

JERUSALEM

Yad Vashem

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Cover:

"A Lost Jewish World" in the Valley of the Communities



Yiz

By Michal Morris Kamil

Commemoration in light of the Holocaust is a multifaceted, complex act involving different levels of remembrance and introspection. It is both shared and private; it evokes feelings of togetherness and loneliness; it colors the past with a subdued pessimism and directs to a better future. Communication in an array of forms links these dichotomies of commemoration.

What becomes most obvious with the passing of years since the Holocaust is the need for communication expressed by the survivor, the survivor's children and grandchildren. With each Holocaust Remembrance Day, the danger of the survivor's tragic story dying with him or her increases, and with it our basis of commemoration. We must therefore encourage, record and remember every effort made to transmit information about this terrible period in Jewish history. Through Pages of Testimony, audiovisual recordings, memoirs, testimonies, education and inter-generational dialogue, we can ensure that the memory will never be forgotten.

This issue includes coverage of Holocaust Remembrance Day 1997. Iris Museri recalls life as a ten-year-old in a Libyan concentration camp. Two major Yad Vashem exhibitions, "Luboml" and "David Olère" are reviewed. "Podium" reports on the International Institute's annual conference. There is full coverage of the Hall of Names international workshop in which participants discussed the problems of gathering and recording victims' names. Finally, this issue provides a brief look at Yad Vashem's involvement in the Swiss bank investigations.

Yad Vashem
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Cover: Rare stamps from local scenes in the Polish town of Luboml, printed in 1918. Yiddish is one of the four languages on the stamp. On loan from William Gross, Tel Aviv.

Israel's annual commemoration of Holocaust Remembrance Day sets aside time for the individual, the society and the state to remember and to contemplate one's role as Israelis, as Jews and as human beings.

For the Jewish people, the State of Israel represents a political, national and cultural center. Holocaust Remembrance Day commemorates the third of the Jewish people who perished at the hands of the Nazis and their accomplices only a few years prior to the establishment of the state. Sorrow, anger and hope are expressed on this day through memories, testimonies, prayers and silence -- on a national, communal and individual level. Nationally, the day commences with the official opening ceremony in the Warsaw Ghetto Square at Yad Vashem. Leaders of the State, the chief rabbis of the Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities, top military officials, representatives of the diplomatic corps, Holocaust survivors and their families, and the general public are all present at the ceremony.

The main focus this year was the one-and-a-half million Jewish children slaughtered by the Nazis. Six survivors who were children during the Holocaust lit commemorative torches. Each of their personal stories shed light on the terror, torment and the struggle that they each experienced, and their invincible will to survive.

Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, spoke of the unprecedented nature of the Holocaust in human history. "It is impossible," he said, "to fathom what went on during those dreadful years in which a third of the Jewish people

was murdered. A million and a half children were wiped off the face of this earth, murdered twice -- for being children and for being Jews.



Thousands of members of Israeli youth movements in the Warsaw Ghetto Square.

They were deprived of their childhood. The gifts of innocence, trust, open fields, stories, animals -- were taken from them and crushed. They could neither laugh nor cry."

Israeli President Ezer Weizman spoke of "the infants who died during the Holocaust who continue to cry out, even if their voices were silenced. There were those who perished at their mothers'

breast, and others who died before they could read or write. All died not understanding why they were denied the right to live." Weizman cautioned against extremist regimes, which -- fifty years after the Second World War -- remain incapable of commitment to moral and humane values, and maintain military infrastructures capable of mass destruction. "They can destroy world peace and



Israeli President Ezer Weizman at the opening ceremony.



Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu lays a wreath.

MARTYRS' & HEROES' REMEMBRANCE DAY 1997

K O R

bring the world's existence to an abrupt end," Weizman said.

The national commemoration continued on the following day with the traditional sounding of the siren, during which the entire country paused for two minutes of silent remembrance. At the foot of Nathan Rappaport's statue of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, wreaths were laid by the President of Israel, the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the Knesset, the President of the Supreme Court, the Chairman of the World Zionist

Organization, the IDF Chief of Staff, the Chief Superintendent of the Israeli Police Force, the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, the Chairman of the International Council of Yad Vashem, the Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, and many other dignitaries and representatives of survivor and partisan organizations.

Later, in the Hall of Remembrance at Yad Vashem and in the Israeli Knesset, the "Unto every Person there is a Name" ceremony was held. During the ceremony, the nation's political and religious leaders read out names of those who perished. They were followed by streams of families -- survivors with their children and grandchildren -- who read out the names of their loved ones who were murdered in the Holocaust. This unique act of national commemoration reached down into the deepest levels of personal remembrance.

The day drew to a close with the ceremony in which 2,500 representatives of twelve Israeli youth movements assembled at Yad Vashem. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Culture and Sport, Zevulun



Minister of Education, Zevulun Hammer, addressing the Youth Movement Ceremony.

Hammer, spoke at the rally. "You, our children, who were born into a state that already exists, cannot imagine a world where there was no Jewish national homeland, and how that world stood silent, closing its gates to Jews fleeing their destruction. You, our children, cannot imagine how survivors, as young as yourselves, raised themselves from the cataclysmic abyss, and planted the foundations of faith within the wilderness."

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, asserted, "Holocaust Remembrance Day this year is characterized, on the one hand, by Israeli youth's deep identification with the terrible



Chairman of the Yad Vashem International Council, Dr. Yosef Burg, lights the memorial torch.

fate and agony of the children who perished, and on the other hand, by their desire to be personally touched by the history of the Holocaust, and to adopt it as a part of the multifaceted makeup of their personal identities as Jews and as human beings."

Commemoration of the Holocaust was not limited to the realm of official ceremonies and ritual. Throughout the country, in community centers, schools, army bases, survivors' organizations and in the media, the Holocaust was the focus not only of remembrance, but of a process of soul-searching, contemplation and reckoning for the future.



A very personal moment of reflection.

DISCUSSION ON THE HOLOCAUST IN CONTEMPORARY ISRAELI ARTS

By Motti Shalem



L. to R.: David Bergman, Savyon Librecht, Oded Kotler and David Witztum.

One of the central topics occupying scholars of sociological history throughout the Western world today is the shaping of collective memory in various cultures and its expression in the lives of the nations bearing that memory.

In general, one might say that there is a direct correlation between the dominance of religious rituals in a given culture and the prevalence of patterns of memory and memorialization in the spirit of these traditions. This narrows the realm for public discussion regarding the shaping of memory. In dynamic Western society, where culture is formed outside the walls of houses of worship, questions surrounding the shaping of memory have become central to research bridging the humanities and the social sciences, as well as in public discourse, in which thinkers, writers, educators and others participate.

In Jewish law and tradition, patterns of remembrance for the Jewish people's collective traumas throughout history were clearly formulated and defined. One such prominent pattern in the Jewish culture of memorialization -- personal as well as collective -- is study. Study has become so central a value in the Jewish tradition that there is hardly an event worthy of note, whether a traumatic memory, festival or holiday, which lacks a tradition of study.

Continued on page 4

DISCUSSION ON THE HOLOCAUST IN CONTEMPORARY ISRAELI ARTS

Israel's Independence Day, set on the fifth day of the Hebrew month of Iyar, and the memorial days for the fallen soldiers and for the victims of the Holocaust, were declared national days of remembrance. However, patterns of collective memory are formed not only through decisions taken by official institutions, but as a product of multi-faceted public discourse.

Study, which has served as a foundation stone in Jewish culture as a means of providing expression for collective memory, has not yet found its place in Israel in the formal and informal national rituals surrounding Holocaust Remembrance Day, Veterans' Memorial Day or Israel's Independence Day.

Yad Vashem has been attempting for some years now to institute a permanent forum for discussion and study of the Holocaust, which takes place on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day. These gatherings indicate a growing trend to provide the concept of study with a certain status in Israeli society's evolving culture of memory.

For many years, historical discussion of questions pertaining to the Holocaust was an almost exclusive form of study of the topic. Historical study was seen as a means to know and an attempt to understand the history of the Holocaust, as a process containing an educational aim of identification with the victims and the survivors, as well as for personal and collective formulation of the meanings stemming from this deeply traumatic event.

With this in mind, the most recent discussion session on this year's Holocaust Remembrance Day was devoted to the representation of the Holocaust in contemporary Israeli arts. This was the first time since the establishment of the forum that the topic for discussion was not a strictly historical question pertaining to the history of the Holocaust, but rather one which looked into the manner in which the Holocaust is given expression in literary, cinematic and theatrical works. The evening opened with lectures by Professor Yehuda Bauer of Yad Vashem and Dr. Michal Freedman of Tel-Aviv University. Participants in the discussion included author Aaron Appelfeld, director David Bergman, actor Oded Kotler, and author Savyon Librecht, whose story, "The Strawberry Girl" was dramatized by actress Rama Messinger. The evening was chaired by David Witztum.

The writer is Director of Yad Vashem's Central School of Holocaust Studies.



A LIBYAN

Childhood

By Michal Morris Kamil

“ I had completed first and second grades. The Jewish school in Benghazi was closed down in my third year. It was 1941. I remember the Camice Nere, the 'Black Shirts', looting shops. My father owned a beverage factory which was hit. It was terrible. They entered our house and stole everything we had, even my father's suits, documents of his bank accounts, everything. During the bombings we were denied safety in the bomb shelters because we were Jewish. We hid in a morgue. The children were all huddled into the chamber where the corpses were washed. We were so afraid; who would watch over us should the adults be caught? Someone joked, 'the dead'. For nights afterwards I had dreadful nightmares.”

These are the vivid memories of Iris Museri, née Ines Habib, from Benghazi, Libya, who was nine years old during the war. Upon visiting the Valley of the Communities at Yad Vashem on Holocaust Remembrance Day, she recalled her terror as she and her family attempted to escape after having been warned of the German advance: "We hid in caves, there was nothing for any of us. Finally, we were apprehended and sent on a five day ride in huge trucks, crowded like sardines. We had no idea where we were going. From that day on, my parents stopped laughing, smiling or eating; we couldn't talk to them. On arriving at the Giado concentration camp [in 1942], we were given half of a worm-infested roll to eat. The water was contaminated. During those

ten months, 600 people died of typhus and starvation. I too fell ill and after liberation received medical aid from the British. My mother and brother weren't so lucky. My mother died and I still don't know what caused her death. My brother, who had typhus, died following the liberation of the camp.”

Iris recalls in particular the cruelty of her jailers. "The 'Marshall' constantly called us 'giudeo', a derogatory term in Italian for "Jew." One day, my father walked towards the fence where local Arabs smuggled food to the prisoners in exchange for gold. He returned with a watermelon. The guard, armed with a leather whip, grabbed him and ordered him to encircle the camp,



*The Habib Family:
Mother - Viola,
Father - Asher,
and children.
L to R: Chaim,
Albert, Ines
(Iris) and
Alisa.*



Sisters Alisa (on left) and Iris on a visit to the Valley of the Communities.



CONCENTRATION CAMP:

Memories

without his shirt, in the boiling heat, his hands tied. While doing so he was whipped repeatedly. I watched, not shedding a tear or uttering a sound. Neither did my father. I remember it well."

The Benghazi Jewish community, according to Iris, was vibrant and secure. "Zedaka" (charity) was a central tenet of communal life, and medical care was provided for the needy. There were numerous synagogues. Rabbi Joseph Jir'an was a central communal figure. The memory of his being pushed out to the courtyard in the camp by the Marshall and forced to sweep the floor with his beard, symbolized for Iris the murder of her past. "It was my blackest day at Giado." She recalls the feeling of vulnerability shared by all. "Once, we were ordered out to the yard and informed that there was an order to kill us. After three hot hours in the sun, we were told that the Marshall was awaiting a telephone call from Mussolini himself telling him whether or not to proceed. When finally we were informed that we had been granted life, the Marshall commented, "It would have been a waste of bullets anyway."

Following the liberation of the camp by British forces, Iris returned home only to find a wasteland, with no water and electricity. The British supplied tanks of water, food, flashlights and straw mats. With the arrival of the Jewish Brigade, there was an initiative to send the survivors on boats to Palestine. Later on, in 1949, Iris, along with those in her family who had survived, arrived in Haifa on a boat called "Herzl."

Two years ago, for the first time, Iris spoke at length of her life to her granddaughter's class. Up to that point, she had barely shared her camp experience, even with her husband. "It infuriates me," she says, "to

THE FATE OF LIBYAN JEWRY DURING THE HOLOCAUST

By Dr. Irit Abramski

In the early stages of the Second World War, Libyan Jewry's situation was propitious, for two reasons: Firstly, Italy was known for its humane treatment of Jews during the war, both in Italy itself and in the colonies. Up until its occupation by Germany, Italy even served as a place of refuge for many European Jews persecuted by the Nazis. Furthermore, Libya's Italian governor, Italo Balbo, had acquired a reputation as a particularly enlightened ruler, who opposed racial legislation. However, Balbo's sudden death and the unique combat situation in the Western Desert brought about a transformation in Libyan Jewry's situation.

These singular circumstances created a situation whereby the Cyrenaica region -- in eastern Libya -- was twice lost by the Italians during the fighting. In January of 1941, and again in December 1941, Cyrenaica was occupied by the British for a number of months. During these periods, the Jews of Benghazi showed an unsurprising predilection for the British forces: Jewish soldiers from Palestine arrived in Libya along with the British military, and aroused great excitement among Libyan Jews.

In both instances, after the Cyrenaica region was re-conquered by the Italians, heavy penalties were imposed upon the Jews, who were accused of collaboration with the enemy. Following the second British occupation, Mussolini himself ordered that the Jews of Cyrenaica be punished and expelled from their homes. The expelled Jews, of mixed nationalities, were divided into three groups, according to citizenship: French citizens were deported to incarceration and concentration camps in Tunisia and Algeria, British citizens were transferred to concentration camps in Northern Italy, and following the occupation of Italy by Germany, they were deported to Bergen-Belsen and Innsbruck.

These 3,000 Jews of Cyrenaica who were Libyan citizens were transferred to concentration camps in the Tripolitan Desert. The central camp there was Giado. Jews in this camp suffered from disease, hunger, and poor sanitary conditions. An epidemic soon broke out and within half a year, approximately 600 of the inmates died of hunger and typhus.

It was the good fortune of the remaining inmates that the third British occupation of Cyrenaica, in January 1943, was the final occupation. This, in turn, saved the surviving inmates along with the rest of Libyan Jewry, many of whom had been incarcerated in forced labor camps such as the Sidi Azaz Camp in Tripoli, and Bukbuk, on the Egyptian border.

hear comments about the Holocaust as something which pertains only to European Jews, and which does not interest children from North African and Sefardic backgrounds. I myself am completely integrated -- I have two brothers-in-law who are Ashkenzi. My sister is married to a Hungarian. My husband, a Sabra, is of Turkish

and Egyptian origin and my grandfather was from Italy. How can the Holocaust not concern us? Once, when my nephew fidgeted during the siren on Holocaust Remembrance Day, the teacher punished him, commenting that the Holocaust obviously does not interest him. I went to see the teacher and told him my story. He never opened his mouth again."



*Experts from all over the World
Took Part in an International
Conference on Documentation
and Computerization of the
Names of the Victims.*

By Alexander Avraham

On June 1-3, 1997, Yad Vashem hosted the first international workshop focusing on the gathering, documentation and computerization of the names and personal details of the millions of victims of the Holocaust.

Participants in the workshop included representatives of nine countries from Europe, the United States and Israel. All of the participants are actively involved in the documentation and computerization of victims' names. Among the institutions represented were the memorial sites at the Auschwitz and Stutthof camps in Poland, Bergen-Belsen in Germany and

Mechelen in Belgium, the Federal Archives of Germany and Switzerland, the "Terezin Iniciativa" in the Czech Republic, the Center for Jewish Studies in Milan, the Museum of Genocide in Belgrade, The Spielberg Visual History of the Shoah Foundation in Los

Angeles, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, the Messua Institute, Beit Terezin and of course, Yad Vashem.

The guest of honor at the workshop was lawyer Serge Klarsfeld of France, himself a Holocaust survivor, who many years ago initiated the gathering and documentation of the names of all French Jews deported to concentration camps during the Second World War. Following the publication of his book of lists, which included the names of French Holocaust victims, Klarsfeld encouraged and supported the documentation of the names of victims from Belgium and Italy. In his address, he emphasized the symbolic importance and implications of recording the names of the Jews who perished, as a means of paying a final tribute, as a Jewish act of commemoration for those who could not be buried according to Jewish Halacha, and as a living memorial for generations to come. From a less symbolic and more practical perspective, such documentation can serve the purpose of establishing a central source of information for historical and other research in the future.

During the three day workshop, the participants presented their work in the fields of documentation and computerization of names, and their plans for the future. The range of projects presented, some still in formative stages and others near completion, was extensive and impressive.

The institutions presenting their material

"The Holocaust On

Excerpts from the stirring words of Serge Klarsfeld:

"Himmler's ambition to suppress (knowledge about) the Final Solution from history, to prevent it from becoming "the Holocaust" ... could have been successful in the case of a victory of the Reich. Even with Hitler's defeat it has been effective in part. In the case of a victory all Jews would probably have been annihilated; all documents concerning the organization of the slaughter would have been destroyed; all of the death installations would have been destroyed; all of the extermination camps would have been razed to the ground... Silence would have fallen on the unexplained vanishing of the Jews from Europe."

"My personal journey followed my father's tragic itinerary through to its end; later, in my historical research, I began to go back from the anonymous crowd of victims to their individual identities. The Shoah is not only six million victims, it is also one victim plus one victim plus one victim..."

"To the atrocious but abstract vision of anonymous crowds led to their slaughter, we substituted images of family; human beings who cannot be replaced in their individuality. Confronted by a horror stronger than any word, an indignation weaker than the immensity of the massacre, I chose what I felt was most proper: sobriety, rigor and precision. Each human being has a name and is a human being by that name. By retrieving their names, we have pulled from the night all those murdered. We have brought them back into the light of day and memory. Our will to remember links them with the world."

at the workshop shared a common focus -- nearly all concentrate on documentation and computerization of the names of Jews deported and murdered from a specific country or in a specific camp. Yad Vashem, on the other hand, has been focusing for many years on the gathering and recording of names of Jews from all countries in which Jews were murdered during the Holocaust, whether in camps, ghettos, mass graves, or resisting persecution.

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, spoke to the participants about Yad Vashem's moral and legal mandate as

Yad Vashem Archives, presented future plans for establishing an integrative data-bank which will include data-bases of names from the different sources such as "Pages of Testimony," deportation lists, lists of prisoners from the camps and testimonies as well as publications and other sources from within and outside Yad Vashem. Dr. Robert Rozett, Director of the Yad Vashem Library, spoke of the broad range of materials that exists which might aid in the gathering and documentation of victims' names.

Other projects which are currently being developed, some unique to Yad Vashem, were presented throughout the workshop. Dr. Daniel Fraenkel of the Archives presented the Thesaurus of Holocaust-related terminology which is currently being developed. The Hall of Names staff provided examples of usage

of the geographic index which includes names of Jewish communities, camps and murder sites, as well as an index of Jewish names which will be part of the future data-bank and which is intended to facilitate research.

The majority of the workshop's participants expressed the opinion that this was an important and interesting event which brought people up-to-date with the current status of documentation and with future directions.

The participants decided that contact between them will continue. In addition, measures will be taken to strengthen cooperation so as to achieve the common aim of establishing and completing the different databases of names for the benefit of those seeking help in uncovering the fate of Holocaust victims and commemorating their memories.

The writer is Director of the Hall of Names and one of the organizers of the Workshop.

caust is e Victim, and Another, and Another, and Another..."

Serge Klarsfeld

the official authority for commemoration and research on the Holocaust, and its consequent duty to promote and expand efforts to commemorate the names. Shalev introduced Yad Vashem's program for establishing in Jerusalem a comprehensive computerized data-bank of names and biographies of all victims of the Holocaust. Shalev asked the participating representatives for their cooperation in advancing this common goal.

During the workshop, the Yad Vashem staff described the efforts being made in documentation and computerization, and explained "Pages of Testimony" which serve as symbolic tombstones. In these pages, survivors and relatives provide details of their murdered relatives. The gathering of these "Pages of Testimony" commenced in 1955 and continues through today. Over the past few years, Yad Vashem has taken upon itself to enter the names and details on computer -- a process which is currently well under way. Dr. Yaacov Lozowick, Director of the

Lawyer Serge Klarsfeld is awarded a plaque by the Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev, in recognition of his groundbreaking work in the field of gathering of names of Holocaust victims. The presentation took place at a festive dinner organized by the World Jewish Restitution Organization. Key participants included the President of the W.J.R.O. and World Jewish Congress, Edgar Bronfman, the General Secretary of the W.J.C., Israel Singer, the Treasurer of the W.J.C., Ronald Lauder, Chairman of the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency, Avraham Burg and many other dignitaries.

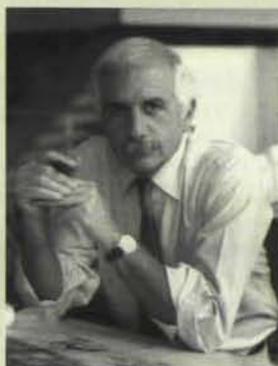


L to R: Serge Klarsfeld, Malcolm Honlein, Executive Vice Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate.

ARCHITECT SAFDIE CHOSEN TO DESIGN THE NEW MUSEUM COMPLEX

World-renowned architect Moshe Safdie, has been chosen to design the expansion and renovation of the museum complex and entrance plaza to the Yad Vashem site in Jerusalem.

A tender was put out a year ago to design the project. Eight well-known leading architectural firms were invited to present their ideas for the expansion and renovation of the complex. Six firms submitted their proposals, three of whom reached the final stage: Jack Diamond and Kolker Kolker and Epstein Architects; Abraham Yasky and partners, Architects and Urban Planners; and Moshe Safdie, Architects and Planners, who offered the winning bid.



Moshe Safdie

A professional committee made up of architects, historians, museumologists and members of the public, in conjunction with the Yad Vashem Tenders Committee, was involved in choosing the architectural firm.

Moshe Safdie was born in Haifa, Israel in 1938. He is the recipient of numerous international awards, and has taught at some of the world's most prestigious architectural schools and universities. He has published numerous books and articles and has been the subject of a number of films on architecture. His projects include the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa; the Ford Center for the Performing Arts in Vancouver; Ottawa City Hall; Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem; and the Mamilla David's Village - Phase I in Jerusalem. Currently in the works are the Elwyn Rehabilitation Center in Jerusalem; the Exploration Place Science Center and Children's Museum in Wichita, Kansas; the Lester B. Pearson International Airport Terminal in Toronto; and the Rabin Memorial Center in Tel Aviv, among many others. Moshe Safdie and Associates, Architects and Planners have offices in Boston, Jerusalem, Montreal and Toronto.

The cost of the expansion and renovation of Yad Vashem's museum complex is estimated at over \$20 million. The Government of Israel and the Claims Conference have promised to finance part of the total cost. A substantial sum will be provided by the fundraising campaign for the museum headed by Joseph Wilf of the American Society for Yad Vashem, chaired by Eli Zborowski.

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, explains the immediacy of the need for expansion, "Owing to the rise in the number of visitors, which is expected to reach two million by the year 2000, and the necessity to adapt the site to the twenty-first century, the Yad Vashem Directorate has drafted a plan for the development of the site, called, "Yad Vashem 2001." This includes a masterplan formulated by Yad Vashem in conjunction with a team headed by architects David Reznik and Dan Tzur, with an estimated cost of over \$50 million. The expansion of the museum complex, which will be carried out by Safdie's firm, is a part of this project."

In addition to the expansion and renovation of the museum complex and entrance plaza (which will include a special visitors' center and parking facilities), the masterplan also provides for the construction of new buildings for the Archives and the Central School of Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem. The architects for the design of these buildings were chosen last year, and construction is to begin in the near future.

SWISS

PROBE

AIDED

BY

YAD

VASHEM

The Yad Vashem archives, which contain over 50 million documents, and the Hall of Names, which records millions of names and brief biographies of Holocaust victims, serve as important sources of information for the ongoing investigations of missing Jewish assets which were confiscated, stolen and used during and after the Holocaust.

Over the past year, organizations involved in the Swiss probe have visited Yad Vashem and commented on its centrality in this historic mission. During his June 1997 visit to Yad Vashem, Paul Volcker, former Chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank and currently head of the Volcker Commission -- The Independent Committee of Eminent Persons established by Swiss banks and Jewish organizations to investigate dormant bank accounts of Holocaust victims -- met with Avner Shalev, Chairman of Yad Vashem's Directorate. Volcker told Shalev how moved he was by his visit to Yad Vashem. "He had gained new insight," he said, "into Yad Vashem's role and significance in the commemoration of Holocaust victims." He expressed his willingness to provide assistance to Yad Vashem in advancing this goal. In response, Shalev emphasized that, "For Yad Vashem, this inquiry is of the greatest moral, rather than material, importance. We owe it to the victims, to their families, and to future generations to uncover this aspect of the Holocaust. This is part of perpetuating the memories of the millions of innocent men, women and children killed."

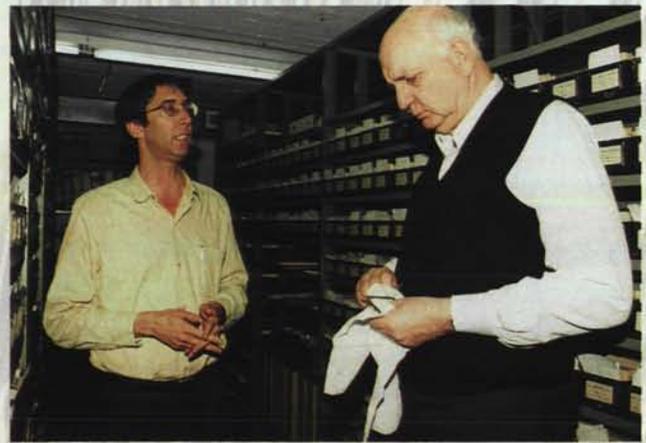
The Swiss Federal Banking and Volcker Commissions have recently established guidelines for a more liberal and expeditious process than that which has been followed to date by the Swiss banking ombudsman in handling claims for Holocaust victims' dormant accounts in Swiss banks. In the past, claimants dealt with the ombudsman, whose role was mostly clerical. The bureaucratic process was prolonged, insensitive and frustrating and often resulted in the claimants ending up empty-handed. Volcker publicized in the end of July, the first partial lists of over 1850 names of those who held accounts in Swiss banks, whose accounts have been dormant for ten years or more. By October, there will be a further list of twenty thousand dormant Swiss account holders. Jewish organizations claim that many Swiss citizens acted as trustees of Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

Swiss Ambassador Thomas Borer, head of the "Switzerland-World War

II" Task Force, visited Yad Vashem in May of this year, and was introduced to the departments relevant to the historical research which forms part of the Swiss Investigations. In a letter to Yad Vashem following his visit he stated, "Yad Vashem can leave no one indifferent...It brings testimony of the tremendous suffering any civilization

- no matter how refined or developed it may be - can inflict ruthlessly upon its minorities. In this spirit, I feel your contribution is essential in keeping alive the memory of all the Shoah's victims and ensuring that such a crime against humanity may never recur." In his speech to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services of the US House of Representatives in June 1997, Borer stated that "it is imperative to work as quickly as possible to relieve the suffering of the needy survivors with actions that underscore the commitments that we have made."

Since June 1997, representatives of Arthur Andersen and Co., one of the three international accountancy firms working for the Volcker Commission, have made repeated visits to



Paul Volcker on his visit to the Yad Vashem Archives. On the left: Dr. Yaakov Lozowick, Director of the Archives.

Yad Vashem, for purposes of research in the Hall of Names and in the Archives. They have focused in particular on the names of individuals whose occupations and professions indicate a likelihood that they may have held accounts in Switzerland. The accountants intend to use Yad Vashem's huge databank of names, professions and locations to make the necessary correlations with lists of the Swiss banks.

In June 1997, Avner Shalev addressed the Knesset in conjunction with Paul Volcker, President of W.J.R.O., Edgar Bronfman, Member of Knesset and Chairman of the Special Parliamentary Committee for the restitution of Jewish Property, Abraham

Hirsch and Chairman of the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency, Avraham Burg. Shalev stated that, "Yad Vashem is pleased with the world's awakening with regard to the fate of the individual and public Jewish property which was stolen during the Holocaust. Fifty years after the events of the Shoah, the European governments are demonstrating a preparedness to discuss, investigate and compensate the Jewish people. There cannot ever be a monetary compensation for the loss of six million members of the Jewish people, but the willingness to uncover the fate of Jewish property and to make up for the loss is an expression of recognition by the European states of their responsibility for the fate, honor and property of the Jews. The International Council of Yad Vashem and I call upon the European governments and Jewish organizations throughout the world not to abandon this important mission, and to denounce at all costs any attempt to present these legitimate Jewish claims as "blackmail."

TZILA HASS STORY

Recently, Itamar Levine, award winning deputy editor of Israel's leading economic newspaper, "Globes," published the following story:

During the 1960's, Tzila Hass inquired after her aunt's money currently valued at over \$10,000. The Swiss banks demanded that she provide a series of documents including a death certificate, previous inheritors and a photocopy of her aunt's passport. It was not possible to obtain these documents due to the circumstances surrounding the Holocaust and the absence of diplomatic relations between Israel and the then Communist block of Eastern Europe. Following nine long years of correspondence, the Swiss government informed Hass that they are going to regard the money she claimed as "heirless property," and that it will be transferred to a fund established in the 1960's for money falling under this category. The fund allocated two thirds of its money to the local Swiss Jewish community and the remaining third to the International Red Cross. Hass received nothing. Levine contends that the money was in fact secretly transferred to Poland, as part of an agreement to compensate Swiss nationals when their property was nationalized.

By Galia Limor

On March 2, 1943, David Olère, a forty-one-year-old Parisian Jew, was deported to the Auschwitz death camp. Unlike most of those deported with him, Olère was not sent directly to the gas chambers to be killed. When he first arrived at the camp, he dug graves, but was shortly thereafter assigned to the Sonderkommando unit, whose members worked inside the crematoria. Within a short span of time, the members of the Sonderkommando units were also sent to their deaths, but Olère, thanks to his artistic talent, was able to remain alive. "He was an artist ... his job was to paint for the SS," according to Dov Paisikowitz, an eye-witness survivor. Olère, who was a graphic designer by profession, and who had designed posters and cinematic costumes before the war, wrote the SS their letters in a decorative handwriting, which he even adorned with flowers.

After the war, he began to paint what he had seen in the crematoria. He made over seventy sketches which depicted the scenes of horror in accurate detail. His testimony is a rare document, from which details can be gleaned about what occurred in the gas chambers. He was one of the few members of the Sonderkommando who did not perish in the camp. His testimony is also unique because it describes in sketches that which has only been described before in words.

After the war, Olère returned to Paris, where he worked for NATO. In dozens of sketches, he described his war-time world. The trains, the prisoners' marches, the endless beatings, and the piles of corpses lying on carts are but a portion of the live scenes which turned to sketches in pencil and ink. The manner in which Olère chose to depict the power relations in the death camp is almost always the same -- the few against the many. But the essence of these relations are reversed in the reality which arises from the sketches: Here, the few are the powerful while the many, the group, are weak and helpless. The manner in which each of the groups is depicted is also repeated throughout the sketches. The few, the German soldiers, are almost always shown from behind. They are large-bodied, dressed in uniforms, and the angles of their



"It's all over now. Is it a dream?" Paris, 1945

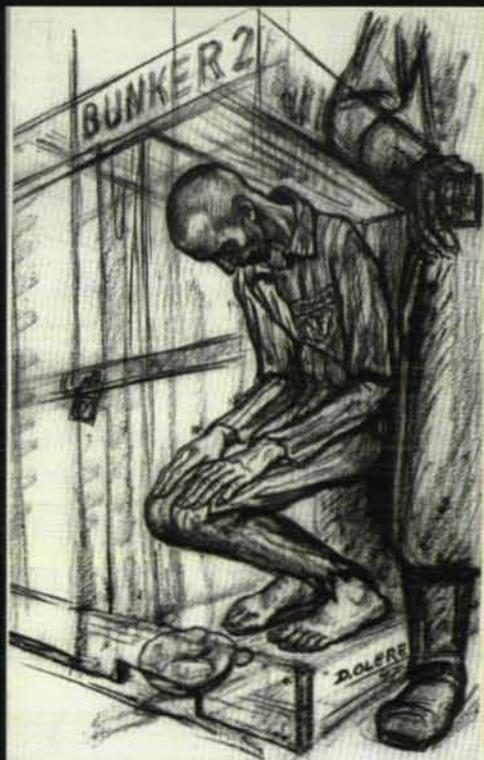
bodies and faces are distinctly emphasized. The many, the group of Jewish prisoners, are depicted as broken, both physically and spiritually. Their bodies are bent and it is clear that they have undergone extensive torture. The faces of the people in this group are shown with few details and they often appear to be reproductions of a single individual.

Most disturbing are the pictures of the gas chambers themselves, the changing rooms, the crematoria, and the bone breaking. In these drawings, there is much greater detail, creating the impression that Olère chose a less minimalistic and more detailed way to depict the horror.

Olère does not portray himself differently from the rest of the prisoners in the camp. He too, is shown with a broken body and a shaved head. This self-portrayal continues his tendency to depict realistically. He attempts to show that individual identity is erased in the death camp, that the past disappears, and death, stalking each and every one of the prisoners, makes no distinctions. The horrors themselves are also not depicted from the artist's own personal perspective but are shown in an objective manner.

Olère died in Paris twelve years ago. His widow and son requested that his pictures be exhibited in a place and manner which would immortalize the memory of Auschwitz's victims. They placed the collection in the hands of lawyer Serge Klarsfeld, who loaned it long-term to Yad Vashem, so that future generations could view these rare human documents.

Olère's works have been on exhibit since April in a special exhibition at Yad Vashem. The curator of the exhibition is Bella Shomer-Zaichik.



David Olère punished in the bunker, Paris, 1947

A VISUAL TESTIMONY OF AUSCHWITZ

David Olère



"Selection", Paris, 1945



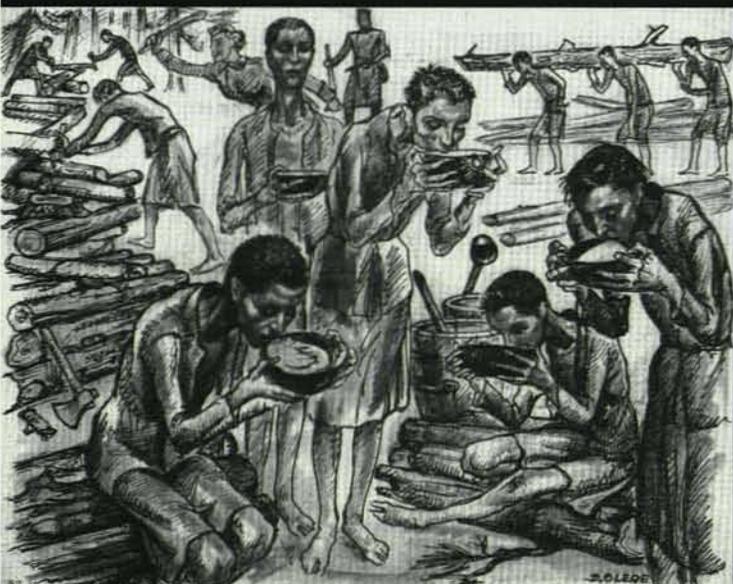
"Construction of crematorium at Birkenau, Paris, 1945



"Listening to the BBC news in English after midnight", Paris, 1945



"In the Melk tunnels (forced labor), Paris, 1945



"The order to burn their sisters and brothers", Paris, 1945



"The last stage, with the Lord's help", Paris, 1947

By Dr. Yaacov Lozowick

The Nazi party had been in power in Germany for six years before their invasion of Poland lit the spark that set off the Second World War in September 1939. Two additional years passed before their invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, when they began to murder every Jew along their path. The systematic murder began in Chelmno as early as

than propose simplistic answers. A few dozen such historians gathered at Yad Vashem in February 1997 in order to hear and tell of the state of research regarding "Reactions of German society to the Nazis' anti-Jewish policy, 1933-1941."



The conference was marked by the storm created during the preceding months by Daniel Goldhagen's book, which maintains that German society was saturated with what he has termed "eliminationist antisemitism." Many of Goldhagen's critics have charged that he paints a complex historical picture in simple black and white. The scholars' conference in Jerusalem sought out the shades of grey, which indeed could be discerned in each and every lecture, although the picture of German society painted by the various speakers' brushes emerged largely in tones of dark grey.

The conference was held by the International Institute for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem and the Leo Baeck Institute. The conference's organizer was historian David Bankier of Jerusalem, who published an important book about German public opinion and the persecution

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MILLION

Dozens of International Scholars Discuss Reactions of German Society to

December, 1941 and the organized annihilation of the Jews of Europe began.

It is impossible to determine the number of people directly involved in the murder of some six million Jews -- the number reaches at least tens of thousands. To these, one must add the hundreds of thousands who made a significant contribution to the murder process. The more broadly we define the term "accomplice," the greater the number of criminals, whether those who participated willingly, or those who did so through denial. But what are we to say about eighty million Germans? Furthermore, the annihilation of the Jews took place outside of Germany, far from the eyes of many. The degradation and dispossession of half a million German Jews, on the other hand, took place in every city, town and village, over a period of years, in broad daylight. What part did the tens of thousands of Germans play in the expulsion of the Jews from their homes and from the land they considered their homeland?

Simplistic ideological answers might be offered, such as "nearly all Germans despised the Jews and were pleased to see them suffer," or "only a small minority of extreme Nazis persecuted the Jews, and the remainder of German society turned a deaf ear." It is the job of historians, however, to attempt to expose the complex reality rather

of Jews a number of years ago. In addition to the Israeli participants, scholars from Germany, the United States, Canada, Britain and Australia took part in the conference. The topic drew a large audience: there were 400 people present at the opening session. It was the high level of the lecturers, however, which led to the participation of hundreds of listeners for four full days.

The list of lecturers included some of the central figures in the historiography of the period: Yehuda Bauer, Leni Yahil, Otto Dov Kulka, Avraham Barkai, Konrad Kwiet, Walter Zvi Bacharach, Richard Breitman, and Shlomo Aronson. The principal innovation of the conference, however, was to be found in the lectures of a long list of lesser known, mostly young historians, whose work has been characterized by an underscoring of the period's fine details, in contrast to the broad generalizations. Oded Heilbronner of Jerusalem looked into the ideological stance held by a group of Catholic historians in the 1930's. Yifat Weiss of Tel-Aviv investigated the German-Jewish establishment's attitude toward Jews of Polish citizenship in Germany. John A.S. Grenville of London told of his findings regarding Jewish homes in Hamburg during the war years. Judith Levin, chief photograph archivist at Yad Vashem, researched photographs taken by Wehrmacht soldiers.

The strength of historical research focusing on the micro level

is in its ability to enrich and correct the picture on the macro level. A fine example of this was provided by the German historians participating in the conference: Not one of them attempted to answer the question, "What was the attitude of German society to the persecution of German Jews?"; instead, each focused on one small corner -- but the sum total of their findings came together to create a comprehensive picture, while criticizing those who had come before.

Beate Meyer of Hamburg looked into the perseverance of marriages between Jews and non-Jews in the face of hatred and persecution from without. Although there were cases in which the marriages were able to withstand the trial and indeed save the lives of the Jewish partner, it was more often the case that the personal bond could not withstand the pressure and the couple separated -- the Aryan partner returned to the majority society, and the Jewish partner emigrated (in the thirties), or died (during the war). John Grenville commented that Ms. Meyer's findings, although unpleasant, actually present the picture in a more moderate fashion than it ought to be, since many of the mixed marriages were in fact between non-Jews and Jews who had converted to Christianity; from the point of view of the couple, these were not mixed marriages at all.

Simone Ladwig-Winters of Berlin followed mixed families who owned a large retail chain. Here, too, she found that business partnerships of many years between Jews and non-Jews, like family ties, could not withstand the pressure. Another scholar, Frank Bajohr of Hamburg,

A key example is the case of Karl Gordler, Mayor of Leipzig. Gordler resigned in 1937 following an argument between him and his deputy, a Nazi party member, who demanded that the statue of composer Mendelssohn-Bartoldy be removed from the city square. After the deputy carried out his plan behind his back, Gordler resigned. German historian Christof Dipper rejected the thesis and provided evidence of Gordler's concurrence with Nazi policies during the thirties. He was joined from the audience by a young scholar, Wolf Gruner, who questioned the significance of the argument over the statue at a time when the city government actively participated in the dispossession of their own residents.

Gruner presented his own research regarding the welfare services and the Jews in his home town of Berlin, as well as in other cities. Uwe Lohlm presented a similar study of Hamburg. While many of their colleagues focused on well-to-do Jews and the elites of German society, these two studies of welfare and social services sought to examine what fate befell the weaker Jews, what treatment they received from the authorities, and what was the attitude of the surrounding society toward them. Berlin and Hamburg were considered cities which were less infected with Nazism than other German cities, and certainly less than Munich. Nevertheless, in both cities there was an unplanned and unintended blending of pressures from the regime, from the party, from local forces, and from the surrounding society. Lohlm: "Here was expressed a high degree of acceptance of anti-

ACCOMPLICES ?

Nazi Anti-Jewish Policy in the International Institute's Annual Conference.

focused on the conduct of the large merchant families in his city, one of Europe's most prominent international ports and centers of commerce. His findings indicated that the older generation preferred commerce to antisemitic ideology, while their sons, apparently influenced by their different life experience, flocked after the regime's jingoistic and anti-Semitic slogans.

Albert Fischer of the University of Jena focused on Germany's principal economic figure during the thirties, Heilmar Schacht, known as the "economic dictator." Schacht, who was dismissed from his position prior to the war, was able to convince historians and the world through the 1970s that he had been the defender of Jews. This, Fischer contends, was far from the truth: Schacht protected Jews when such protection served economic policy, but he was always in tune with Hitler, and certainly agreed with the economic policy of distancing Jews from the economy and from society. Fischer found that Schacht in fact continued to justify this position following the war.

Canadian historian Peter Hoffman focused on another aspect of the elite society in Germany: the growing hostility towards Hitler which led to the assassination attempt in 1944. According to Hoffman, a significant number of the officers and aristocrats who rebelled against the Nazi regime did so out of a distaste for the persecution of Jews.

Jewish prejudice and of the goals of the National Socialists in a closed Volksgemeinschaft." And Gruner: "National, local, regional and other frameworks combined to divest the Jews of as much support as possible. They learned to do this through their work. The more they discriminated against Jews, the fewer possibilities for emigration existed for poorer Jews; the growing poverty of the Jewish community constituted a problem for the Nazi leadership, and forced them to change their policy, which grew increasingly extreme as of 1938."

Gruner's closing words serve as a good illustration of the possibility of composing a larger picture out of the small stones of the mosaic, as his conclusion is nearly identical to that of Michael Wildt of Hamburg, who investigated the mood and actions of the Office of Jewish Affairs in the SS. The custom there, according to Wildt, was to create a situation that would be intolerable for the Nazis, and to then demand that it be resolved through ever more extreme measures. Such a policy of evolution by radicalization was possible because at every stage, in response to every new obstacle, there were always enough people around to make sure the new rules were fully enforced.

Dr. Lozowick is Director of the Yad Vashem Archives.

EDUCATIONAL CENTER IN GIVATAYIM

By Gideon Greif

Quietly, far from the spotlights, Yad Vashem's Educational Center in Givatayim runs a wide range of activities in the Tel Aviv area and in the center of the country. This educational center - the Volhynia Jewry Center -- recently marked its twenty-fifth year of activity. The center's employees have good reason to look back with pride and satisfaction: The annual number of those who come to study at the center reaches over twenty-thousand. This number includes middle-school and high-school students, IDF soldiers, teachers of history, literature and citizenship, educators, university students, and teachers from abroad.

The success of the Center in fulfilling its educational goals can be measured by a single criterion: the quality of the educational staff and the quality of educational materials, since what the center lacks is a museum of art and history -- an invaluable component of Holocaust education. The existence of such a museum in the mother-institution in Jerusalem, and its absence in the Givatayim branch, pose a tremendous challenge to the staff of lecturers and educators at the Givatayim branch; principally to the institution's director, Mr. Avigdor Efron, who has contributed greatly to the rapid development of the center's organizational and administrative infrastructure. Mr. Efron initiated teachers' seminars and instituted his pedagogical method. Assistant Director Ms. Margalit Shlaine contributed invaluable to the increasing number of survivors who appear before the various groups, and to the pedagogical and didactic aspects of the educational activities.

Without a permanent exhibition, the Givatayim branch of Yad Vashem must develop effective and appropriate substitutes for Holocaust education. One essential and meaningful educational tool is the personal testimony of the Holocaust survivor. This is a powerful component in seminars and all other educational activity at the Center. Throughout the year, a group of Holocaust survivors appear before the students and soldiers and describe their own Holocaust experience.

Aside from seminars -- one for middle-school students and one for high-school students -- the Center holds special study days for students embarking on educational trips to Poland and Germany. An annual teachers' seminar is also held, focusing on central topics in Holocaust history. Every few months, the Center holds an enrichment seminar for the interview staff of the video documentation project established by American film director Steven Spielberg. Together with the Ministry of Education, the Center also holds preparatory courses for teachers who are accompanying groups of students to Poland: There are study days which form part of the "Tehila" project. The pièce de resistance of the Center's educational activity over the past fifteen years is the activity carried out in cooperation with

various units of the Israel Defense Forces. At Efron's initiative, participants in the IDF officers' course take part in seminars at the center. Following this tradition, the Center's seminars have been incorporated into the training schedule of the officers' school. These future officers have been joined by male and female soldiers from most of the IDF's units. Over the years, approximately fifty thousand soldiers have taken part in the Givatayim branch's educational activities.

Twenty-five years of educational activity have provided the Givatayim branch of Yad Vashem with a highly respected reputation among educational institutions, research and commemoration centers, university chairs for study of the Holocaust, and among the community of Holocaust survivors.

Education On Wheels

By Motti Shalem

Yad Vashem's Central School for Holocaust Studies is currently in the process of purchasing a mobile unit which will be equipped with teaching and educational aids, to be put into operation throughout the country.

The Traveling Pedagogical Center will facilitate treatment of a major educational topic on a broad and comprehensive basis. It will be furnished with books and learning units, televisions and video machines, audio cassette players and tapes, mobile exhibitions, CD ROM discs and computers, props and scenery for ceremonies, and more.

In 1997-1998, the topic chosen will be connected to the broader context of the State of Israel's fiftieth anniversary, which is also the central theme for schools for the coming school year.

The unit's staff will include a senior advisor and three soldier-teachers. The unit will be constructed and staffed so as to provide a half-day activity in a given school, including activities for both teachers and students, using formal and informal educational tools.

The unit will be a joint project of the Yad Vashem Central School for Holocaust Studies and the Youth Department of the Ministry of Education.

The purchase of the unit and its supplies was made possible thanks to the support of the survivors of the Griessmann and Lissauer Families.

A New Exhibition Opens in the Valley of the Communities

"Luboml: a Small Jewish World"



Above: Aaron Ziegelman with his grandson Itai at the exhibition.



Scenes from the exhibition.



By Michal Morris Kamil

An old black and white photograph of a family portrait at the Luboml railway station, Volhynia, 1938. Forty-eight members and friends of the Ziegelman family accompanied nine year old Aaron, his mother and his sister as they were to embark on their lengthy journey to the United States of America and to a new future. Smiles characterize those photographed, and the picture is void of any sense of fear, imminent danger or doom. It is a photograph which would ordinarily have found its place within the historical album of the Jewish mosaic of the Diaspora.

For Aaron Ziegelman, however, and the American branch of this family, now three generations further down the genealogical line, this picture has become a celluloid memorial. It was the final pictorial record of a family which was almost entirely wiped out in the Holocaust. For many years, Aaron believed that he and his immediate family were the sole survivors of the Ziegelmans. Aaron published an article about his childhood in Luboml in a Philadelphia newspaper and as a result made contact with a distant relative who put him in touch with an additional eighty relatives around the world. Zeigelman then held a five day reunion in New York.

Aaron set out to assemble everything he could find to document and give life to his memories of Luboml. The result was the Luboml Exhibition Project, directed by Fred Wasserman and supported by the Aaron

Ziegelman Foundation. 100 photographs, documents and artifacts from the Project are displayed in Yad Vashem's new exhibition, *Luboml: A Small Jewish World* in the Valley of the Communities. Included are everyday items such as Shabbat candlesticks, embroidery, lacework, liquor labels from a Jewish distillery, rare and unusual stamps, (which appear on this magazine's cover) and other items. The highlights of the exhibition are life-size photos and motion picture footage taken by an American tourist in Luboml in 1933. The footage is used to simulate the atmosphere of the marketplace.

The Jewish community of Luboml dated back to the 14th century. By the 1930s, Luboml (Libivne, as it was called in Yiddish), had a vibrant community of at least 4,000 Jews who constituted over 90 percent of the population. The interwar years were a period of cultural ferment and change in this community. While the family and traditional religious institutions continued to play a central role, they were joined, and sometimes challenged, by modern intellectual currents, styles of dress, and other secular influences (particularly Zionism) which made their way into this corner of eastern Europe.

Luboml was occupied by the Soviets from 1939 until 1941, when the invading Germans, assisted by the Ukrainians and Poles, massacred the Libivner Jews in a series of "actions" which culminated in the final executions on October 1, 1942. Only 51 Jews from Luboml

(excluding those who immigrated before the war) are believed to have survived the Holocaust.

The special effects used in the exhibition create a "live" atmosphere which enables the viewer to grasp the "reality" of this vibrant and colorful prewar community. The visitor is then confronted with what remains following the Holocaust -- faded black and white photographs, memories and the feeling of transience of what once was a very solid and vivid existence. These are presented on the Memorial Gallery Wall. The intention in the exhibit is to contrast the reality of Jewish Luboml before the Holocaust with its "virtual reality" today. The latter is contained in a computer terminal that allows visitors to access a list of all of the victims of the Shoah who lived in Luboml, and to view the Luboml Project's Internet website.

"The Valley of the Communities was constructed in order to commemorate organized Jewish communal life. Beit Hakehilot, which was established thanks to Eli Zborowski, has space for three-dimensional temporary exhibitions," explains Elly Dlin, Director of the Valley and the exhibit's curator. "This is the first exhibition to focus specifically on a single place. The Luboml community is similar to hundreds of "small Jewish worlds" in eastern Europe, and is an extreme example of the phenomenon of Jews living and creating in their own separate world. The "realities" of millions of Jews were mercilessly cut short in the Holocaust."

NEWS

MINISTER YISHAI VISITS YAD VASHEM



Israeli Minister of Labor and Welfare, Mr. Eli Yishai, visited Yad Vashem in June. In a letter to Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, he stated:

"My visit was a most powerful experience, and moved me to the depths of my soul, affecting the most hidden chambers of a Jew's heart upon seeing the difficult and shocking pictures...I truly believe that knowledge of the horrors of the Holocaust -- which you as the generation following Israel's revival have taken upon yourselves to pass on -- will foster an understanding of the feelings and terror of that period which I myself absorbed during my moving visit to Yad Vashem, Jerusalem."

EUROPEAN SUPPORT OF THE RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS LEXICON

The European Commission (the executive body of the European Union) recently informed Yad Vashem that the Internal Selection Committee has approved the granting of ECU 500,000 (approximately \$600,000) for the research and publication of the multi-volume Righteous Among the Nations Lexicon. The works will be published in English and in the relevant languages. The Lexicon records the stories of the nearly 15,000 non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. Johanan Bein, Vice Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate comments, "These heroes were rays of light in the years of darkness that engulfed Europe and should serve as role models of human behavior for educators and students alike."

PRIZE TO JERUSALEM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

The Uveeler Prize is awarded to high school students who have produced written work of a high caliber in the field of Holocaust studies. Yad Vashem presents prizes on an annual basis from the Mark and Leuba Uveeler Fund.

This year, the prize-giving ceremony was held at Yad Vashem in May, in the presence of Mr. Yohanan Bein, Vice Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Mr. Motti Shalem, Director of the Central School of Holocaust Studies, the benefactor, Mrs. Leuba Uveeler and Mrs. Tirtza Lev Zion, Director of the Uveeler Center for Guidance of Research Projects.

The first prize was won by Orit Dan, a student at the Hebrew Gymnasium in Jerusalem. Orit's paper was entitled, "The influence of the first generation's trauma on the second and third generation within parent-child relationships."

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Motti Shalem commended the students, adding that "what is important to the thirty-two students who participated in this competition is not only the prize, the intellectual curiosity or the academic mark, but mainly the stories that they heard in first person from the survivors of the Holocaust."

By Jeremy Swimer

POLISH PRIME MINISTER SUPPORTS HOLOCAUST RESEARCH IN POLAND



Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz

Twenty Righteous Among the Nations were recognized and awarded the official certificate and medallion on May 23, 1997, by Israeli Ambassador Gershon Zohar, in Warsaw, Poland. Present at the official ceremony, held

in the Cameri Opera House, were Polish Prime Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, key political figures, prominent leaders of the Jewish community including Arnold Mostowicz, Chairman of the Association for Jewish Veterans who spoke, survivors living in Israel and in Poland, and a very large audience.

Prime Minister Cimoszewicz spoke of the importance of the award and its significance for the Poles, whose soil was chosen by the Nazis as the site for the extermination of the Jewish people. He emphasized the need to establish a historical information center in Poland for the study of the Holocaust. The Prime Minister recalled his visit to Israel in January and his tour of Yad Vashem which, he said, left him deeply moved.

Israeli Ambassador Zohar emphasized the need to cultivate the Jewish-Polish heritage, especially in light of the near-total destruction of the community.

INTERNATIONAL MULTIMEDIA PRIZE FOR "THE RETURN TO LIFE"



The compact disc of the multimedia program, "The Return to Life", developed and produced by the Yad Vashem Central School of Holocaust Studies, represented Israel in the international competition sponsored by the International Communication Congress, in Biarritz, France, and won second place. Representatives from twenty-three countries submitted entries in the "Multimedia" category. Entries came from such organizations as travel agencies, American Express, the Municipality of Rome, and others. The competition's sponsors were highly impressed with, "The Return to Life" CD, and said that they would consider creating a new category of educational multimedia.

The program was previously presented at a competition for multimedia applications sponsored by the Manufacturer's Association, the Israel Export Institute, and others. It was awarded first place among twenty-seven entries, in the "Israel Prize for Visual Communication 1997."

"The Return to Life" is the first program of its kind which deals with the teaching of one chapter in the history of the Shoah. The program follows the experiences of survivors of concentration camps and ghettos, from the day of liberation through their attempts to return to their homes, their confrontation with manifestations of antisemitism, joining the "Bricha" movement, encounters with soldiers of the Jewish Brigade and emissaries from Eretz Yisrael, their life in the DP camps, and the difficulties of absorption in Israel and in other countries.

The production of "The Return to Life" was based on meticulous academic research. The staff of Yad Vashem examined thousands of documents and tens of thousands of photographs and films from the Archives. Almost two years of investigative research, and hundreds of hours of witness testimony were reviewed in the production of the CD. Partners to the project were Icons Multimedia.

ANATOMY AT ITS WORST

One of the major themes of Nazi ideology was the "purification of the human race," eliminating "inferior strains." The Nazis, therefore, took great interest in the different sciences, especially medicine. To this end, various textbooks were used, including an anatomical atlas written by Prof. Eduard Pernkopf in 1937.

Pernkopf had been appointed Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Vienna in 1933 and was an avid supporter of the Nazi party. Since the Atlas' first publication, it has gone through innumerable editions in a variety of languages, and is recognized as the authoritative textbook used in medical faculties throughout the world to this day.

Recently, however, concerns have been raised that many illustrations of surgical operations performed in the University of Vienna's anatomical laboratory, as well as various body parts which appear in the book, were taken from political prisoners and victims of the Nazis who were murdered in the camps. There is further suspicion that body parts still present in the university's laboratories may also have originated with victims of the Nazis, Jewish and non-Jewish.

Professor William E. Seidelman of Wellesley Hospital, Toronto, brought this matter to the attention of the Vice Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, who in March 1995, wrote to Prof. Alfred Ebenauer, present-day Rector of the University of Vienna, calling upon him to conduct a comprehensive investigation in this matter, and requesting that the results of the investigation be made public. In addition he asked for the "Atlas" to be modified in accordance with the findings, and that body parts of victims of the Nazis -- insofar as such are found -- be brought to appropriate burial.

The Rector responded to Yad Vashem's demands, and ordered a comprehensive investigation in early 1996. The findings indicated that use had indeed been made of prisoners' body parts in the university's laboratories. However, in order to determine the extent of such use, and to reach clearer conclusions, the Rector, in January 1997, called for a more in-depth investigation, with a committee which he would personally head and which would include senior scholars and representatives of the Jewish community. The Yad Vashem Directorate commended Professor Ebenauer's actions and expressed its hope that the investigation will conclude with the desired results.

By Aryeh Spoznick

MEDICAL AID FOR THE RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS

The Anne Frank Fund, based in Basel, Switzerland, was established in 1987.

It aims were to promote tolerance, coexistence and the struggle against antisemitism, fascism and racism. In a meeting with Dr. Aryeh Bauminger (formerly Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate) it was suggested that the Fund provide aid to Righteous Among the Nations -- non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust -- especially those behind what was then the Iron Curtain. Many Righteous were receiving minimal pensions and could not cover the costs of expensive medical services such as the purchase of eyeglasses and hearing aids or the use of a blood-pressure apparatus, glucometers, and medications.

In 1988, the Anne Frank Fund reached an agreement with Yad Vashem to supply these items to those Righteous Among the Nations who resided in Eastern Europe. John D. Goldsmith, Vice President of the Fund, coordinates the purchase of the medical equipment, which is then sent to the Righteous in need. There were cases where the specific person could not receive required medical treatment and the Fund consequently arranged for his or her hospitalization in a hospital in Central or Western Europe. In 1996, 107 Righteous Among the Nations benefited from the medical aid provided by the Fund. These included individuals from Poland, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Moldavia, Hungary and Croatia. Goldsmith comments, "It is our aim to provide the few remaining Righteous Among the Nations with as much help as possible in their remaining years."

MEMORIAL ARCHITECTURE

Yad Vashem, the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, and the Austrian organizations -- Gedenkdienst, Innsbruck, Arche, and Platform for Inter-cultural Projects -- in conjunction with other institutions, organized an international student workshop aimed at studying and highlighting the subject of Holocaust-memorial architecture. The first week of the interactive workshop took place in August 1997. Its aim was to deepen the participants' comprehension of the Shoah, was its history and implications through a wide range of lectures, excursions and discussion groups, and to encourage the students to propose potential architectural designs. The seminar's coordinators were Zeev Druckman and David Guggenheim of Jerusalem. Lecturers included Jean Pierre Le

NEWS

A NEW MEMORIAL BOOK

Zvi Meiron, Chairman of the Organization of Immigrants from Nagybanya and its surrounding areas (in northern Transylvania), presented the Memorial Book commemorating four Jewish communities of Northern Transylvania to Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev. The majority of Jews from these communities perished in Auschwitz.

The organization recently completed the ambitious project of gathering 2,513 names of members of these communities who died in the Holocaust and presented them for safekeeping in the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem. The testimonies of seventy survivors were recorded in the Yad Vashem Archives.



L to R: Zvi Meiron, Avner Shalev, and organization members Pinchas Greenberger and Zvi Greenfeld.

Dantec of Paris; Hermann Gruenwald of Oklahoma; Daniel Mintz of Jerusalem; Perla Kaufmann of Haifa; Robert Jan van Pelt of Ontario; Anton Schweighofer of Vienna; and many others from around the world.

Participants received academic credit for their projects. The workshop's program, which included tours of commemorative sites and architectural schools throughout Israel, was multi-disciplinary, and afforded an eclectic approach to memorial architecture. It, furthermore, raised questions about the purpose of memorials and the current state of memorial architecture throughout the world. The international workshop aimed to reinforce the students' knowledge of, and sensitivity to, the Holocaust.

COURAGE

&

Nobility

The Late Baron Friedrich Carl von Oppenheim was Honored as a Righteous Among the Nations

By Roberta Chester

The individuals designated by Yad Vashem as "Righteous Among the Nations" are testimony that alongside those who sank to the depths of inhumanity, there were others who, in their efforts to save Jews, reached the highest levels of courage and compassion.

As the person responsible for saving the lives of the Griessmann and Lissauer families, as well as other Jews, Baron Friedrich Carl von Oppenheim was one of these individuals. In a ceremony at Yad Vashem in April, his name was added to the Righteous Honor Wall in the Yad Vashem Gardens of the Righteous Among the Nations.

Baron Friedrich Carl von Oppenheim was born in 1900 in Köln, Germany, to a family of bankers. In May 1938, under the Nazi Aryanization policy, the bank was forced to change its name and ownership. Von Oppenheim was classified by the Nuremberg laws, as being a quarter Jewish, or, a 2nd grade *mischling*. Dr. Robert Pferdmengetes, a personally liable partner of the bank since 1931, a personal friend of the family, and an opponent of the Nazi regime, lent his name so that the bank could continue as Pferdmengetes & Co.

Beginning in 1939 (partly because of his grandfather's Jewish origin) von Oppenheim was placed under continuous Gestapo surveillance. In Mr. Walter Griessmann's memorandum accompanying his application for the acceptance of Friedrich Carl von Oppenheim into the ranks of "Righteous Among the Nations," he indicated that von Oppenheim was arrested by the Gestapo on September 4, 1944, and charged with undermining the German war effort and siding with the enemy. According to Griessmann, who together with Dr. Leno Lissauer owned the N.V. Oxyde metal trading company, the Nazis had reason to suspect von Oppenheim. Although his family had lived in Bonn and Köln for over



*At the Righteous Honor Wall:
L to R: Walter Griessmann, Gisela von Sanden (Oppenheim's daughter), Baron Friedrich Carl von Oppenheim (Oppenheim's son), Hanna Hirshfeld (née Lissauer) and Baron Alfred von Oppenheim (Oppenheim's son).*

two hundred years and belonged to the ranks of Köln's notables, the origins of this old banking family were Jewish. His grandfather, Eduard Oppenheim, had converted to Protestantism in 1850, when he married Amalie Heuser but by Nazi law he was still a quarter Jewish. This did not imply immediate danger, but, combined with his family origins, social standing and economic influence, it increased the Gestapo's suspicions.

According to Walter Griessmann, Von Oppenheim's experience with the Nazis had taught him that anything could happen. "When he engaged in helping Jews, he must have been very conscious of the fact that for them this was a question of life and death, and was aware that his own life was in danger."

When he was placed in prison, the Gestapo report stated that "there is a strong suspicion that Friedrich von Oppenheim has used his foreign travel for dubious activities." Statements in the report to the effect that von Oppenheim "assisted several Jews who had emigrated to Holland to travel via France and Spain to America," indicate that the Gestapo was aware of von Oppenheim's assistance to the Jewish Lissauer and Griessmann families.

It was only when the Americans finally occupied Landshut on May 1, 1945, that the inmates of the prison in which von Oppenheim was incarcerated were liberated. Von Oppenheim, according to Walter Griessmann, "survived by the skin of his teeth." Fortunately for von Oppenheim, his investigation had dragged on without trial, and he had remained in prison for eight months until the end of the war. After the war, Baron von Oppenheim resumed his banking business. He died in 1978.

In addition to the Griessmann and Lissauer families, von Oppenheim was personally involved in helping other Jews to survive the Holocaust. Speaking at the Yad Vashem ceremony in his honor, von Oppenheim's son, Baron Alfred von Oppenheim, announced his family's decision to endow a permanent chair at the International Institute for Holocaust Studies to research racism, antisemitism and the Holocaust, "in an attempt to help prevent a recurrence of events like the Holocaust." Speaking on behalf of his brother and sister, von Oppenheim considered that "the distinction bestowed on our father is also an obligation for us. We feel that we should, in our way, act in his spirit."

Friends of Yad Vashem Worldwide

*The American Young Leadership Associates at the dinner of Yad Vashem: 2nd Row, L to R: Guest speaker Eli Rosenbaum, Lawrence Burian, Lisa Khodadadian, Caroline Arfa, Lorne Lieberman, Talya Toledano, Randi Halperin
1st Row, L to R: Shellie Davis, Keren Toledano, Estie Agus, Elizur Agus.*



■ **The new American Young Leadership Associates of Yad Vashem** recently met the Chairman of the Directorate of Yad Vashem, **Avner Shalev**, in New York. At the meeting, **Shalev** explained masterplan "Yad Vashem's 2001" and briefed the group on the different aspects relating to education, commemoration and preservation.

□ At the first meeting of Yad Vashem's **Young Leadership Associates**, which took place at the end of May in New York, **Eli Zborowski**, Chairman of the **American Society for Yad Vashem** declared, "It is the third generation which very often reopens the memory so it can be preserved...From now on you will carry the torch." **Caroline Arfa**, Chairwoman of the **Young Associates** and co-chair of the evening, called upon the **Young Leadership Associates** to carry on the message of remembrance to the "tens and millions of Americans who, despite the movies and the recent publicity, still cannot say what the Holocaust was." At the meeting, attended by over 200 people, **Eli M. Rosenbaum**, head of the Office of Special Investigations of the U.S. Department of Justice, spoke about the continuing struggle to expose and bring to justice Nazi war criminals living at large in America.

□ Another moving event in June for the **American Society** was an evening paying tribute to **Professor Jan Karski** under the auspices of the **Consulate General of the Republic of Poland** in New York, and in conjunction with the **Ronald S. Lauder Foundation**. **Eli Zborowski**, Chairman of the **American Society**, described **Jan Karski** who was honored as Righteous Among the Nations, as, "the model human being who is carrying the torch for a better understanding of Polish-Jewish relationship. Professor **Jan Karski** is and will be the shining example for generations to come of how people of different traditions and various backgrounds can and should be able to enjoy living together."

□ **Joseph Wilf**, the Chairman of the Campaign for Building the New Museum Complex, recently met with **Avner Shalev** at Yad Vashem to be briefed and to coordinate the campaign's strategy following the selection of the project's architect, **Moshe Safdie**.

■ **The Yad Vashem National Charitable Trust in England**, whose Chairman is **Ben Helfgott**, has appointed a new Director, **Simone Redbart**. **Ms. Redbart** took part in a three week educational seminar at Yad Vashem and on her return will direct all the society's activities beginning with the annual appeal which will go towards the establishment of the Research Department in the new Archives.

■ **The Dutch Society**, chaired by **Ab Caransa**, recently presented Yad Vashem with their annual support towards the restoration of documents carried out in the laboratories of the Archives.

□ Thirty participants, supported by the **Dutch Society**, are currently taking part in the first three week Dutch educational seminar for teachers, educators and counselors at Yad Vashem.

■ **The Norwegian Society** was recently paid a visit by **Simcha Salach**, the Director of the **Yad Vashem Foundation**. The society is currently in the process of invigorating, recruiting and expanding its activities and membership. This year's focus is on Yad Vashem's educational projects.

■ **The German Society** was formally established in a foundation meeting held in June in Frankfurt. Organized by the Society's Managing Director, **Klaus-Peter Becker**, the newly established society elected its functionaries. **Dr. Ansgar Koschel** will serve as Chairperson. **Sonja Latasch-Herskovitz** and **Romy Paluch** will be the society's two Vice Chairpeople. The Treasurer will be **Henry H. Faktor**. **Dr. Frolinde Balsler**, **Arno Lustiger** and **Axel Rutters**, all involved in history and literature, were elected to sit on the Scientific Board.

■ News from the **Israeli Society** includes the dedication of the new audiovisual equipment in the Yad Vashem auditorium, made possible by the support of **Arye Dyksel** who lost many of his family members in the Bialystok Ghetto.

■ **Tzelina Shatil**, a Holocaust survivor who was hidden as a child, will provide an annual contribution to the Hall of Names project for computerizing the names of the millions of Jews who perished during the Holocaust. Her support will be in memory of her family.

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Yad Vashem *new*

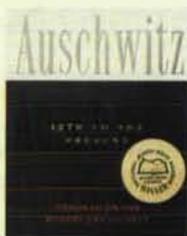
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NEW PUBLICATIONS



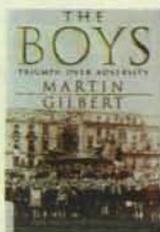
Ian Kershaw and Moshe Lewin, eds., *Stalinism and Nazism – Dictatorships in Comparison*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1997 369 pp.

Kershaw and Lewin's book presents an in-depth analysis of the similarities between the Nazi and Stalinist dictatorships – two apparently opposing systems of rule. The analysis is based on a common ground approach, where recognition of the crucial differences between the two are vital. Three principal parallel aspects of the regimes are studied: the rise and rule of the dictatorships, their clashes in war, and the difficulties of the post-dictatorship society in confronting the past. The book provides a novel perspective on two of the most inhumane regimes in the twentieth century. A.L.



Deborah Dwork and Robert Jan Van Pelt, *Auschwitz, 1270 to the Present*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York-London 1996, 443 pp.

The name "Auschwitz" has become a symbol for the entire Holocaust period. In this concentration and extermination camp, which was built on the edge of a small town, close to 1.5 million innocent people were murdered, the majority Jewish. The research of Dwork and Van Pelt is an original and unique attempt to combine geography and history throughout the generations, and the processes involved in its becoming a living hell since 1940. German architects, prior to the gas chambers and crematoriums, drew up plans to convert Auschwitz into a Germanized city including the expulsion of the local, Polish population and the introduction of hastened industrialization and extensive urban planning. The book contains maps, blueprints, and photographs. Included are detailed outlines of those involved in the planning of this factory of death. This informative book is essential for understanding one of the most central chapters of the Holocaust. G.G.



Gilbert, Martin, *The Boys – Triumph over Adversity*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson London: 1996, 511 pp.

Gilbert's book is a moving account of the experiences of 732 young survivors, who were brought over to Britain after the Second World War and formed a closely-knit group which they dubbed "The Boys", girls inclusive. The book, narrated by "the boys" themselves, is a celebration of life, which relates their experiences before the Holocaust and the problems in rebuilding their shattered lives. As Ben Helfgott, one of the "the Boys" and currently chairman of the Yad Vashem National Charitable Trust in England, comments "[upon our arrival in England] we had to come to terms with ourselves, to realize that we were alone, that we had lost our parents. So there was both joy and despair at the same time" (p.299). A.L.

Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev, and representatives of the veterans and the IDF spoke.

■ In June, British musician Adrian Snell, who composed music to Jewish texts and poems written by Jewish children in the Terezin Ghetto, performed in the Valley of the Communities.

■ Guido Koller spoke to the Scholars' Meeting about *Sources on the Refugee Question in the Swiss Federal Archive*. In another Scholars' Meeting, Dr. Steven Bowman presented his research on the Holocaust in Greece.

■ In July there was a concert of cantors from Tel Aviv Cantorial Institute who sang cantorial chants and songs from the Ghetto. The performance, which took place in the Valley of the Communities, was presented by cantor Naphtalie Hirstik and accompanied by musician Raymond Goldstein.

EVENTS AUGUST-NOVEMBER

5.8.97 Ceremony commemorating the deportment of Janusz Korczak and the children to their deaths in Treblinka fifty-five years ago. Members of the Janusz Korczak Association in Israel, former pupils and co-workers will attend the event. At the ceremony, the Bruno Brand prize for children's literature will be awarded to author Uri Orlev for his book, "The Sand Game."

6.10.97 The annual gathering of survivors from the Lodz Ghetto.

9.10.97 Annual memorial service for the Jews who were murdered at Babi-Yar.

13.10.97 The opening of the exhibition, "There are no Childish Games," in the Museum of Art. The exhibition presents examples of children's games and creativity during the Holocaust.

The International Institute for Holocaust Studies will be holding its annual conference at Yad Vashem on 17-18 November. This year's topic will focus on *Zionism and Zionist Policies in the Shadow of the Holocaust*. For more information contact 972-2-6751609 or fax 972-2-6433511.

EVENTS MAY-JULY



Edith Kraus and Konrad Richter

■ In May a piano recital was held in honor of pianist Edith Kraus, marking her birthday. Internationally renowned pianist Konrad Richter performed the identical concert given by Edith Kraus in the Terezin Ghetto in 1943.

■ The annual ceremony for the Allied victory over Nazi Germany took place at Yad Vashem. At the festive occasion, hundreds of veterans who fought in the Allied Forces, Jewish partisans, and volunteers from Eretz Israel in the British army and the Jewish Brigades took part. The event was organized by Yad Vashem, the Israel Information Office, the Association of Jewish Partisans and Fighters from Eretz Israel, Disabled Veterans of the War Against Nazism and was in cooperation with the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption. At the ceremony, the Minister of Immigrant Absorption, Yuli Edelstein, Chairman of the