto succeeded in escaping the ghetto after the battle that raged there, and survived in hiding on the "Aryan" side; others took shelter deep inside the bunkers in the ghetto, but were ultimately discovered by the Germans and deported to concentration and death camps. There were also the few who managed to survive among the ruins of the ghetto until liberation. The majority of the Jews who took part in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising were murdered. This unique oral documentation enhances our understanding of one of the central chapters in Holocaust history.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WORK OF TIMELESS REMEMBRANCE. EACH PERSON MATTERS, AND YOU HELP MAKE THAT A REALITY."
CHRISTINE MCCLINTOCK HUDSPETH, ON FACEBOOK

SHOWCASING THE VALLEY OF THE COMMUNITIES

A new online presentation showcases the Valley of the Communities as well as the stories of six Jewish communities from across Europe. A unique and experiential video tour of the walls and courtyards of the Valley integrates scenes of prewar Jewish life. The exhibition highlights the Jewish life that flourished in Chelm, Ioannina, Piotrkow Trybunalski, Siauliai, Szyclowiec and Wiesbaden before the war, and the devastation that befell these communities during the Holocaust period. The historical accounts of life in the communities are conveyed within the visual context of the Valley of the Communities.
RIGHTHEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS

One of Yad Vashem’s principal duties is to convey the gratitude of the State of Israel and the Jewish people to non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. Since 1963, Yad Vashem has worked diligently to piece together testimonies, documents and photographic evidence in order to uncover as many details as possible of each rescue story. Those deemed worthy of recognition receive a medal and a certificate of honor, and their names are commemorated on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem.

In 2013, the Commission for the Designation of the Righteous, headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Jacob Türkel, recognized 454 individuals as Righteous Among the Nations, bringing the total number honored thus far to over 25,270 individuals from around the world.

EGYPTIAN DOCTOR HONORED FOR BERLIN RESCUE

Dr. Mohamed Helmy, an Egyptian physician living in Berlin, worked in the heart of Nazi Germany to help save his Jewish friends during the war years. When the deportation of Jews from Berlin began, he hid 16-year-old Anna Boros (later Gutman), a family friend and former patient, in a cabin he owned in the Berlin neighborhood of Buch. Dr. Helmy himself was targeted by the regime, but, despite the great danger, he used every possible means to protect Anna. He even obtained a certificate for Anna attesting to her (alleged) conversion to Islam, as well as a marriage certificate in Arabic claiming that she had married a fellow Egyptian in a ceremony held in Helmy’s home.

DISCOVERING CONNECTIONS

Growing up in Canada, Claire Hoffer (née Fox) knew nothing of how her parents survived the Holocaust. Many years after her parents passed away, Claire’s curiosity regarding her family’s history motivated her to visit her parents’ native towns in Poland and Ukraine. As part of her preparations for the journey, Claire decided to research a name she had found among her father Paul’s documents: Olga Grocholski. The name was written on an envelope, along with an address in Poland. As she searched for the name online, she was directed to Yad Vashem’s website, where, to her amazement, she found Olga’s name.

Through Yad Vashem, Claire discovered that Olga Grocholski and her husband Józef had saved the life of Pawel Fuks during WWII. After the war they kept in touch, even after Fuks immigrated to Canada and changed his name to Paul Fox. In 1987, the Grocholskis were recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations, but, sadly, Paul Fox had already passed away. Now, 70 years after Fox knocked on the Grocholskis’ door asking for help, his daughter Claire was able to fill in the missing pieces of her family’s past. Claire’s story is just one of many recent revelations to family members of both rescuers and survivors of the Holocaust, enabled through the uploading of information to the Internet by Yad Vashem’s Department of the Righteous Among the Nations.

"If it weren’t for Dr. Helmy, I would not be here today, and nor would my two brothers Charlie and Fred. Between us we have seven children, who also owe their lives to him."

Carla Greenspan, Anna Gutman’s Daughter
With more than 169 million pages of documentation, Yad Vashem’s Archives house an incomparable collection of Holocaust-related material. Agreements to copy documents contained in the various archives of Central and Eastern Europe as well as the FSU have recently bolstered the collection to unprecedented proportions. The methodical digitization of Yad Vashem’s vast collection of documents, testimonies, photographs, archival footage and other items is currently underway, with a view to making all of the information at the Archives’ disposal accessible to the wider public.
Over the past decade, Yad Vashem has distinguished itself as a world center of digitization and accessibility for archival documents. At the end of February 2013, a senior management delegation from the Bundesarchiv (German Federal Archives) came to Yad Vashem for a three-day visit. One of the biggest archives in Europe, spanning over 110 km of storage, the documents preserved in the Bundesarchiv date from 1495, among them numerous records from WWII. Yad Vashem has a long-running agreement with the Bundesarchiv for sharing knowledge and photocopying materials. The distinguished guests toured the digitization and scanning facility and were especially interested in Yad Vashem’s methodology as well as its vision for opening its holdings to the public, including the digitization of documents currently underway.

Yad Vashem continues to work towards “open access,” making digital materials freely available to the wider public. As part of the Israel Archives Network (IAN) project, an initiative of the National Heritage Program at the Prime Minister’s Office, Yad Vashem operates a center for the digital backup of Holocaust documentation. In 2013, the center scanned and provided digital backup for over 200,000 pages of documentation held at three leading Holocaust archives in Israel. This project enabled the successful mapping of collections of Holocaust-related documents in Israel, and will ultimately promote easier access to these collections.

Additional information about Dutch Jewry was recently uncovered due to the expert work of a team cataloguing and indexing data on documents in the Yad Vashem Archives. In total, 2,100 files were catalogued and new information obtained on the wartime fate of some 20,000 Dutch Jews. The new data is accessible to the public via computer terminals in the Yad Vashem Reading Room and via the Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names on the Yad Vashem website, enabling researchers, students and the general public to locate relevant information quickly and easily.
Sara Kil (née Ish), aged just two years old, is pictured here in the midst of the Vilenski-Ish family in 1937 in Varaklani, Latvia. By the end of the Holocaust, the only survivors from the loving family were Sara, her mother Basia and her aunt Ester. Her father, Yankel Ish, fell in battle near Moscow, and her aunt, Toybe-Cire Vilenski (along with her husband Shpungel and their three children, not pictured), were shot to death in August 1941 in Livani, Latvia. One of the few remaining documents of the family, the photo was given to Sara by a neighbor after the war.

Among the millions of pages of documents acquired in 2013 by the Yad Vashem Archives from areas in the Former Soviet Union - Ukraine, Latvia, Belarus and Lithuania - were 90,000 index cards from the Latvian Historical Archives completed during a 1935 census. From these documents, Sara was able to learn the dates of birth of her family members, as well as other previously unknown details about their lives. These documents gathered by Yad Vashem provide not only important historical facts regarding prewar Jewish communities, but also detailed personal information that allow us to piece together the individual stories of every victim of the Holocaust.

"YOU PROVIDE A MEMORIAL AND A VOICE FOR THE ANONYMOUS HOLOCAUST VICTIMS WHOSE EXISTENCE WOULD HAVE OTHERWISE DISAPPEARED FROM OUR COLLECTIVE NATIONAL MEMORY."

ITZHAK D. GOLDBERG, WHO DISCOVERED THE EXISTENCE OF HIS FATHER’S FIRST FAMILY, WHO WERE MURDERED DURING THE SHOAH, VIA YAD VASHEM’S ONLINE NAMES DATABASE.
Growing up in the United States, the Privens did not know much about their family history or the tragic fate during the Holocaust of relatives from their father’s ancestral village of Pavloch. Driven to uncover their family roots, siblings Lew and Cheryl embarked on a genealogical search that began with a trip to Ukraine, followed by an important discovery of new information on Yad Vashem’s Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names, ultimately having an enormous impact on the Priven family. The revelation of previously unknown living relatives culminated in an emotional reunion of extended family in the US and Israel and a moving bar mitzvah ceremony “twinning” Jalen Schlosberg, Lew Priven’s grandson, with his third cousin, Haim Okham, who was murdered at the age of 13 during the Holocaust. The reunion prompted Cheryl to join the ranks of the Shoah Victims’ Names Recovery Project’s global volunteer network, assisting others in commemorating their lost loved ones.
In July 2013, Yad Vashem’s Pages of Testimony Memorial Repository was officially included in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. The register was founded in 1995 to raise global awareness regarding preservation of, and access to, unique and irreplaceable documentary heritage in various parts of the world, and so far includes only 299 items worldwide, all of which are endorsed by the Director General of UNESCO. The Pages of Testimony Repository is the first Israeli collection to be included in the Register.

Thus far, 2.6 million names have been documented on Pages of Testimony, which, together with other records, have allowed Yad Vashem to identify by name some 4.3 million out of the six million Shoah victims. Pages of Testimony continue to be filled out by friends and family of the victims, as Yad Vashem maintains this historic endeavor. The entire collection, housed in Yad Vashem’s Hall of Names, is available online on the Names Database in English, Hebrew, Russian, German and Spanish.

"From Survival to the Skies"

“My most moving moment was not when I got my wings, but when I became an officer. Because I was there, and they yelled ‘Jew’ at me. Just like someone who has never been hungry cannot understand what hunger really means, in the same way someone who wasn’t there cannot understand what it means to come from there. To become an officer after being there is like being on top of the world.” stated Shaya Harsit, Managing Director of the “From Survival to the Skies” organization.

The “From Survival to the Skies” oral testimonies project reached its conclusion in the fall of 2013. This special initiative documents the stories of Holocaust survivors who went on to become pilots and personnel in the Israel Air Force. Over the course of the project, a joint endeavor of Yad Vashem and the “From Survival to the Skies” non-profit organization, initiated by former MK Col. (Res.) Eliezer (Cheetah) Cohen, over 40 testimonies were recorded. The Oral History Section of the Archives records some 1,000 video testimonies of survivors in Israel each year; the collection now numbers some 120,000 video, audio and written testimonies.

"There is no substitute for just one individual’s testimony, spoken face to face."

MARY DEIJKS, THE INDEPENDENT
The Yad Vashem Archives’ Footage Collection contains some 700 titles from before, during and after the Shoah, including newsreels, amateur films and propaganda material as well as documentation of war crimes trials. Each film is carefully analyzed, in an effort to uncover as many details as possible relating to its contents, including the events it depicts and the individuals involved. The films are then linked to other relevant materials in Yad Vashem’s collections - documents, photographs, Pages of Testimony and more - turning each film from illustrative material to a unique documentary source.

One of these collections of rare footage was recently donated to Yad Vashem’s Archives by Rabbi Joseph Bramson, the son of Dr. Jacob Bramson, a former psychiatrist and department manager at the Franeker Psychiatric Hospital in the Frisland district of the Netherlands. Dr. Bramson was also an amateur photographer and, with an 8-mm camera, filmed his family at different events as well young people in training at a “Kibbutz” in Franeker. The collection sheds light on the life of a Jewish family in a remote area of the Netherlands before and during the war - and afterwards in Israel without the mother, Corrie, who did not survive. The number of private films donated to the Archives has grown considerably in recent years, providing commemoration of families and details about the daily lives of different communities in Europe.

**UNIQUE FILM COLLECTION DONATED TO ARCHIVES**

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"**YET IT IS NOT IN ARCHITECTONIC MEMORIALS THAT YAD VASHEM HAD ITS BIGGEST IMPACT ON THIS VISITOR, BUT IN THE EVIDENTIAL BITS OF PAPER ACCUMULATED BY THE ARCHIVISTS."**

DOMINIC LARSON, IN THE SUNDAY TIMES
Miriam (Weinbaum) Frank was born to Hershlik and Haya-Rachel (née Eichner) Weinbaum in 1934 in Czestochowa, Poland. In 1942, Miriam’s family paid a Polish woman to hide the young girl in central Warsaw, and Haya-Rachel, Hershlik and Miriam’s older brother Bolek hid elsewhere. The family kept in contact with Miriam, passing her brief notes via the “aunt” who was protecting the young girl. Among the notes that Miriam received were from her brother, on which he had written arithmetic and language exercises. During several months in 1942, these notes were the only channel of communication between Miriam and her family. Miriam’s parents and brother did not survive the Holocaust, and in 1949 Miriam came to Israel with a group of orphaned children. In 2013, as part of the “Gathering the Fragments” Israeli national campaign to rescue Holocaust-related personal items, Miriam donated to Yad Vashem what were in essence farewell letters from her loving family, notes that she had cherished for over 70 years. These precious items, along with the story that accompanies them, will be safeguarded at Yad Vashem for posterity.

"FOR ME, THE ULTIMATE AND MOST ACCURATE INTERPRETATION OF THE HOLOCAUST CAN BE FOUND ONLY AT YAD VASHEM."

STEVEN KURLANDER, IN THE HUFFINGTON POST
The recipient of the 8th annual Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman’s Award for Artistic Achievement in Holocaust-related films was Polish director Wladyslaw Pasikowski for his film Aftermath, a thought-provoking work about the role played by Poles in the murder of their Jewish neighbors. Jan Tomasz Gross’s book Neighbors (2000) engendered a scholarly exploration of the role of some Poles as perpetrators, the deliberate cover-up this significant chapter in the history of the Holocaust in Poland, and the torment of discovery by a younger generation born after the war. Pasikowski’s film brought these charged issues to the screen, attaining much public attention and creating a lively debate.

Israel Educational Television (IETV) recently signed an agreement to deposit copies of its complete collection of programs on the Holocaust at Yad Vashem’s Visual Center. Some 160 programs and films produced by IETV since its inception at the end of the 1960s will be digitally preserved and made available for immediate viewing by the Center’s visitors. Among the films to be deposited are interview programs that significantly impacted Israeli public discourse, programming for children and youth, and many important documentaries. With this addition to its collection, the Visual Center contributes to the preservation of the Israeli audio-visual heritage on the topic of the Holocaust, and enables IETV to preserve its contents for future generations.
Survivor memoirs, along with other eyewitness accounts, are one of the few sources available for trying to understand the motivations, thoughts and feelings of people as they suffered the tumultuous events of the Holocaust. Despite the inherent complexity of learning about the events of the Holocaust through personal testimony, memoirs often breathe life into descriptions of Jewish communities and families on the eve of the Holocaust, and thereby create a better appreciation of the world that was destroyed. They also contribute greatly to our understanding of how survivors coped with the terrible personal loss the Holocaust inflicted upon them, and how they struggled to rebuild their lives in the wake of its destruction.

Yad Vashem’s Library includes a collection of more than 12,400 volumes of memoirs by Holocaust survivors, providing a source of both documentation and commemoration to students and scholars of the Holocaust alike. The Library’s computerized catalogue enables librarians, researchers and others to obtain up-to-date information on the survivor memoirs available in its collection.
The celebrated International Institute for Holocaust Research encourages, supports and advances scholarly research on the Holocaust. Its projects help lay the foundations for additional investigation of the cataclysmic events that took place during the Shoah, not only providing a source of information, but also promoting future research by other scholars. Through its workshops and conferences, as well as the publications it disseminates, the Institute encourages stimulating academic discourse and promotes fresh insights on the core topics of Holocaust Research.
The systematic mass murder of the Jews in Eastern Europe was primarily carried out by shooting in areas adjacent to the cities, towns, and villages in which they lived. Some murder sites such as Babi Yar in Kiev and Ponary in Vilna are well documented, while hundreds and possibly thousands are unknown and unmarked. The ongoing project "The Untold Stories - Murder Sites of the Jews in the Occupied Territories of the USSR" is comprised of a research track that currently provides comprehensive information about 650 Holocaust murder sites and the murder of Jews on the territory of the FSU. The project utilizes eyewitness testimonies, film footage, written and oral documentation and memoirs to supply an accurate picture of the actual numbers of victims, their identities and their fates. In addition to recently acquired Soviet and German documentation, as well as materials in Yad Vashem's Archives, information has been collected by local people in the field in Minsk, Belarus, and the Crimea. A parallel online guide presents an overall picture of 1,229 different murder sites. After being explored, the new information and materials are uploaded to the Yad Vashem website, where they are available for easy access by scholars and the general public around the world.

The continuing research project of the online "Transports to Extinction: Shoah (Holocaust) Deportation Database" uses a wide range of documents to compile comprehensive information about each and every transport of Jewish victims carried out by the Nazi regime during the Holocaust. During 2013, detailed descriptions of approximately 200 transports were added to the Deportation Database. These transports originated from various cities in Germany, among them Hamburg, Dusseldorf and Berlin, as well as from Luxemburg. The final destinations of these transports were the Theresienstadt ghetto as well as several killing sites and extermination camps in Eastern Europe. The Deportation Database has now grown to include a total of 700 transports. By the end of 2014, research is expected to be completed regarding all transports that departed from within the boundaries of the greater German Reich (Germany, Austria and Bohemia and Moravia).
Hundreds of scholars, researchers and colleagues gathered at Yad Vashem in November 2013 for a special symposium to honor and remember Prof. Israel Gutman who had passed away the previous month. The attendees paid tribute to Prof. Gutman's significant and unique contribution to the propagation of historical awareness regarding the Holocaust and its meaning among the wider public forum in Israel, especially the youth. Prof. Gutman's personal resume - as someone who experienced in the flesh the horrors of the Holocaust, fought in the Warsaw ghetto, was a prisoner in Majdanek, Mauthausen and Auschwitz, where he was a member of the camp's Jewish underground, survived the death marches and was a witness to all that occurred - added enormous weight to his rare and exceptional strength as a researcher, teacher and leader. Prof. Gutman was a renowned scholar and faculty member of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and an integral part of the research activities at Yad Vashem serving during different periods as head of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research, Chief Historian and Academic Advisor.

In December 2013, a day-long international symposium marking 60 years since the establishment of Yad Vashem featured speakers from Israel, Poland, France and Germany, who discussed Yad Vashem's formation, consolidation and challenges. Speakers included Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak, Chairman of the Claims Conference Executive Committee Reuven Merhav, Head of the Research Institute and incumbent of the John Najmann Chair for Holocaust Studies Prof. Dan Michman, previous Director of Yad Vashem's Research Institute Dr. Bella Guterman, Yad Vashem Chief Historian Prof. Dina Porat, Dr. Boaz Cohen (Israel), Prof. Annette Wieviorka (France), Prof. Pawel Spiewak (Poland) and Dr. Susanne Heim (Germany).

A highlight of the day was a fascinating dialogue between Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev and Yad Vashem Chief Historian Prof. Dina Porat, in which they discussed the challenges that Yad Vashem has faced during the 20 years of Shalev's tenure and presenting his vision for the future. Also launched at the event was the new album by Dr. Bella Guterman, 

*Yad Vashem: 60 Years of Remembrance, Documentation, Research and Education* (Hebrew), which uses documents, newspaper clips and photographs to relate the history of Yad Vashem decade by decade.
The International Institutes’ Center for Research on the History of Soviet Jews during the Holocaust held an international conference during February 2013. “The Holocaust and the Jews in the Second World War in Soviet Literature and Film” brought together researchers from the US, Germany, the UK, France, Russia and Israel in the field of Yiddish and Russian Language literature and documentary cinema. The scholars discussed the ways in which the Holocaust was reflected in artworks created in the Soviet Union. In the course of the conference, researchers discussed the unique methods deployed by the writers and filmmakers to circumvent the spoken and unspoken restrictions imposed by Soviet censorship. During the conference, it was noted that “every Soviet book had multiple authors: the writers, the editors, the censors, the Party officials, etc,” something practically inconceivable in Western literature. A number of the conference lectures were published in the International Research Institute’s “Search and Research” series.

The research workshop “Holocaust in Yugoslavia: History, Memory and Culture – a Reappraisal” took place at the International Institute for the Holocaust Research during 2013. The workshop, an initiative of the Israel Science Foundation, Yad Vashem and Bar-Ilan University, gathered a group of 23 scholars from 12 countries, among them historians, scholars of literature, folklore, art and music, and a well-known Serbian Jewish writer, all involved with the research of different aspects of the Holocaust in former Yugoslav lands. This unique gathering, during which the participants read their often innovative and original papers and exchanged their knowledge and ideas on an interdisciplinary level, included also a highly emotional encounter with the Yugoslav Jewish survivors living in Israel. The four intensive days clearly underlined the need for more up-to-date research and publications in the field.

The 2013 Yad Vashem International Book Prize for Holocaust Research, in memory of Abraham Meir Schwarzbaum, Holocaust survivor, and his family members murdered in the Holocaust, was awarded to Dr. Avihu Ronen for his book, Condemned to Life: The Diaries and Life of Chajka Klinger (University of Haifa and Yedioth Books, 2011) and to Prof. Bernard Wasserstein for his book, On the Eve: The Jews of Europe Before the Second World War (London: Profile Books, 2012). Condemned to Life weaves together meticulous research regarding different chapters of the Holocaust, with a thorough and sensitive account of the way in which the Holocaust was viewed during Israel's first few decades. On the Eve provides a comprehensive analytical overview of European Jewry in its entirety and its situation and internal dynamics before the Shoah. The study is a work of historical synthesis by a leading scholar that deals with the condition of European Jewry in the 1930s.
NEW RESEARCH ON JEWISH SURVIVAL STRATEGIES IN POLAND

In December 2013, a workshop was held at Yad Vashem devoted to a collaborative research project on Jewish survival strategies in Poland, 1942-1945. The international gathering brought together scholars from Canada, Poland, France and Israel to try and better understand the fate of Jews who fled to the Polish countryside. The project is a joint effort of the Center for Research on the Holocaust in Poland of Yad Vashem’s International Institute for Holocaust Research, the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and the Polish Center for Holocaust Research of the Polish Academy of Science.

In the spring and summer of 1942, some 250,000 Polish Jews searched for rescue among the local population. Of them, 30,000-40,000 survived the war, while the fate of the rest remains, for the most part, unknown. Based on new historical evidence and using innovative methods of analysis, numerous individual stories are being examined in order to expand the knowledge regarding the survival of Jews in the period following the mass Jewish deportations to the extermination camps. Headed by Prof. Jan Grabowski (University of Ottawa), and with the cooperation of scholars throughout the world, the project is mapping strategies of survival and will contribute to the understanding of German persecution, Polish and local reactions as well as the Jewish experience during the Holocaust in Poland. It is expected to be completed in 2015 with the uploading of an online database and interactive map.

VISITING SCHOLAR: SOFIJA GRANDAKOVSKA

Dr. Sofija Grandakovska was among the postdoctoral fellows at the International Institute for Holocaust Research during the fall of 2013. The topic of the total annihilation of the Jews from Macedonia as a peripheral community of Europe remains an almost unexplored area of research, both in Macedonia and in the general realm of Holocaust studies. Her research delved into an exceedingly complex issue: the deportation of the Jews from Macedonia to Treblinka II, where they were all murdered. Resource materials in the Yad Vashem Archives enabled her to investigate the process of administrative exclusion of Macedonian Jews by Bulgarian citizenship by Bulgarian political officials. Dr. Grandakovska believes that the results of her research will have compound significance - both within the general tragic Holocaust history of Europe and within the social sciences and humanities.

“YAD VASHEM, THE WORLD HOLOCAUST CENTER, WAS A REAL TREASURE OF DOCUMENTS OF ALL TYPES OF MEDIA - WRITTEN, AUDIO AND VISUAL.”

DR. SOFIJA GRANDAKOVSKA, SKOPJE, MACEDONIA
YAD VASHEM PUBLICATIONS

Yad Vashem Publications serves as a hub for writers and researchers of innovative historical research, reference books, documents, memoirs, diaries and more. During 2013, more than 35 new titles were released in a variety of languages, helping to fulfill its mission disseminating information to as broad an audience as possible, promoting the study of the Holocaust and commemorating the victims and the survivors.

From the spring of 1942 until the summer of 1944, some 45,000 Jewish men were forced to accompany Hungarian troops to the battle zone of the Former Soviet Union. Some 80% of them never returned home. They fell prey to battle, starvation, disease, and labor, aggravated immensely by brutality and even outright murder at the hands of the Hungarian soldiers. Robert Rozett’s book *Conscripted Slaves. Hungarian Jewish Forced Laborers on the Eastern Front during the Second World War* follows the personal accounts of these slaves - a collective story that is integral to understanding the destruction of Hungarian Jewry in the Holocaust.
David Silberklang’s *Gates of Tears: The Holocaust in the Lublin District* is the first book in English to examine the Holocaust in the Lublin District, an area central to Nazi anti-Jewish policy. Its analysis traces forced population movements and forced labor, constants in German policy, the bitter early memory of which influenced the Jews' later actions. Many hid or fled the deportations to death camps and forced labor, fearing an extreme return of earlier experience, but were unable to grasp the "Final Solution." Lublin was a contradictory district—few ghettos yet little survival; and Jews could not affect their collective fate. As Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech Talmud wrote in a last letter, no hope remained, “only the gates of tears have not been locked before us.” Only luck could save them, but luck was scarce.

Henry Foner (Heinz Lichtwitz), who had lost his mother at a young age, was one of approximately 10,000 children who left Europe between December 1938 and September 1939 thanks to the Kindertransport program. He was sent from Berlin to Wales and lived there with a Jewish couple who provided him with a warm, loving home. From the moment they parted, Henry’s father, Max Lichtwitz, sent him colorful illustrated postcards written in German and later on in English. Max, who had the courage and foresight to part from his only child and thereby save his life, was deported to Auschwitz on December 9, 1942 and was murdered a week later. Henry, his wife Judy, and their family moved to Israel in 1968 and made their home in Jerusalem. The authentic and moving document *Postcards to a Little Boy: A Kindertransport Story* presents the postcards and letters that Henry received from his father and other relatives and friends. The book is available in English, German and Hebrew.
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* outgoing
** incoming

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Academic Advisor

* outgoing ** incoming

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Dr. Susanna Kokkonen, Christian Friends of Yad Vashem, Italy and Scandinavia

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Arie Zuckerman, Diaspora Affairs Desk and Special Advisor to the Chairman of the Directorate
Operational Budget, for the period January 1, 2013 - December 31, 2013 (unaudited)

Revenues

- Israel Ministry of Education - 47%
- Funds & Donations - 33%
- Department Activities - 20%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<td>Israel Ministry of Ed.</td>
<td>44,824</td>
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<td>Funds &amp; Donations</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>96,367</strong></td>
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Expenditures

- Education - 16%
- Remembrance - 16%
- Documentation - 16%
- Research - 10%
- General & Administrative - 10%
- Technological Infrastructure & Maintenance - 32%

<table>
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<td>Research</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>96,367</strong></td>
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Development Budget, for the period January 1, 2013 - December 31, 2013 (unaudited)

The source of all revenues for Yad Vashem development projects is donations and legacies.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
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<td>New Projects &amp; Programs</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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* Projects and Programs in the spheres of Education, Remembrance, Documentation and Research
** Construction of the new International Seminars Wing at the International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem Square, general construction works, and development of technological infrastructure.
On January 30, 2014, Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, received the Presidential Medal of Distinction from President Shimon Peres in a ceremony held at the President's Residence. Shalev was recognized for his public service as Chairman of Yad Vashem over the past two decades. During the ceremony, President Peres said: “Thanks to your life’s work, I feel Yad Vashem is not only a place of memory, but you have also made it a warning bell for the world.”

The President's Advisory Committee, headed by former president of Israel's Supreme Court Meir Shamgar, noted that, “Avner Shalev works tirelessly, employing innovative and original methods, to instill vital Jewish, Zionist and universal values within Israeli and global consciousness, primarily through significant and meaningful Holocaust remembrance. For two decades he has invested his soul, his might and the utmost of his abilities to ensure that the Shoah is appropriately commemorated and its profound implications learned.”

The prestigious Presidential Medal of Distinction, first awarded in 2012 at President Peres' initiative, is bestowed upon rare individuals who have made unique and extraordinary contributions to tikun olam (repairing the world) or to Israel's society, culture and international status, and who personally exemplify the traits of entrepreneurship, innovation, creativity and vision. Among the elite group of the Medal's recipients to date are: US Presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton, Henry Kissinger, and Zubin Mehta. This year's awardees include Professor Elie Wiesel and director Steven Spielberg.
YAD VASHEM SOCIETIES AND FRIENDS WORLDWIDE

Yad Vashem is deeply grateful for the dedicated work and fundraising efforts of its Friends Societies; the activities, events and awareness-raising endeavors of our partners are crucial to our shared mission of spreading Holocaust Remembrance and Education worldwide.

American Society for Yad Vashem
Chairman: Leonard Wilf
500 Fifth Avenue, 42nd Floor
New York, NY 10110-4299
USA
Tel: 212-220-4304
Fax: 212-220-4308
Director of Development: S. Isaac Mekel
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www.yadvashemusa.org

Australian Friends of Yad Vashem
Chairman: Joey Borensztajn
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Elsternwick, VIC 3185
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Tel: +61 (450) 603-703
afyv.exec@gmail.com

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jyberg@yahoo.com

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Costa Rican Association for Yad Vashem
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French Committee for Yad Vashem
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Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Liechtenstein
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Swiss Friends of Yad Vashem  
Chairperson: Joel Herzog  
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1207 Geneva, Switzerland  
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Fax: +41.22.817 36 06  
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Fax: +44 20 8359 1201  
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Dnepropetrovsk 49000, Ukraine  
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Fax: +380 (562) 342137  
office@djc.com.ua

Uruguayan Association for Yad Vashem  
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Contact: Rita Vinocur  
Canelones 1084-C.P. 11100 Montevideo  
Uruguay

Venezuelan Association for Yad Vashem  
President: David Yisrael  
Unión Israelita de Caracas  
Avenida Marques del Toro No 59  
San Bernardino  
Caracas 1010, Venezuela

Invest in Your Heritage – Join Yad Vashem’s Legacy Circle  
Let your estate plans ensure that the memory of the Shoah is passed on to future generations.  
By including Yad Vashem in your estate plans, you guarantee a future that confronts denial and indifference. To learn more about legacy giving please visit: www.yadvashem.org/legacy or e-mail: international.relations@yadvashem.org.il
"As Yad Vashem marks 60 years of crucial activity, it is once again our great pleasure to join in welcoming this year’s new Benefactors. With your help, Yad Vashem will continue in its sacred mission of Holocaust education and commemoration, inspiring future generations to work to shape a better future. We look forward to seeing Yad Vashem’s circle of dedicated supporters grow from year to year.”

Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson

Rachel and Sam Boymel

Rachel and Sam Boymel both survived the Holocaust as young adults, hiding in occupied Ukraine. Rachel was saved by Vasil Ivanovich Stripscuk; Sam was saved by Petr Tokarsky, a family friend who hid him in his barn from Nazi soldiers and Ukrainian collaborators. Both men were later recognized as Righteous Among the Nations. Most of Sam’s and Rachel’s family members were murdered. Shortly before the end of the war, Sam and Rachel met and married, living in a Displaced Persons (DP) camp in Germany for several years and then immigrating to the USA. After first working in a humble butcher shop, Sam later became a very successful businessman in the nursing home and real estate industries.

Sam and Rachel wrote together about their war experiences in Run, My Child, which was published by Yad Vashem in 2010. Their recent contribution to Yad Vashem endowed the Panorama in the new International Seminars Wing of the International School for Holocaust Studies, in tribute to Holocaust survivors who fought in Israel’s War of Independence. The plaque honors Rachel’s brothers Yosel and Menachem Czerkiewicz, who fought in the war after surviving the Holocaust.

Halina Ruth Cypel z”l

The late Halina Cypel z”l, was born in Poland in August 1914. After WWII broke out, Halina managed to obtain false identity papers and formulated an escape from the Warsaw ghetto. However, after the ghetto uprising, she was arrested and sent to work as a slave laborer in a munitions camp in Germany. At the war’s end, Halina spent some years in a DP camp in Germany before arriving in the United States. Most of her large family, including her father, three brothers, husband and child, were murdered during the Shoah.

While living in the US, Halina remarried and found work in a watchband factory, where she met lifelong friend Regina Gertner. Regina and her daughter, Lucy Gertner, cared for Halina in her later years. During her lifetime, Halina befriended Eli z”l and Elizabeth Mundlak Zborowski, and forged a strong bond with the American Society for Yad Vashem. Halina was dedicated to honoring and memorializing those who were murdered in the Holocaust, and reflected this passion by bequeathing the entirety of her estate to this cause.

Helene Habermann, Josef Habermann z”l, and Family

Josef Habermann, z”l, was born in 1919 to a religious family in Germany. From a young age, he was very involved in congregational and community life, and would organize gatherings at his own expense without taking any credit. He had a reputation as a modest and smart young man. During the war, Josef was interned in the Blechhammer and Buchenwald camps. In Buchenwald, the SS were looking for a locksmith, and Josef came forward even though he knew nothing about the field, thus saving his own life.
Fred Hillman z”l
Fred Hillman z”l was born in Vienna, Austria in December 1921. Soon after his birth, the family moved to Chemnitz, Germany, where Fred’s two brothers were born. On October 28, 1938, in the “Polish Action,” Fred and his father were among the Polish Jews deported from Germany. They joined their relatives in Stanislawow, Poland; however, Fred returned to his mother and brothers in Germany to sell the family possessions. Shortly before the rest of the family left to join the father in Poland, Fred was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp. In April 1942, the rest of the Hillman family, together with thousands of Stanislawow Jews, was transported to the Belzec death camp, where they were murdered upon arrival.
Throughout the war, Fred was moved to various concentration camps, including Auschwitz, but eventually was returned to Buchenwald, where he was liberated by the US Army. Fred’s command of English, German and Polish enabled him to work for the American Military Government in the US occupation zone. In 1946, he immigrated to the US and settled in Ohio, where he opened a military surplus business, which he expanded to include a discount department store. Fred passed away on February 7, 2011, leaving no children, but his name will live on and be remembered for generations to come, through his generous donation to Yad Vashem by the Estate of Fred Hillman.

Josef’s beloved wife, Helene, was born in 1928, a long-awaited child. She lost all of her family in the Shoah, with the exception of one cousin. Helene is a very positive person with a great deal of inner strength, despite the horrors that she endured during the Holocaust. She has always been determined, caring and supportive of many causes.

Their children Harry, Roman and Sonja, were born in Germany after the war. Like his parents, Harry believes that not everyone receives an equal chance in life, and therefore views it as an obligation to help those who are less fortunate. Holocaust education is very important for the family, especially after their experiences in the Shoah. This prompted them recently to become Yad Vashem Benefactors, endowing the Education Gateway for Learning and Reflection, in loving memory of Josef’s parents, Tauba and Abraham Habermann, z”l, and Helene’s parents, Sara and Yehuda Kornfeld, z”l, and all their family members who were murdered during the Holocaust.

David and Sharon Halpern
David Halpern, son of Yad Vashem Benefactors Sam, z”l, and Gladys Halpern, who were among the founders of the American Society for Yad Vashem, was born in December 1949 in New York City. In 1972, David graduated from Long Island University with a Bachelors degree, majoring in finance. That same year he married Sharon, who pursued a career teaching French to high school students. After raising their children, Jeremy and Mindy, Sharon joined David in the real estate development and design field.

For David and Sharon, who are actively involved in several charitable organizations, Holocaust remembrance and education is paramount, and their support of Yad Vashem’s activities steadfast. David is a treasurer on the Board of Directors of the American Society for Yad Vashem, and both he and Sharon have been actively involved with Yad Vashem for more than 20 years. Recently David and Sharon became Pillars of Yad Vashem, generously endowing The Children’s Terrace. Their family’s experience in the Holocaust had a deep impact on them, teaching them that humankind is capable of both remarkable achievements as well as the most heinous crimes imaginable. They believe that the murder of 6,000,000 Jews and millions of other innocent souls should serve as a lesson for all people of all faiths, and that Yad Vashem is the repository of that lesson and the keeper of that memory for the entire world. This serves as the basis for their commitment to supporting the mission of Yad Vashem to preserve the names, artifacts and memories of this unique tragedy.

David and Sharon’s son, Jeremy Halpern, and his wife, Abbi, have three children: Brianna, Jasmine and Ashton. Their daughter, Mindy Halpern, and her husband, Alan Schall, have four children: Emily, Sophia, Brandon and Zoe.

Fred Hillman z”l
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Yad Vashem’s accomplishments would not be possible without the support and commitment of our valued partners. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our many friends who have shared in our vision in 2013, and in previous years, enabling its realization:

**PATRONS OF THE MOUNT OF REMEMBRANCE**

- Dr. Miniam & Sheldon G. Adelson, USA

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The Danek Gertner Foundation, Austria

Fondation pour la Memoire de la Shoah, France

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The Joseph Gottdenker Family, Canada

Eva & Arie Halpern z”l, USA

Glady’s & Sam z”l Halpern, USA

Sharon & David Halpern, USA

Franz Karl Hess z”l, Switzerland

The Estate of Fred Halpern, USA

Dana & Yossie Hollander

Keren Hayesod in honor of John & Pauline Gandel, Australia

Maxi Librati, France

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The Estate of Martha-Sarah & Edmond-Abraham Friedmann z”l, Israel

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Benedict Aptaker, USA

The Asper Foundation, Canada

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Arie Becker & Family, Mexico

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David Berg z”l, USA

Rosalie & Tobias Berman, USA

Rachel & Sam Boyemel, USA

Braman Foundation, USA

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Jan & Rick Cohen, USA

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Yad Vashem would like to express deep appreciation for the enduring partnership of the following:

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Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, USA
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The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany
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The National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, Austria
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The Dutch Humanitarian Jewish Fund, JOODS, The Netherlands
The European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRi)
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The Company for Location and Restitution of Holocaust Victims’ Assets, Israel Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, USA
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