

# Yad Vashem

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M O V I N G



Yad Vashem

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Yad Vashem

# Editorial

Dear Readers,

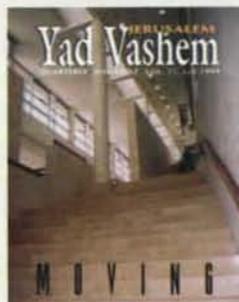
Exciting things are happening at Yad Vashem with the beginning of the new Jewish year, 5760! At full speed towards the new millennium, Yad Vashem is intensely engaged in the "Yad Vashem 2001" masterplan. Much of this vision is nearing completion with the establishment and forthcoming inauguration of two new buildings on the Yad Vashem campus.

The move to the new Archives and Library building as well as to the new International School for Holocaust Studies building has been Yad Vashem's main activity over the last three months. "Moving," this fall issue's cover story, reviews the tremendous work by Yad Vashem's employees towards the imminent relocation.

We have devoted the *Art Focus* and *Podium* sections of the magazine to the issue of slave labor as depicted through the medium of art and as recalled in survivors' testimonies. Other stories include "The Missing Photograph," which tells the story of a photograph that found its way back to the original Auschwitz album, and "A Promise Kept," recounting the story of an 18-year-old shepherd who saved Jews.

We extend a warm welcome to the 350 participants from all over the world who are taking part in the 'Second International Conference of the International School for Holocaust Studies. May your participation in the conference be fruitful and empower you in your teaching of the Holocaust!

Yvette Nahmia-Messinas  
Managing Editor



Cover: Interior view of the new International School for Holocaust Studies building designed by David Guggenheim in association with Daniel Mintz of Guggenheim-Bloch architects and urbanists

by Yvette Nahmia-Messinas

Opposite a large desk piled with brown cardboard boxes, Ella Bark cautiously sorts, identifies, and keeps an inventory of documents. Over the last 13 years that she has been working at the Yad Vashem Archives, her hands have touched stacks of old documents, a few of which she still recalls. Currently sorting and packing documents from the



O-3 Record Group on Yad Vashem Testimonies, Ella is a link in the chain of employees who are preparing the ground for the move of the Archives and Library into their new premises, the Archives and Library Building.

Mary Ginzburg, a Yiddish, Russian, and Ukrainian expert, works in the same document-packed room. During the last nine years, Mary has traveled to the Ukraine and the former Soviet Union to track down Holocaust-related material in local archives. Due to her and other archivists' work, as well as to the public's willingness to hand over their private collections, the Yad Vashem Archives have expanded to the extent that it is necessary to create additional space to house them.

Situated high above the Jerusalem corridor overlooking the Jerusalem forest, the new Archives and Library building will house the ever-expanding collections of the library, documents archive, the photograph and film archive, and oral testimonies. The Hall of Names, also within the Archives constellation, will be housed in a separate building located

# Tens of millions of documents and hundreds of thousands of books, photographs, films, and testimonies on their way to the new building

at the end of the new Historical Museum. The new Archives building has been made possible by a generous contribution from the Claims Conference under the leadership of Rabbi Dr. Israel Miller, Claims Conference President, and other contributors.

To prepare for their relocation to the new building, the documents archive, photograph and film archive, as well as the library temporarily

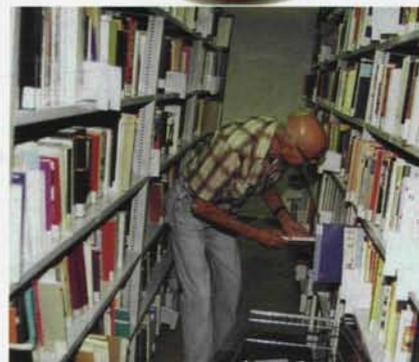
concerning the logistics and planning in preparation for the move." Just as the library's users were anxious about the library closing, the library staff is anxious to make it work the very best way possible. "We rethought, reorganized and revamped the collection of the reading room in order to provide a better service to the public," says Robert.

While books get new stickers in the library,

organized in thousands of files that make up close to 300 record groups which need to be dealt with in the document archives. Each and every one of those 50 million documents must be disinfected before they can be placed in the box in which they belong. Then the boxes need to be bar-coded and placed in the appropriate record group.

One of those files that needed repackaging,

## O V I N G



closed their doors to the public pending the move to their new state-of-the-art facilities. Esther Aran is in charge of the planning together with the directors of the different archive departments and Dr. Yaacov Lozowick, Director of the Archives, all of whom are supervising every stage and detail of the project to facilitate the relocation.

A new service involving the integration of the library and all archive data banks is currently being established by Yehudit Levin. This service, facilitated by Michael Lieber, Yad Vashem's CIO, will offer the public improved, upgraded access in the year 2000.

Meanwhile, behind the library's closed doors, where quiet would ordinarily reign, the 80,000 books and several thousand journals are being aired, cleaned, and checked for legible labels as the entire collection gets ready to move to its new home. The Director of the library, Dr. Robert Rozett, is busy dealing with the step-by-step planning. "We are moving in 20-meter units, mapping out sections of 20 meters in the current library, and moving the books in them to their allocated space in the new library. We have invested a great deal of thought

the 100,000 photographs in the photograph collection are being scanned — an operation started in mid-July. Professionals who have been working in two shifts are expected to complete the scanning in November. However, although the scanners and computers used for this task are the best that modern technology can offer, the project of scanning Holocaust-related photographs does not always run so smoothly.

At times, even professionals cannot bear the sight of these images. The scenes depicted in a number of these photographs are so cruel that those who work with them need to pause, breathe in some fresh air, and let off steam before they return to scan an additional picture.

"Completing this work," says Daniel Uziel, Director of the Photograph and Film Archive, "means that the public will have on-line access to the photograph archive. At first, access will be possible via computer terminals in Yad Vashem, and at a later stage through the Internet."

In addition to the 100,000 photographs the photo and film archive has to process and the 80,000 books requiring attention in the library, there are over 50 million documents

Dr. Yaacov Lozowick recalls, contained around 700 postcards sent to Relico, a welfare organization that dispensed food packages (each containing a return postcard) to Jews living in occupied Europe during the war. "There is a lot to learn from these postcards," says Yaacov, "which provide information about where the Jews were living, when they were living there, as well as information relating to the food package itself. A certain man wrote on his reply card, for example, that the previous time he had received the package it had weighed 600 grams whereas that time it weighed only 350."

On his laptop computer Yaacov Lozowick opens a document showing a table indicating every single step concerning the move, which is scheduled to be completed at the end of October. Yaacov believes it will take at least another year for all data banks to be integrated and for the employees to become fluent in the new computer programs.

While almost all of the Archive departments have closed their doors to prepare for the move, there are still two departments with their doors wide open to serve the public: the Hall of Names and the Oral Testimonies Department.

The staff of the Hall of Names is working in high gear on the "Unto Every Person There Is a Name" campaign, receiving Pages of Testimony and processing the enclosed information. "Due to visitors' increased demand, the Hall of Names has extended its opening hours and is now providing service to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., Sunday to Thursday," says Alexander Avraham, Director of the Hall of Names.

At the Oral Testimonies Department, it is not only business as usual, but also more than usual. A new project has been undertaken (*Ginzah Kiddush Hashem*, Hashem Archive) to Orthodox Jews, before, Holocaust. "We have a running," says Malka Tor, "Alumim, an organization children in hiding at the time deposited with us all their department is open to those individuals and them, it is also preparing for Malka, they are taking this testimonies taken a few decades ago in order to transcribe them properly and create an inventory to render them accessible to the public.



in cooperation with the in Bnei Brak (Kiddush document the lives of ultra-during, and after the number of other projects Director of the department. whose members were of the Holocaust, recently testimonies." receiving testimonies from institutions willing to give the move. According to opportunity to review

As Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, takes pride in saying, "It seems that with the pace, devotion, and energy, on the part of all the Archive staff and directors who are working towards the move, a major part of the 'Yad Vashem 2001' masterplan will have become a reality before we enter the new millennium."

## The School M O V E S to Its New Premises

by Lisa Davidson

The International School for Holocaust Studies is now well into its preparations for the forthcoming move to the new building, due to be officially opened on 7 December. From students to educators, the move is affecting everyone, including the young National Service volunteers completing their year at the Resource and Pedagogical Center.

Michal, in the final stages of her service, says that the entire operation of the center is now restricted, with only very minimal assistance being available to the public. "We are now packing away all our materials, a very intricate task requiring a great deal of effort to ensure that items are filed away correctly. We are also checking our files for missing resources. The new building will definitely be an improvement for us," she continues, "as space in our current office, which is located in the administration building, is somewhat limited. In addition, as a result of visits by many members of the public, there is constant noise, which makes for a difficult working environment."

Safira Rapaport, Head of the Center, states that the area for the Pedagogical Center in the new building will be on two stories, resulting in ample space for storage and more room to accommodate the public. She talks about the sentimental aspect of the move, as the team considers the present space as somewhat like a home. "However, the time has definitely come to respond to the times, and as we reach the 21st century we have to ready ourselves for the future. The architectural plans were prepared especially with the public in mind and the new Pedagogical Center will definitely be more user-friendly."

The International School for Holocaust Studies was established with the assistance of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports and other contributions. Dr. Motti Shalem, the school's director looks on the move as an important step for the education of today's Israeli youth. "We are the only school of its kind anywhere in the world and the building has been designed and built with this in mind. With the new building and its facilities, including an expanded team of educators and educational programs, we see ourselves teaching every Israeli pupil at least once before army service. The improved facilities and space will mean a capacity of three times the amount of pupils we are able to receive today."

He also stresses the international aspect of the school. "Hundreds of educators from all over the world study at Yad Vashem in courses on how to teach the Shoah and antisemitism, in a variety of languages as diverse as Russian and Hungarian. Our staff members also travel around the world to promote Holocaust education with Yad Vashem's educational materials."

Meanwhile the activities of the school continue as the final preparations for the opening of the new building are underway.

by Nina Springer-Aharoni

For nearly 55 years, Yehuda Schwimmer of Petah Tikva kept a photograph in his collection that belonged to a series of some 200 original photos stored in an album at the Yad Vashem Archives. Schwimmer's photo was recently handed over to Yad Vashem and returned to its original place.

The "Auschwitz Album" is a rare original

## The

collection of photos that document the deportation of Jews in the Carpathia region under Hungarian occupation to the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp in the summer of 1944. Today the album contains 196 photographs, arranged in chronological order of events and accompanied by handwritten explanatory captions. By observing the photos, one can trace the route taken by hundreds of thousands of Jews from the moment of their arrival to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

On the title page of the "Auschwitz Album," the editor explains the main topic — resettlement of Jews from Hungary — that the collection wishes to document. In fact, this collection of highly important visual documents pertains directly to the "final solution of the Jewish question."

A small number of the album photographs — usually listed anonymously — were printed and published in journals and books, and made their way to films and museums dealing with the Holocaust.

The "Auschwitz Album" was found, by chance, by survivor Lilly Jacob-Meier, in a barracks at the Dora-Nordhausen camp upon liberation in early May 1945. Lilly Meier, nee Jacob, born in Bilke (Beregszasz region), reached Auschwitz with her family in the first week of June 1944. On the very first day, she was separated from her parents and five siblings, whom she never saw again. In the album she had found, Lilly recognized her two brothers, 11-year-old Cyril and 10-year-old Zilik, her Aunt Tova with her five children, her maternal grandparents, and additional family members, none of whom returned. She identified Rabbi Weiss, Rabbi of Bilke, on the cover page of the album. She also identified herself in a photo taken on the day of her arrival in Auschwitz, standing at a roll call of "able-bodied women," her head shaven and still wearing the dress in which she had reached

the camp. When she moved to the United States in the 1950s, she took the album with her.

In 1980, Lilly turned it over to the Yad Vashem Archives for permanent safekeeping. That same year, 1,000 print copies of the album were produced with the assistance of Serge Klarsfeld. Most of them were distributed to libraries and archives around the world. Over the years, several people used the album to identify relatives who had perished, and a few survivors actually identified themselves.

of the event. However, the focus is on people, whose features are readily identifiable in many close-up shots. The photographers, including SS men, interacted with the people on the platform, and it is evident that they did not work surreptitiously. Presumably the photos were taken overtly and with the knowledge of camp officials.

But how can one explain the photography when it is known that taking pictures in the camp was strictly prohibited? The "Auschwitz

possession has 196 photos.

One original photo from the album was kept in the private collection of Yehuda Schwimmer, Chairman of the Organization of Survivors from Bilke in Israel since 1945. He testified that the photograph had been given to him from the original album at a time when no one could have imagined the album's historical importance. He met Lilly Meier in 1945, very shortly after the liberation, when they returned to their hometown, Bilke, to look for surviving kin.

# Missing Photograph

Some 1.1 million Jews from the Nazi-occupied areas were murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Between 15 May and 9 July 1944, 434,351 Jews were deported to Auschwitz from peripheral towns across Hungary, including Carpathia and Transylvania.

Apart from testimonies of individuals who managed to escape from Auschwitz during the war, along with testimonies recorded after the war, no documentation about the annihilation of Jews in the camp has survived. The "Auschwitz Album" is a visual document that traces the process of *selektion* and preparation for extermination of the hundreds of thousands of Jews whose traces vanished in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

For us, the photos in the "Auschwitz Album" are the only evidence that the people in the photos reached the camp. The Nazi documents, lists, and statistics concerning the roster of prisoners at Auschwitz do not mention most of the people observed in the album. Women, children, the elderly, and the ill — anyone defined as "unfit for labor" — disappeared without a trace.

The photos in the "Auschwitz Album" were taken and edited by two SS men: Walter Bernhard, Head of the Identification Department at Auschwitz, and his assistant, Ernst Hoffmann. This became clear at the Frankfurt trials in 1964, where Lilly Meier presented the album to the judges as an incriminating exhibit. The album also helped identify an SS man named Bartecki, who is shown at the Auschwitz-Birkenau platform in one of the photos. The photographers' task entailed many hours of professional work on the platform. The angles and quality of the photos indicate that much mobility within the camp was required to achieve a variety of perspectives. Several photographs were taken from the camp watchtowers and a few were shot from the roofs of the boxcars.

Several photos were taken with wide-angle lenses in an attempt to capture the general setting



*The missing photograph from the "Auschwitz Album" given to Yad Vashem. In the picture (from left to right): Zalman Friedman, Meir Berger, and his brother Ya'akov Berger from the town of Bilke, upon their arrival at the Auschwitz-Birkenau platform*

Album" may have been meant to document the efficient "resettlement of Jews from Hungary in the East"; it may have been a deceptive document prepared at the initiative of the camp commanders. Therefore, the producers of the album tracked the *selektion* stage by stage, stopping only a short distance from the crematorium, so that the album does not document the last stage of the extermination process.

In 1946 a glass negative of the original album was prepared at the Jewish Museum in Prague, to which Lilly Meier had lent the material. Otto Krauss and Erich Kulka examined the glass plates and reported that 203 negatives from the original album were found. Some of the Prague negatives were broken later on; among them, only five photographs were reconstructed and added to the original album. The "Auschwitz Album" in Yad Vashem's

The photo was recently printed in the Bilke Memorial Book. Yehuda Friedman of Kfar Warburg noticed that his father, Zalman Friedman of Bilke, who perished in Auschwitz, appeared in the picture. Only by chance was the photo identified as one of the original pictures missing from the album.

A few photographs from the original assortment may still turn up in private collections. To complete the "Auschwitz Album," it is very important to attempt to locate and reinsert them in the original album. Yad Vashem is publishing the album in conjunction with the Auschwitz Museum. Individuals who have identified themselves or their relatives and friends in the album's photographs are kindly requested to contact Estee Du-Nour at 972 (2) 644 3510, fax: 972 (2) 6443509, or e-mail: publishing@yad-vashem.org.il.

by Kathryn Berman

## Three Hundred and Fifty Participants at the School's International Conference "The Memory of the Holocaust in the 21st Century — the Challenge for Education"

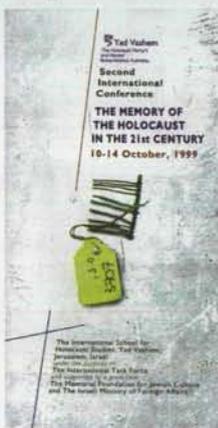
Following the first successful International Conference at Yad Vashem, in 1996, the Second International Conference on the Holocaust and Education will take place from 10–14 October 1999. The theme of the conference will be "The Memory of the Holocaust in the 21st Century — the Challenge for Education."

This conference will take place under the auspices of the International Task Force, which was created on 7 May 1998, on the initiative of the Swedish Government, in order to further international cooperation on Holocaust education, remembrance, and research. The working group of the Task Force will hold a meeting at Yad Vashem on 14 October 1999 and Task Force members will attend the conference. Yossi Sarid, Israel Minister of Education; Thomas Ostros, the Swedish Minister of Higher Education; Ehud Olmert, Mayor of Jerusalem; Dr. Jerry Hochbaum, Executive Vice President of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture; and Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, will address the participants at the opening ceremony of the conference. Professor Yehuda Bauer, Director of the International Institute for Holocaust Research at Yad Vashem, will lecture on "The Educational Impact of the Holocaust on Contemporary Civilization — a Memory and a Challenge?"

Projected goals of the conference will be to present current educational curricula for different ages based on up-to-date academic research, to assemble educators from different countries in order to discuss strategies, to present ways of integrating Holocaust testimonies within different educational frameworks, and to engage the participants in the masterplan for change titled "Yad Vashem 2001."

In all, there will be over 350 participants at the conference from Israel and abroad, and more than 130 workshops will be given in the afternoon sessions, which will be held in the new International School for Holocaust Studies building on the campus of Yad Vashem.

Each of the conference's four full days will center on a different topic: morning sessions will consist of two 45-minute lectures to be given by keynote speakers on the topic of the day. The theme for the first day will be "Jewish Life During the Inter-War Period," and Professor Dan Michman will lecture on "Jewish Identity in Inter-War Western Europe: Between Acculturation, Democratization, and Rising antisemitism." Professor Yaffa Eliach will give a lecture on "The Shtetl — Restoring the Vanished Past of Jewish Life in Eastern Europe." The second day's theme will be "The Perpetrators and the Final Solution." The title of Professor Konrad Kwiet's lecture will be "The Perpetrators and the Final Solution," and Professor Michael Marrus will lecture on "Who Knew What, When and Where about the Murder of European Jewry?" The theme of the third day will be "Daily Life of the Jews under Nazi Rule." Professors Israel Gutman and Nechama Tec will lecture on "The Ringelblum Archives — a Source for Educators on Teaching Jewish Life in the Ghettos" and on "The Illegal Life of Jews on the Aryan Side: A Comparison of Men and Women," respectively. The



theme of the last day will be "The Aftermath of the Holocaust." Professor David Cesarani will give his lecture on "The Holocaust in the Present: Using News Stories to Explore the History of the Holocaust and Its Impact Since 1945." Professor Hanna Yablonka will lecture on "The Speaking Survivors: What Was Said and What Was Understood."

After the keynote lectures, the participants will be split into six groups to engage in educational discussions on the topics they have heard.

Consistent with the educational focus of the conference, the afternoon workshops will provide ample time for a dialogue between the presenter and the other participating educators. In this way, it is hoped that a serious educational interaction will ensue.

In addition to the conference itself, optional activities will be offered on 15–16 October, concluding with an evening of Jewish music on Saturday evening, 16 October.

The educational units that will be offered at the conference can be accessed through Yad Vashem's website at [www.yadvashem.org.il](http://www.yadvashem.org.il).

The conference is supported by a generous grant from The Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture and The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

*The author is Coordinator of Seminars for Educators from Abroad.*

## The American Society for Yad Vashem — Expansion of Its Education Department

Following the decision by the American Society to expand its education department to properly address the increasing demand for Holocaust education programs in the US, Marlene Warshawski-Yahalom has been appointed its new Educational Director.

The American Society office will serve as the liaison between Yad Vashem—Jerusalem and the United States, giving educators easier access to Yad Vashem's many educational resources. These resources include videos, CD-Rom materials, and curricula units designed for all grades and school groups.

The humanistic approach to studying the Holocaust, which is at the core of the many units and curricula produced at Yad Vashem, will determine the American educational experience. "We all share the commitment to further the public's understanding of the Holocaust. These excellent materials and resources generated from Yad Vashem are a means to further these aims," states Society Chairman Eli Zborowski.

Graduates of the International School for Holocaust Studies Summer Institute for Educators can also continue their own affiliation with Yad Vashem through the forthcoming educational events and programs that the American Society will sponsor.

To obtain information on teacher training seminars, educational materials and resources, and conference scheduling, contact: Dr. Marlene Warshawski-Yahalom in the US at (212) 220-4304, or (800) 310-7495; fax: (212) 220-4308; or e-mail: [Marleneyv@aol.com](mailto:Marleneyv@aol.com).

## Course for French Rabbis

By Lisa Davidson and Irena Steinfeldt

For the first time, Yad Vashem held a seminar exclusively for leaders of religious communities when a group of 19 rabbis from Paris and its environs — including the Chief Rabbi of Paris, David Messas — participated in a 9-day course on the Holocaust. The seminar took place at the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem 27 July–4 August 1999 and was held in conjunction with the Consistoire de Paris. Dr. Richard Prasquier, Chair of the French Society for Yad Vashem was instrumental in its organization and also gave a lecture. The program consisted of lectures on Holocaust history, the theological and ethical questions in the post-Auschwitz era, and Holocaust teaching. Hope was expressed that this important educational activity would be expanded in the future.

## Teacher-Training Programs in Hebrew

by Carmit Sagi

“ I have been a classroom and homeroom teacher for the past twelve years. As a member of the second generation of a family of Holocaust survivors, I consider the study of the Holocaust very important. To my surprise, the teachers’ course at Yad Vashem taught me a great deal about a subject in which I had considered myself well versed. The course was very meaningful in shaping my personal and national identity, and it gave me many tools as a classroom and homeroom teacher.”

This is an example of the responses of teachers and educators who participate in the annual courses run by the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem. Educators, members of the second generation, and many others who have no personal or family connection to the Holocaust, attend these courses. This year, about 1,000 teachers countrywide will take part in Yad Vashem’s teacher-training programs on the Holocaust.

The course includes major segments devoted to issues of personal identity and Jewish collective consciousness. The teachers are offered a variety of scholastic units in history, literature, philosophy, cinema, education, and the arts. The courses are conducted in an interdisciplinary format in order to respond to the moral/value issues and emotional questions that history alone cannot address.

The teacher training courses for teachers of the early grades place much emphasis on pedagogical contents. Discussions are held with the teachers about the diverse study units that the International School for Holocaust Studies has developed as tools in the classroom. The course for post-primary teachers stresses new findings in various disciplines of Holocaust research and presents study units tailored to the high-school level.

Yad Vashem also co-sponsors teacher-training programs with various agencies around the country, dealing with such topics as “The Holocaust in World Cinema,” “Religious Zionism during the Holocaust,” and “Jewish Thinkers and Intellectuals during the Holocaust.”

The teachers come from various groups in Israel’s social mosaic: secular, traditional, religious, kibbutzim, and settlements in Judea-Samaria-Gaza.

*The author is Director, Teacher Training Department.*

## Cooperation with Council of Europe, UNESCO, and Theresientadt

by Lisa Davidson

Council of Europe

A meeting of the Council of Europe Education Section took place in Strasbourg in February, on the subject of “Teaching about the History of Europe in the 20th Century.” Israel’s attendance the result of the initiative of Ambassador Arye Gabbai, the Israeli Ambassador to the Council.

Shulamit Imber, Pedagogical Director of the International School, met with representatives of the Council to discuss the possibility of coordinating a seminar for teachers in April 2000 in Vilnius, and it was decided that one day would be devoted to Yad Vashem’s materials, its approaches to education, and pedagogical aims.

Jean Pierre Titz, Head of the Section “Educational Policies and European Dimension,” visited Yad Vashem for three days in June to learn in depth about the philosophy and objectives underlying the Yad Vashem educational program. He met with Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Prof. Yehuda Bauer, Head of the International Institute for Holocaust Research, and Ambassador Johanan Bein, Vice Chairman of the Directorate, among others, and was made familiar with the multimedia project and outdoor campus, as well as with the educational materials.

The visit will result in greater cooperation between Yad Vashem and the Council of Europe. In an additional visit in July, and as a member of the Council’s delegation, Titz attended an Israel–Council of Europe seminar organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the workshops on education, participants were informed of — and discussed — the planned future cooperation between the Council and Yad Vashem.

### UNESCO

At the beginning of 1999 Daniel Janicot, Assistant Director General of UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization), visited Yad Vashem to discuss the importance of Holocaust education in Europe. He met with Johanan Bein and was shown around the museum.

In May, Elizabeth Khawajkie, International Coordinator for Schools, met Shulamit Imber and Safira Rapaport, Head of the Resource and Pedagogical Center at Yad Vashem, where it was agreed that several educational units would be sent to the headquarters in Paris for the use of the organization.

Following his first visit to Yad Vashem in 1996, Colin Power, UNESCO’s Director General for Education, returned to Yad Vashem last July to meet with Shulamit Imber and Johanan Bein. Possibilities were considered for future programs for Holocaust education, specifically in Europe. It was decided that next year Shulamit Imber would participate in a workshop at UNESCO’s headquarters in Paris for educators from countries requiring Holocaust education.

### Theresientadt

Dr. Jan Munk, Director of Pamatnik Terezin, the Theresientadt Memorial, visited Yad Vashem in late June to discuss mutual cooperation for the forthcoming Education Conference at Theresientadt and Prague, to be held 6–8 October. In addition to learning about Yad Vashem’s computerization project, he was introduced to the educational philosophies of the International School for Holocaust Studies and the multimedia program, in which he showed a great deal of interest. As a result of the meeting four Czech teachers took part in the recent teacher-training seminar in German.

This is the story of a violin bearing the ongoing imprint of the treks, hardships, valor, and adventures of decades of experience. Many years ago, during World War II, the violin was the inseparable companion of Motteleh, a 12-year-old Jew. The young boy, his violin in hand, hid in the forests of Belorussia until he encountered Misha, a fearless partisan who commanded a partisans' camp in the forests.

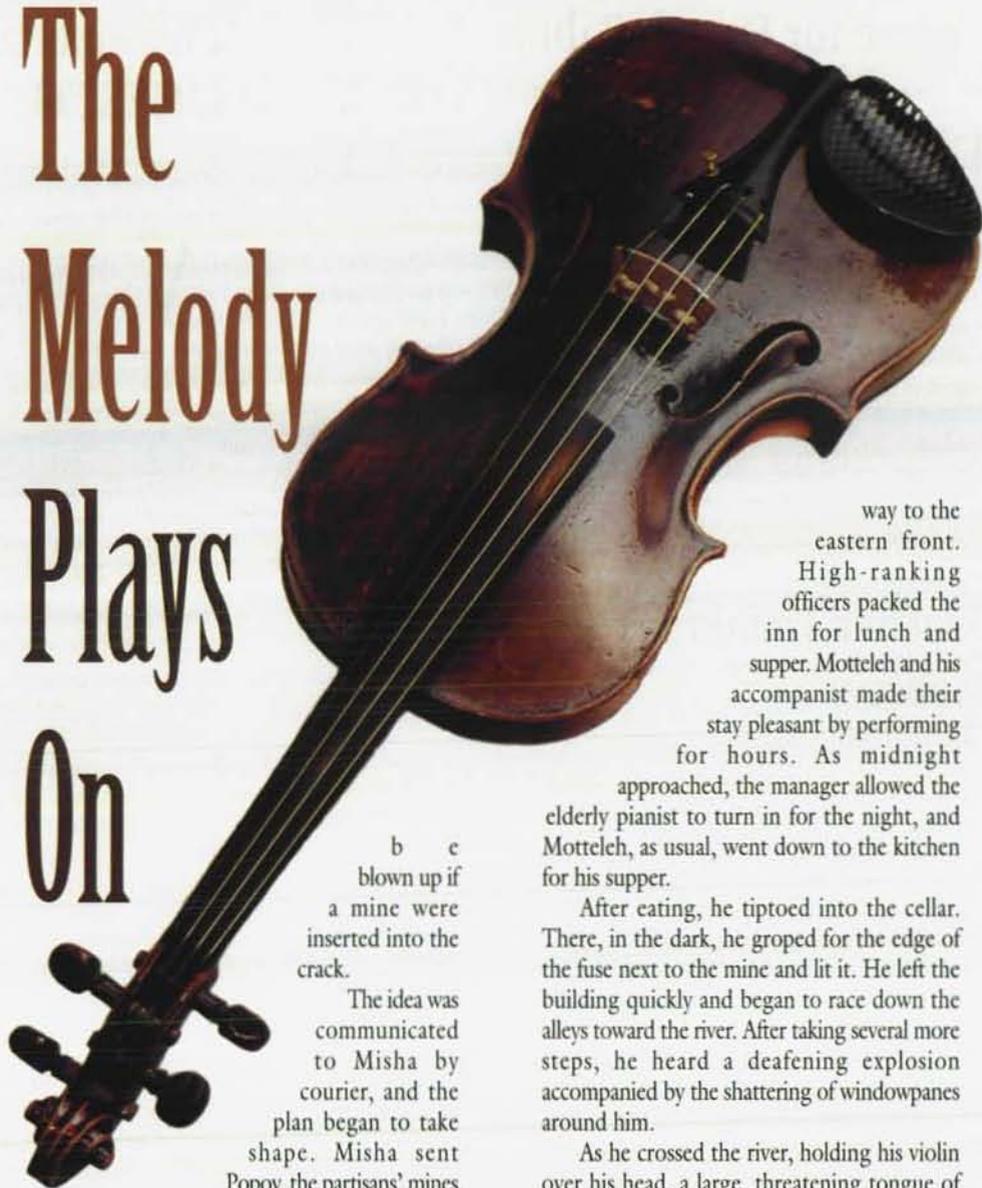
Misha gave Motteleh his protection and provided permanent refuge for the boy in the partisans' camp. It quickly became apparent that Motteleh, an accomplished violinist, could be very helpful to the partisans. One day, the group of partisans headed for the town of Ovruch, which was still under German control. Motteleh, disguised as a beggar, sat down next to the church and played his violin. A forged document in his pocket, specially prepared by one of the partisans in his group, identified him as the son of Ivan Kobina, of the village of Listvin, who had been interned in a Russian POW camp. Motteleh played Ukrainian folk songs and accompanied them with his soft voice as people slowly gathered around him and began to drop coins into the small bowl resting between his legs.

Suddenly a German officer approached, ordering Motteleh to come with him. Together they walked through the town alleys until they came to a stone building. As they entered, Motteleh noticed German officers seated at small tables, eating, drinking, and speaking in loud voices. The "escorting" officer led Motteleh to a grand piano in the corner of the room. An old man with long gray hair who was sitting at the piano placed some music in front of Motteleh, ordered him to play, and then began to accompany him on the piano.

When they finished playing, the officers' cheering filled the room. The one who had delivered Motteleh was very impressed with the impromptu concert and suggested that Motteleh play twice a day at noon and in the evening. In return, he offered him two marks per day, as well as lunch and dinner. Misha ordered Motteleh to stay with the Germans and "case" the building. The facility, they soon discovered, was a Wehrmacht hostel where the Germans had established a roadside inn that attracted large numbers of soldiers. As Motteleh played for the officers, he memorized all the details he saw and had them forwarded to Misha by courier.

One day after lunch, Motteleh discovered a crack in the wall of the building, evidently created when the town was bombed. The young violinist, influenced by the partisans' stories about bombs and sabotage, thought that the entire place, German officers and all, could

# The Melody Plays On



be blown up if a mine were inserted into the crack.

The idea was communicated to Misha by courier, and the plan began to take shape. Misha sent Popov, the partisans' mines expert, to Motteleh, who briefed him on the building.

Popov calculated that the task would require 18 kilograms of explosives, and began to teach Motteleh how they were made and how to lay them so that they would detonate. All that remained was to place a large quantity of explosives in the cellar fissure.

This, however, was no simple task because Motteleh had to visit the cellar each evening. At the door, he withdrew the violin from its case, placed it in an empty barrel, and left the building with the empty case. The next day, when he returned to play, he tucked the case under his arm. Now, however, it was filled not with a violin but with several kilograms of explosives. Within a few days, he moved the entire quantity to the cellar. All that remained was to set the fuse.

Motteleh chose the appropriate day. An entire SS division had reached the hostel on its

way to the eastern front. High-ranking officers packed the inn for lunch and supper. Motteleh and his accompanist made their stay pleasant by performing for hours. As midnight approached, the manager allowed the elderly pianist to turn in for the night, and Motteleh, as usual, went down to the kitchen for his supper.

After eating, he tiptoed into the cellar. There, in the dark, he groped for the edge of the fuse next to the mine and lit it. He left the building quickly and began to race down the alleys toward the river. After taking several more steps, he heard a deafening explosion accompanied by the shattering of windowpanes around him.

As he crossed the river, holding his violin over his head, a large, threatening tongue of flame illuminated the city. On the opposite bank, as planned, his partisan comrades waited for him and drove him back to the forest. He was proud for having avenged the murder of his family.

Little Motteleh did not survive the war, but died about a year later. Misha, however, zealously guarded Motteleh's permanent companion, the faithful violin. Misha bequeathed the instrument to his relatives, and his grandson, Sefi Hanegbi, a tour guide in the Negev, kept it for many years. Recently, with the mediation and assistance of violin-maker Amnon Weinstein, Hanegbi decided to place it in the permanent care of Yad Vashem.

At a unique ceremony with *Keshet Eilon*, the international master classes at Kibbutz Eilon, the violin was handed over to Avner Shalev in the presence of violinists Ida Handel and Shlomo Mintz, after a tune by Ernst Bloch was played by violinist Matan Givol.

What does the word “mud” connote? To most people it simply means a soft, wet deposit left on the ground after rain. To Auschwitz survivors, however, “mud” has a far deeper significance.

The camp inmate’s day involved moving rapidly from living quarters to the toilets to the soup line; it involved long treks from the camp to the work areas; it entailed hours of standing in order, motionless. The people were weak, and the mud on the ground made walking and standing difficult. Corpses lay uncovered in the mud. The mud was an enemy.

Primo Levi noted that to survive the camp, one had to be either prominent or transparent. The *kapo* were prominent, and for the masses to survive they were compelled to hunch over and humbly look to the ground — always facing

and consequently to draw a more comprehensive picture of camp life, Attia has compiled a list of 50 words used repetitively in testimonies, which he intends to explain based on their context.

“Words are signals,” explains Attia. “Simple nouns such as ‘soup,’ ‘walk,’ ‘food,’ ‘door’ are much deeper than just the letters. Each word encompasses a whole world of connotations.” So what is in a word? Attia, a historian and linguistics expert, explains that words have both structural and cognitive semantics. He is most concerned with the structural semantics, that is, the semantic (or the explicit) traits of a noun. “In order to talk about a noun in a particular time period, one has to understand the semantic traits attached to that noun, at that time.” His work, therefore, amounts to a dictionary of Auschwitz survivors’ terminology.

the inmates are dragged from the carriage and marched into a horrific new reality, a different world. And the more their reality is contrasted to ours, the harder it is for us to understand the depth of language they use in recalling the event.

Attia says that those who read the testimonies, but were not interned, need to be initiated into the language used by the survivors. “We have to understand the specific semantic traits, but the survivors, largely for psychological reasons, are not explaining them.”

“Soup” is another word that Attia has attempted to reduce to semantic traits. Soup was more than nutrition (it was barely that) and very temporary warmth. It was an instrument of reward and punishment — the authority’s control over who received the soup with stock

# mud

## More Than Words

the mud. Thus, when an Auschwitz survivor refers to “mud” in a testimony, it is far more than a climatic or topographical description.

Dr. Itzhak Attia is researching, in the framework of the International Institute for Holocaust Research, the semantics involving the deeper meaning of the nouns used in testimonies.

Attia explains that when a survivor describes his or her Auschwitz experience, there is a lack of suitable language available that can sensitively and accurately describe the situation without making it banal, and thus changing the event. Elie Wiesel commented that Auschwitz is incomprehensible to someone who was not there. If words are supposed to transmit ideas, but they in fact misrepresent them, then the truth is deformed. Thus, in an effort to give deeper meaning to the terms used in testimonies,

One word that has especially interested Attia is “door,” more accurately, the door to the train transporting Jews into the camp. When a survivor refers to the opening of the [transport] “door,” he or she is recalling a bombardment of sensations: the immense noise of the simultaneous opening of all the train doors; the sudden transferal from pitch black to glaring light; the contrast between the intense heat suffered for anything between three and ten days in the stuffy carriage to the ice-cold chill of the raw elements; and the change from an intensely claustrophobic environment to a vast open expanse.

Attia calls the “door” the “missing air chamber,” because it should be the space where those being transported can prepare or readjust to the stark difference between life on either side of it. Instead of alighting through this door,

rather than just the tasteless hot water. (And if one managed to obtain stock, it could be bartered for essential items.) Also, the inmate’s fight for a place in the soup line was part of the feeding process. The soup was a source of life.

The term “arrival” (at the camp) also has specific connotations to the Auschwitz inmate. With arrival, came assault by the SS, terrifying dogs, selection, and registration. The language of the Auschwitz survivor is clearly burdened with deep semantic traits. For the reader to fully comprehend the memory being recalled, these traits must be acknowledged. Otherwise, the reading is trivialized.

With the completion of his work, Attia’s lexicon will offer a greater understanding of the semantic traits of the language used by Auschwitz survivors in their testimonies.

by Galia Limor

Forced and slave labor and the level of compensation that large German companies should remit to those who performed it during the Holocaust are subjects that occur frequently on the current public agenda. Forced and slave laborers are people who were brought to the Reich from German-occupied countries. The Reich's victories in the initial period of the war, coupled with its occupation of many countries, provided the Germans with a vast labor force in the occupied territories.

At first, the foreign workers were meant to replace the millions of Germans who had been mobilized and to avoid the need to recruit women for labor. Subsequently, after the blitzkrieg failed, the main reason the German authorities exploited millions of foreign workers was to increase war production. By late 1944 the population of slave laborers had climbed to eight million, and one in five workers in Germany was foreign. Slave laborers from the East were given much poorer living conditions and treatment than their counterparts from Western countries, as shown in numerous examples.

In Poland, Jews were slave laborers throughout the war and experienced various forms of repression and hardship. People were abducted in the street or from their homes, and all underwent severe on-the-job abuse that sometimes had no substantive purpose.

The compulsory labor order, issued in the winter of 1939, applied to Jewish men and women in Poland between the ages of 12 and 60. Gradually, special labor camps for Jews were built to erect fortifications and upgrade transport routes. The conditions in these camps were extremely harsh. Often, the slave laborers were not even assured a place to sleep and a minimum quantity of food. Many died in the camps; others returned permanently disabled.

Works of art can provide diverse and copious documentation of slave labor. Many works, produced after the war as testimonies and memoirs of sorts, document the horrors that took place in the labor camps and in the workshops. Other works, such as the rug shown opposite, were produced according to dictates from German workshops. Other works commemorate slave laborers who, employed as artists during the day, surreptitiously turned out works at night that documented the grim reality in which they lived. The Yad Vashem art collection contains many paintings that document the lives of slave laborers in World War II. Several are shown here.

**S L A V E**

**L A B O R**

**T H R O U G H**

**A R T**



Arnold Daghani (1909–1985), forced labor, Transnistria, 1942  
Yad Vashem Art Collection



Bedrich Fritta (1907–1944), Jewish laborer in Theresienstadt, 1942–44  
Yad Vashem Art Collection

# Woven in the Lodz Ghetto

by Galia Limor

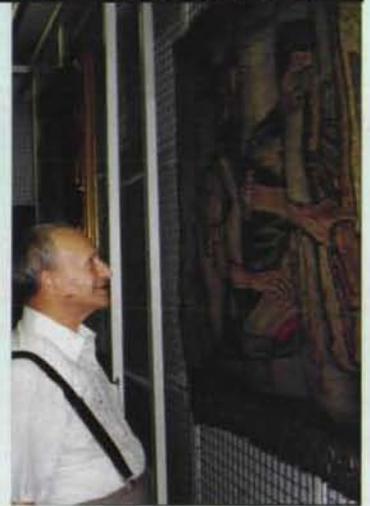
In the Lodz Ghetto, as in other ghettos, the entire population was mobilized for slave labor, and the ghetto itself became a labor camp. In the autumn of 1940, the highest echelon of the German bureaucracy in the Lodz area decided to create more jobs in the ghetto and to establish workshops. For this purpose, they imported machinery from all over the Reich, assured a flow of job orders, and reopened all the shuttered enterprises in the ghetto.

The Jews in the ghetto worked under shameful conditions of undernourishment and deprivation; many collapsed on the job. At first, however, many of them believed that their labor would spare them from transport to vague destinations. The authorities, in turn, profited from the workshops and, for this reason, left the Lodz Ghetto intact while the other ghettos in Poland were liquidated.

Occasionally, German buyers visited the ghetto to buy up the output of the numerous workshops.

One of the enterprises in the ghetto was a rug factory. Located in a small building between the ghetto and the cemetery, it employed men and women under grueling conditions. Germans purchased its rugs by bartering basic commodities. Some of the rugs were patterned after various photographs, including a few that were taken at the workshop itself. One such rug and photograph have been in Yad Vashem's possession for many years. Two men are visible in both the rug and the photograph, one old and the other young, weaving a rug. The photo was taken by a German photographer named Viktor Gawinowein. The following caption appears at the bottom of the photo: *Old and young craftsmen*. The old man who appears in the photo and the rug is Mr. Zilbershtayn; the young man is Perec Zylberberg, who came to Yad Vashem and identified himself in the rug.

Perec Zylberberg (b. 1924) was sixteen years old when he worked at the rug workshop where he spent no more than six months. Afterwards, he moved on to other workshops, and in early 1944 he was sent to a labor camp outside the Lodz Ghetto. The Jews in the ghetto were liquidated that summer, and Zylberberg, who saw the photo in a Holocaust museum, identified himself positively, noting that this rug was unique as it had been made of leftover pieces of cloth. Zylberberg (pictured above), who lives in Canada, recently visited Israel and Yad Vashem and observed the rug that he had known so well from times past.



(b. 1910), forced labor in Teresienstadt, 1942-44  
Art Collection



(b. 1921), forced laborer in a coal mine near Auschwitz, 1945  
Art Collection



refuse in the Lodz Ghetto, 1942-44, artist unknown  
Art Collection

by Eli Sagi

A series of talks in Washington has been held between representatives of the US Administration and Jewish organizations on one side, and the German government and industries on the other. Hope is being expressed that these talks will pave the way for the establishment of a fund to pay compensation to forced and slave laborers who worked in concentration camps and labor camps, German factories, and so on during the period of Nazi rule.

In Poland, the forced laborers were Jews seized in the streets or taken from their homes and forced to do various jobs such as clearing debris and paving roads. Forced labor was obligatory for all Jews, male and female, aged 14-60. Methods of degradation were commonly used. Many were harassed and even killed through work.

Registration was the task of the *Judenrats*, which were obligated to supply quotas of workers in accordance with the needs and demands of the Nazi authorities. When the ghettos were established, some of them became forced-labor camps.

The slave laborers worked in the ghettos,

To give an idea of what the compulsory and forced laborers experienced, as well as their feelings and opinions about the recent campaign to pay them wages for the work they did for the Germans and the suffering they underwent, four personal stories of survivors who worked as forced and slave laborers are presented.

Below are the stories of Masha Greenbaum, Chana Feuerstein, Chava Reuveni, and Noach Flug.

**Masha Greenbaum** was born in Kaunas, Lithuania. She was 14 years old when the Nazis invaded Kaunas in June 1941. Masha was put into the ghetto and worked in various workshops, including one that prepared feathers for pillows to be sent to Germany, manufactured dolls, and produced wooden clogs. The work conditions were harsh, from early morning until evening, and she received just one portion of thin soup during the workday.

In an *aktion* in September 1941, Masha was taken to the Narva camp in Estonia, where she worked for the Todt company on the construction of an airport. "They shouted at us, ordering us to work. I had to pick up stones and move them from one place to another in a small cart; after a while I realized that I was being harassed.

liberated in April 1945.

"Every survivor of forced labor who did not receive wages for his hard work under inhumane conditions must be paid for his work," says Masha. She is angry and feels pain because 50 years have passed since the end of the war and the forced and slave laborers have still not been compensated for their suffering. "The enlightened countries such as the United States should have reached agreement with the German companies and the German government on the payment of wages to slave and forced laborers before a large number of the survivors passed away," she adds.

**Chana Feuerstein** was born in Balkany, Hungary, and was 18 years old in April 1944, when she was put into the Nyiregyhaza ghetto after the Nazi invasion of Hungary. In May 1944 she was taken to the Plaszow camp. With her bare hands, Chana carried pieces that had been taken from Jewish tombstones and used them to build paths to the homes of SS men.

"We worked from morning until dark. The SS men guarded us and my friends with the help of dogs." Chana also carried

# 'They Benefited

in forced-labor camps, and in concentration camps. A large number of them worked in German factories. Jews were required to work 10-12 hours a day in the totalitarian regime of the camps with virtually no food. The purpose of making the Jews work in the camps and factories was to replace the millions of Germans who had been drafted into the army and to save on the costs of emergency mobilization in their country.

Due to the expansion and continuation of the war on the eastern front, the Nazis needed millions of workers for their war effort: additional soldiers for the German army, workers for increased arms production, and so on.

The number of forced and slave laborers alive today is estimated at approximately two million. It should be noted that Jewish as well as non-Jewish forced laborers are covered by this settlement.

Day after day I did the same work, moving stones and returning them to the same place from which they had been taken," recounts Masha. She received food once a day and sometimes not at all.

In the winter of 1943 Masha was transferred to the Kiviylı camp, where she worked on renovating old shacks so that she and her comrades would be able to lie down after a hard day of work. She worked in a cement factory, again for Todt, and made cinder blocks. She reports having suffered humiliations there. In September 1944, Masha arrived at the Ochsenzoll-Langenhorn camp. She worked under inhumane conditions for the Felix Company in a weapons factory, making hand grenades for the German army.

In 1945 Masha was transferred to Bergen-Belsen, from which she was

long planks for construction and worked in the sewing workshop. She received food once a day or not at all. In early August 1944, she moved to the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp. There, after a *selektion*, she was sent to the gas chambers. Due to a defect in the gas chambers she was miraculously saved. In late August 1944 Chana was sent to Neustadt, Upper Silesia, where she dug bunkers in 10-hour shifts without food. She received her rations at the camp. Chana says that she was afraid of the Nazis, who threatened her and the other workers by telling them not to speak or be in contact with one another.

After 10 days, she switched to a weaving factory. "The factory manager threatened that if the workers tried to sabotage the work they would be sent back to Auschwitz," Chana recounts.

Chana was taken from the camp on a



Chana Feuerstein



Masha Greenbaum



Noach Flug



Chava Reuveni



with a hammer and her bare hands in order to fill carts with rocks that were used to build the dam.

She was given her rations in the camp in the morning and evening, and worked in all kinds of weather without a break.

In March 1945 she was taken to the Mauthausen and Gunskirchen camps, where she was liberated in May 1945.

**Noach Flug**, today the Secretary General of the Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel and a member of the delegation to the Claims Conference negotiations with the Germans, was born in Lodz, Poland.

At the age of 15 he was put into the Lodz ghetto where he worked in a factory that produced backpacks, holsters, and tents for the German army. "We worked 12 hours a day. The only food that entered my mouth was a portion of soup and a piece of bread. The factory work was hard. Every worker was required to produce a certain very high number of backpacks," Noach recounts.

In August 1944, Noach was sent to the Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen camps where he worked for electrical-appliance companies such as A.E.G., in an

# from Our Suffering'

death march in January 1945 and reached the Gross-Rosen camp. In February 1945 she was transferred to Mauthausen, and from there she was taken to Bergen-Belsen, where she was liberated.

"Although in the 1950s I refused to accept any compensation from Germany, on the principle that nothing could compensate me for the pain and the loss of my family, today I think that I and all the slave and forced laborers deserve this money for our work and our suffering," Chana says.

**Chava Reuveni** was born in Debrecen, Hungary. When the Nazis invaded Hungary she was 16. In April 1944, the house in Debrecen in which she lived with her parents was made part of the Jewish ghetto. She worked outside the ghetto,

removing ruins of houses that had been bombed by the Allies. She and the other laborers removed the ruins with their bare hands.

After the ghetto was emptied of its inhabitants in June 1944, Chava was taken to the Strasshof and Goestling camps in Austria. She would go out to harvest wheat with a scythe. "We worked through the day without a break," says Chava. Afterwards she was taken to the Steinbach camp and there, too, she harvested wheat. "When it rained and it was impossible to work in the fields, I worked as a domestic in the homes of local residents, where I was also given food."

In October 1944, she was transferred to the forced-labor camp in Saint Poelten-Viehofen, near Vienna, to build a dam across the river. At work she had to quarry

underground mine where they made the appliances. He worked continuously without a rest, and during the work day he received just one portion of soup. He was taken from the camp on a death march in February 1945, and he reached the Mauthausen and Ebense camps. In Ebense he worked in an underground factory for the German military industry until May 1945, when he was liberated.

Noach supports full remuneration for all the forced and slave laborers by the German companies "that benefited from this cheap, accessible labor when those workers were experiencing hardships and torment at work and received almost no food or medical assistance. They benefited from our suffering."

by Dr. Mordecai Paldiel

In October 1999, Yad Vashem will host a rescuer whose Herculean efforts earned him the honor of being designated as "Righteous among the Nations," in a ceremony to be attended by some of the people he saved. From May 1942 to July 1944, Antoni Gawrylkiewicz, an 18-year-old village shepherd, saved 16 Jews belonging to the Kabacznik, Solominansky, and Sonenson families.

As told by Haifa resident Yitzhak Sonenson

"we all owe our lives," for he was the person most intimately involved with the care of the 16 Jews in hiding, which included digging underground shelters, preparing food, removing bodily waste, transferring them from one locality to another, and even warning them of approaching danger, not only from the Germans, but also from antisemitic elements of the Polish underground who operated in the area.

In the words of Prof. Eliach: "Countless times he would open the entrance to our pit

a basket and brought him, together with his father and others, to a safe place with a Christian family. As the danger of detection increased, Antoni moved "his flock" to a new shelter, leading them at night over a five-kilometer stretch to the village of Lebednik.

Suspected of hiding Jews, Antoni was apprehended by a Polish underground unit and sustained severe beatings, remaining bedridden for days, for refusing to disclose their presence. Gawrylkiewicz also helped other Jews who came

# A Promise Kept

and his New York-based sister, Prof. Yaffa Eliach, a noted Holocaust scholar (who were then 10 and 6 years old, respectively), they witnessed a harrowing German liquidation raid in Eishyshok (today Eisiskis, in Lithuania), on the eve of Rosh Hashanah 1941, which claimed the lives of thousands of Jews. The two siblings, together with their parents, Moshe and Zipporah, and their baby brother, Shaul, miraculously survived this action, then fled to the Radin Ghetto. On 10 May 1942 the Nazis staged a large-scale action, during which thousands of Jews were led out of the ghetto to the ancient Jewish cemetery, burial place of the esteemed religious scholar Hafetz Hayyim, where they were murdered.

Sonensons again miraculously survived by hiding with other Jews in the attic of a house. However, to avoid revealing the 22 Jews in hiding, little Shaul had to be smothered to death when he began to cry. After this tragedy, Moshe Sonenson contacted Kazimierz Korkucz, in the nearby village of Korkuciany, who lived in an isolated large farmhouse with his mother, and who agreed to hide the Sonensons (and eventually the other two families) near his house and at other locations.

Antoni Gawrylkiewicz was employed by Korkucz as a shepherd. "To him," states Yitzhak,



*In the center, the "Righteous among the Nations" Antoni Gawrylkiewicz with the survivors Yaffa Eliach and her brother, Yitzhak Sonenson*

and throw in food during the most dangerous circumstances." When Zipporah Sonenson, hiding in a stable in June 1944, gave birth to Hayyim, Antoni quickly placed the baby boy in

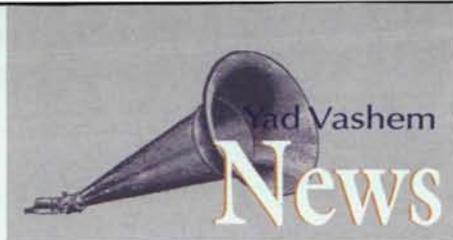
at night begging for food, and he would share with them any food that was left for himself after providing for "his flock."

Travails for the rescued persons did not stop with liberation. Members of a Polish underground unit murdered Yitzhak and Yaffa's mother and baby brother Hayyim in their grandmother's house in Eishyshok. Yaffa Eliach sadly comments: "Unfortunately, Antoni was not there to save us."

In 1973 the "Righteous" title was awarded to Kazimierz Korkucz, who also played a leading role in the rescue operation, but Antoni Gawrylkiewicz was overlooked due to lack of contact with him. After contact was recently established, and the Sonensons and their rescuer in Vilnius had a momentous meeting, Yitzhak Sonenson and Yaffa Eliach submitted testimonies to Yad Vashem, and Antoni Gawrylkiewicz, who now lives in Plock, Poland, was awarded the title of "Righteous among the Nations."

"Antoni is a wonderful person," Professor Eliach emphasizes in her testimony to Yad Vashem. "He taught me many things during moments of reprieve and shared beautiful stories about animals and nice people. He always promised me that he would save me and everybody else." And indeed, he kept his word!

*The author is the Director, Dept. for the Righteous among the Nations.*



## "Europe under Nazi Rule and the Holocaust" International Conference in Poland

by Dr. Tikva Fatal-Knaani

Until now, the International Institute for Holocaust Research has held all of its international scholarly conferences in Jerusalem. Recently, however, Yad Vashem sponsored a conference in Warsaw, its first-ever scholarly conference outside Jerusalem and Israel.

(This is the second in a series of conferences. The first took place in Jerusalem in January 1999 on "The Holocaust and Jewish History," and the third will be held in March 2000 at Brandeis University on "The Impact of the Holocaust on Contemporary Society.")

The conference, held Sunday–Wednesday, 29 August–1 September 1999, focused on "Europe under Nazi Rule and the Holocaust." It was prepared in conjunction with the Mordechai Anielewicz Center at the University of Warsaw, the Jewish Historical Research Institute (ZIH), and the Hamburg Institute for Social Research, with the generous support of the Gertner Center for Holocaust Conferences.

The purpose of the conference was to explore the current state of knowledge about relations between Jews and non-Jews and how these relations were manifested during the Holocaust. Historical research has done little to probe this aspect of the era. Studies have been written about Germany, Poland, and several parts of western Europe, but no attempt has been made to attain a deeper level of knowledge and, especially, to place this knowledge on a comparative footing. The goal of the conference was to make up for this shortcoming by systematically examining the behavior and attitude of each country's population toward the Jews.

The lecturers were from Israel, Europe, and the United States, and at this conference, as at previous ones, they included young scholars and others of international repute such as Miroslav Karny, David Engel, Michael Marrus, Jerzy Tomaszewski, and Wolfgang Benz. The lectures were delivered in

English, Polish, and German, with simultaneous translation. The conference was comprised of plenary lectures on various aspects of Jewish-gentile relations in Poland, Germany, and France, workshops on various countries, and panel discussions.

One evening was devoted to the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, on 1 September 1939. The evening was conducted solely in Polish and most of the invitees were Poles. The speakers included Feliks Tych, Director of the Jewish Historical Research Institute; Wladyslaw Bartoszewski (former Polish Foreign Minister and a leading figure in the rescue of Jews during the Holocaust); and Prof. Israel Gutman, Yad Vashem's Chief Historian.

The participants explored a wide variety of topics during the three days of the conference. The lecturers addressed themselves to the texture of Jewish-gentile relations in topics such as the Polish and Jewish undergrounds; the Polish church and the Jews; persecution and rescue in Germany; the role of the Wehrmacht in murdering the Jews of Belorussia and the Ukraine; the Lithuanians' attitude to the murder of the Jews; the French Resistance and the Jews; and Jewish-gentile relations in the Ukraine, Belorussia, Hungary, Romania, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Italy, Greece, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

The conference was preceded by a festive opening ceremony attended by the Polish Minister of Culture, Andrzej Zakrzewski, and Israel's Ambassador to Poland, Yigal Antebi. The next issue of *Yad Vashem, Jerusalem* will report on the impressions of the conference and a survey of the plenary lectures, workshops, and discussions.

*The author is Administrative Director of the International Institute for Holocaust Research.*

## The History of Latvian Jewry in Latvia

Recently published by Yad Vashem and the Israel Embassy in Riga, *The History of Latvian Jewry* is the first publication of its kind in Latvia since World War II. The book is mainly a translation into Latvian of Prof. Dov Levin's introduction to the section on Latvian Jewry in *Pinkas Ha-Kehillot Latvia Ve-Estonia* (Yad Vashem, 1988, edited by Dov Levin).

The main chapters present general background on Latvia and its inhabitants, the history of the Jews from their first settlement in Latvia until after World War I, and the situation of the Jews in independent Latvia (1920–40), under Soviet rule (1940–41), under the Nazi occupation (1941–45), and after World War II.

Eleven tables, followed by a long list of hundreds of sources in various languages, are included within the text. The front cover shows a photograph of the Great Synagogue in Liepaja (Libau), Latvia.

At the initiative of Oded Ben-Hur, Israel Ambassador to Latvia, the book was submitted to the National Committee of History Teachers in Latvia and was approved for use in the local educational system.



## Haredi Teachers' Conference

The Haredi Administration of the Department for Social and Youth Affairs in the Municipality of Jerusalem, headed by Rabbi Meir Halahmi and Chava Rosenthal, conducted a conference in the Valley of the Communities at Yad Vashem for 250 teachers. Participating in the educational activity in small groups, the teachers completed the study program on "Eastern European Jewry and the Holocaust."

The moderator of the conference was Rabbi Meir Halahmi. Dr. Motti Shalem, Director of the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem, praised the collaboration, and Rabbi Avraham Feiner, a senior city official, addressed the gathering. Rabbi Moshe Haim Lau gave a lecture on the survivors in eastern Europe. Shulamit Imber, Pedagogical Director of the International School, presented Yad Vashem's educational philosophy with regard to the Holocaust.

Cantor Haim Eliezer Hershtik and the choir of the Ron Shulamit Conservatory recited prayers and performed cantorial singing.

## Artifacts from Greece by Hedva Nahmias

In June 1999, hundreds of Greek Jewish Holocaust survivors and representatives of the second and third generations convened at a moving event in honor of the publication of *Pinkas Hakehillot Yavan*, documenting the Jewish communities of Greece, and the opening of the exhibition “Synagogues of Salonika,” at the Valley of the Communities.

The Museum department prepared for the ceremony with the assistance of Yaakov (Jackie) Handeli who devoted much energy to this project, and Raoul Saporta, Chairman of the Organization of Greek Survivors of Extermination Camps. Some 400 inquiries were sent to former Greek Jews asking them to donate objects that document Greek Jewish history before and during the Holocaust. Many came to the ceremony carrying artifacts relating to their personal accounts or to those of relatives who perished in the Holocaust.



Contents of Moshe Matza's circumcision kit

Vashem's Department of Museums.

Among the dozens of artifacts and pictures donated, together with the moving stories concerning them, we cite the story of Moshe Matza (1883–1943), a cantor, ritual slaughterer, and circumciser from the island of Zakynthos.

Moshe Matza's intact circumcision kit was donated to Yad Vashem by his daughters, Deborah Levy and Michal Albala, and his granddaughter, Sheila (Shulamit) Cohen, who had preserved it. The kit includes scissors, a knife, a circumcision shield, bandages, and jars of sand (to stanch bleeding), a honing stone, cotton, and special socks for the newborn. Matza's granddaughter, Sheila, tells the story of the socks: “Grandfather wanted every baby to be properly dressed for the festive event, so he kept a pair of white socks in his circumcision kit to cover the feet of babies whose parents could not afford this piece of clothing.” In a note attached to one of the bottles, Moshe Matza instructs his successor, Shmuel Fortis (Michal Albala's cousin), as to its use: “Scatter the sand in the size of drops and soak it up with cotton to stop the bleeding.”

Moshe Matza — famed for his large cosmetics shop in the town of Zakynthos — conducted *brit mila* (circumcision) ceremonies during the Holocaust with a sense of mission and mortal danger. When he visited a postpartum mother with his kit, not only did he offer his services at no charge but he always made sure to bring something for the newborn.

On 9 September 1940, the Nazis landed on the island and imposed their racial laws and regime of terror. Moshe Matza died during Hanukkah in late 1943 and did not have the privilege of fulfilling his dream of settling in Eretz Israel and performing *brit mila* ceremonies properly.

Another event took place about a month later — a solemn ceremony in Haifa, where a street was named for Salonika Jewry in appreciation of the Greek Jewish community of that city. Haifa residents of Greek-Jewish origin and Rena Mano, who heads the Organization of Greek Survivors, gave representatives of Yad Vashem's Department of Museums a warm reception. Many artifacts were gathered at a reception at the Rabbi Habib Synagogue, named after the Chief Rabbi of Salonika.

The Greek Jews' response to the operation of gathering artifacts for the new museum, now under construction, is evident in the ceaseless influx of artifacts, pictures, photographs, clothing, and stories to Yad

Ignatz (Yisrael) Bubis, Chairman of the German Society for Yad Vashem, passed away in August at the age of 72, after a short illness.

Bubis, born in Wroclaw, Germany (now Poland) in 1927, was the only member of his immediate family to survive the Holocaust. He resettled in Germany after the war. In the 1950s he traded in jewelry and precious metals in Frankfurt, before turning to real estate in the '70s.

In 1969 he joined the FDP (the Free Democrats), and in 1978 he became head of the 6,000-strong Frankfurt Jewish Community. From 1992 until his death, he had been the Chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, and in early 1999 he was appointed as the Chairman of the German Society for Yad Vashem. He was also President of the European Jewish Congress, Vice President of the World Jewish Congress, and a member of the Executive of the World Jewish Restitution Organization.

Ignatz Bubis, who fought an uncompromising battle to make Germany aware of its responsibility for the Holocaust, leaves behind a legacy of tolerance and openness in his quest for unity between Germans and Jews.

Yad Vashem's Directorate, International Council, and Foundation extend their deepest condolences to Ida and Naomi Bubis.



## Gathering of Documentation in Slovakia Ends Successfully

The Yad Vashem Archives project of gathering Holocaust-era documentation did not, of course, overlook Slovakia, although this effort was no easy task. Apart from the Slovakian national archives, all regional and subdistrict archives had to be reviewed. But when the material was requested at each archive, it proved impossible to pay for the documents in advance and photocopy them immediately.

It was necessary for a public personality of stature to complete the project; this was the Director of the Jewish Museum in Bratislava, Dr. Pavol Mestan, who volunteered for the assignment. To complete the project successfully, Mestan exerted every effort and overcame numerous difficulties that arose after the documentation was requested.

He became the address to which the various archives could send queries, to which technical difficulties could be referred, and to which photocopied materials could be sent. Most important, he made sure to forward the material from the Slovakian capital to Yad Vashem. Due to Mestan's remarkable familiarity with the documentation, Slovakia became one of Yad Vashem's success stories in its project to gather archival documentation.

Dr. Pavol Mestan's eagerness to help in this endeavor stemmed — apart from his superb personal traits — from his special relationship with Yad Vashem and his identification with Judaism and the Jews' fate during the Holocaust. He regarded this project as a commemorative enterprise for the vanished community of Slovakian Jewry.

The Claims Conference, under the leadership of its President, Rabbi Israel Miller, and Vice President, Gideon Taylor, has recently pledged another generous gift as part of its donation to cover one-third of the total costs of the comprehensive “Yad Vashem 2001” masterplan. Since its establishment, Yad Vashem has been supported and promoted by the Claims Conference as the pioneer and leading center for Holocaust commemoration and documentation.

# Visits at Yad Vashem



Italian film director Ettore Scola guided by Yaël Orbetto, on his visit to Yad Vashem in July



Visit by Taipei Mayor Ma Ying-jeou in July



The Dutch Foreign Minister Van Aarsten visiting Yad Vashem in August stands in the garden of the "Righteous among the Nations" next to the Wall of Honor inscribed with the names of his mother-in-law, parents, and grandparents "Righteous among the Nations"



Visit by the Deputy Prime Minister of Ireland, Mary Harney, in July

## Yad Vashem Delegation in Auschwitz

by Riki Budenheimer

**A**s part of Yad Vashem's extensive cooperation with the museum at Auschwitz and for the second time this year, the museum hosted a seminar for Yad Vashem employees. This seminar was similar to those of the past six years for employees of the Auschwitz Museum that have been conducted at Yad Vashem.

For most of the 17 members of our group, it was the first trip to Poland and to Auschwitz, so we were understandably concerned about what to expect. In fact, all of us left Israel with butterflies in our stomachs, fearful that a two-week stay in a location so significant would be intense and difficult. The seminar itself consisted of three segments: academic study, touring the Auschwitz site and all of its satellites, and touring Poland. This division, however, provided us with a respite from the more intense and emotional aspects of the program.

The lectures dealt with issues relating to the Polish point of view concerning Auschwitz, Jewish-Polish relations, and Polish remembrance of the war era. Inspired by the stimulating sessions and fascinating lecturers, we found that we wanted to study and see as much as possible. Concurrently, the positive dynamic that developed

within our group certainly helped us to endure the long, tough days when we were exposed to the horrific reality of Auschwitz. The exhausting hikes we took during the evenings helped us to unwind, while our lengthy conversations into the night helped us fall asleep.



Yad Vashem delegation with "Mama" Kaminec, concierge of the hotel in the town of Oswiecim

One of our field trips took us to the cemeteries in the Auschwitz area and south to Silesia, where victims of the death marches are buried. The tour, escorted by a

member of the Museum staff, was one of the most disturbing that we experienced. We visited mass graves inside a Christian cemetery where the Germans had ordered Jews to be buried, and where the local priest or undertaker had recorded the numbers and other details. People living in the area, surprised to see a group visiting these graves approached us excitedly and shared with us what some of them had witnessed in 1945. One heartwarming note was the fact that the graves were well kept and preserved, and it was evident that local inhabitants had been visiting and laying flowers on them.

All in all, we had an unforgettable experience, and we thank Yad Vashem for giving us the privilege of participating in the seminar.

*The author is Director of Study Seminars.*

**J**ohanan Bein (pictured below), Vice Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, is retiring. Bein joined the Yad Vashem Directorate in 1995, after a four-year service as Deputy Director General of Israel's



Johanan Bein accompanying the Foreign Minister of Finland, Tarja Halonen, during her visit to Yad Vashem

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Widely known as Ambassador Bein, Johanan served as Ambassador to the U.N. in New York. On behalf of his colleagues at Yad Vashem, we wish to thank him for his contribution to Yad Vashem, his promotion of the "Righteous among the Nations" department, and his devotion to the theme of the "Righteous among the Nations."

## U.S.A.

The American Society's Annual Tribute Dinner will take place on 7 November, and the honorees will be **Wolf Blitzer**, CNN's lead anchor for *The World Today*, the network's flagship news program, and host of *Late Edition*, and **Jack H. Pechter**, a Baltimore philanthropist. **Blitzer** is the child of survivors and was born in a displaced persons camp. **Pechter's** family fled to Siberia to escape Nazi persecution, and he was born at the



From left to right: Lawrence Eagleburger, Chairman of the International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims and former US Secretary of State; Dr. Israel Singer, Secretary General of the World Jewish Congress; Neal Sher of the International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims



From left to right: Shraga Mekel; Adina Burian; Lawrence Burian; Dr. Marlene Warshawski-Yahalom; Lawrence Eagleburger, Chairman of the International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims; Elie Singer; Caroline Arfa



A delegation from the American Society for Yad Vashem lays a wreath in the Hall of Remembrance

onset of the war in a small town near Chelm. **Jack Pechter** donated a major gift to the building of the new International School for Holocaust Studies. An article about **Jack Pechter** will appear in the next issue of *Yad Vashem, Jerusalem*.

On 30 June **Lawrence S. Eagleburger**, Chairman of the International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims and former US Secretary of State, addressed a well-attended Young Leadership Associates of the American Society for Yad Vashem event, chaired by **Adina and Lawrence Burian**. **Eagleburger** stated that the Holocaust was a seminal event that should influence American foreign affairs in the 21st century, and stressed the importance of documenting, in high school and college curricula, the failure of the US government to do all it could to ameliorate the ultimate result of the Holocaust. **Eagleburger** acknowledged the crucial role played

by **Dr. Israel Singer**, Secretary General of the World Jewish Congress, present at the event, in organizing the International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims. He stressed the immediate task, and one which may take a great deal of time, of identifying as many potential insurance claimants as possible and the Commission's cooperation with Yad Vashem to maintain the necessary archives. He ended his address by describing how deeply moved and impressed he was by Yad Vashem activities during his recent visit.

The fourth event of the Atlanta Friends of the American Society for Yad Vashem took place 17 June at the home of **Deborah and Sam Bettsak**. Guest speaker was **Arye Mekel**, Israel's Consul General to the Southern States. **Erna Martino**, President of *Hemshech*, the organization of survivors second and future generations, spoke about the importance of remembrance.

On 1 August, the 1999 American Society for Yad Vashem Delegation visited Yad Vashem after an extensive tour of Poland and Czechoslovakia led by **Shraga Mekel**, Development Director of the American Society. While in eastern Europe the group visited Auschwitz-Birkenau, Majdanek, Treblinka, and Theresienstadt, where they laid wreaths. Taking part in the delegation were survivors and second generation, including **Frances Chernick**, a survivor of a number of camps, along with her husband, **Murray**, and daughter **Marcia**. **Frances** talked about her experiences at Auschwitz-Birkenau during the tour. Survivors **Erna and Fred Pfeffer**, as well as **Sandra and Ronald Rosen**, and **Hannah and Bruce Goldman**, children of survivors, also participated. During the time spent at Yad Vashem the group heard lectures by, among others, **Avner Shaley**, **Prof. Yehuda Bauer**, and **Dr. Yaakov Lozowick**, took part in a memorial service in the Hall of Remembrance, toured the new buildings, and enjoyed a Cantorial Concert. The group stayed in Israel for a week where their extensive tour of the country included visits to an army base in the Golan Heights, a meeting with residents of the Lebanese border, and an in-depth briefing on Middle East security at the Dayan Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

**Mark Honigsfeld** visited Yad Vashem with his family in August, and was given a tour of the site. The son of survivors **Chaim Perec Honigsfeld and Bluma (Lichtman) Honigsfeld** from Warsaw and Leluv respectively, **Honigsfeld** is in the computer business and a close friend of Yad Vashem.

The **Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation**, a Baltimore-based family foundation established in 1957 by **Jacob Blaustein**, donated a considerable sum to the new International School for Holocaust Studies, officially opening in December. **Jacob Blaustein**, together with his father, **Louis Blaustein**, founded the American Oil Company (AMOCO).

**Dr. Marlene Warshawski-Yahalom** was appointed Educational Director of the American Society, as its Education Department expands to properly address the increasing demand for Holocaust education programs in the US.

## Canada

The Canadian Society's mission led by its Chairman, **Hank Rosenbaum**, and **Leslie Dan**, will attend the inauguration ceremony of the multimedia center, which was funded by the **Leslie Dan Family**, and the dedication of the Canadian Pavilion, on 11 October.

In the framework of the inaugural events, the mission will take part in the Second International Conference, "The Memory of the Holocaust in the 21st Century," tour Yad Vashem's exhibitions and new buildings, and visit the Knesset (Israel's Parliament).

The Canadian Society's Annual Tribute Dinner will be held on 8 November, with the **Honorable Elinor Caplan**, the first Jewish woman to become the Canadian Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, as the honoree. The new position of Fund-raising Chair for the Canadian Pavilion in the International School for Holocaust Studies has been filled by **Gerda Frieberg**, a well-known Holocaust speaker and fund-raiser. She was also a leading force in raising funds for the Toronto Federation Holocaust Center. The fund-raising committee has pledged itself to a fund-raising program within the next 2 years.



## France

The French Ambassador to Israel, His Excellency Jean-Noel de Bouillane de Lacoste, presented a donation to Avner Shalev towards the publication of the French volume of the *Lexicon to the Righteous among the Nations*. Present at the ceremony were Dr. Richard Prasquier, the Chair of the French Society for Yad Vashem, who was instrumental in the French government's decision to donate to the *Lexicon*; Prof. Israel Gutman, Yad Vashem's Chief Historian and the Editor-in-Chief of the *Lexicon* series; Dr. Sara Bender, Coordinator of the *Lexicon* series; and Dr. Luciene Lazare, Editor of the French *Lexicon*.



## Holland

Further to the agreement signed by Jan and Paul Baan, between the Baan Brothers Foundation and Yad Vashem, whereby the foundation agreed to a donation towards the implementation of Yad Vashem's computerization project, the project is now under way.

In June, Joop Levy, the new Chair of the Dutch Society visited Yad Vashem and was shown the plans for the exhibition "No Child's Play," due to open under the auspices of the Society in September/October 2000, in the Hague. It will then move on to Amsterdam. The preparations by the Society for the exhibition are at an advanced stage.



## Germany

Yad Vashem joins with the German Society for Yad Vashem in mourning the loss of its Chairman, Ignatz Bubis. A Holocaust survivor, Bubis headed Germany's Jewish community and the European Jewish Congress. Yad Vashem extends sincerest condolences to his wife, Ida, daughter, Naomi, and the family.



## Latin America

We welcome Perla Hazan, former Director of the Venezuelan Society, who was appointed Emissary of the Latin American and Spanish-speaking countries. We wish Perla, who recently made *aliyah* with her husband, Maurice, much success in her new position.



## Chile

The activities of the Chilean Society for Yad Vashem resumed with David Feuerstein, a survivor and loyal supporter of Yad Vashem, as its Chairman.



## Venezuela

Perla Sultan and her husband, Daniel Salimek, Head of the Ashkenazi Jewish Community of Venezuela, visited Yad Vashem in August. During their visit a short ceremony took place at the Garden of the Righteous, donated by the Sultan Family in honor of their parents, Abraham Sultan Sultan and Dora Abedi de Sultan.



## Mexico

At the end of July, Danny Gater left his position as Yad Vashem's Mexican representative. We wish him success in his future endeavors, and are grateful for his years of important work for Yad Vashem.



## Israel

Following the donation by the Caesarea Edmond Benjamin de Rothschild Foundation to cover the entire cost of the building of the new Hall of Names and its interior exhibit, a cornerstone-laying ceremony took place in September in the presence of guest of honor the Baron Benjamin de Rothschild, Yossi Sarid, the Minister of Education, and Ehud Olmert, Mayor of Jerusalem.

The Yad Avi Hayishuv Foundation — Yad Hanadiv — transferred its contribution to Yad Vashem to fund the purchase of computers for the multimedia center of the International School for Holocaust Studies.

The Ted Arison Foundation in Israel presented a donation towards the distribution and collection by youth of Pages of Testimony in old age homes in Israel.

The Community of Former Radomsk Residents in Israel has decided to donate one of its properties in Tel Aviv to Yad Vashem.

# YAD VASHEM JERUSALEM

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## Campaign for the Collection and Commemoration of Holocaust Victims' Names

by Orly Simani

The campaign for the collection and commemoration of Holocaust victims' names, launched in April 1999 with much success, has prompted Israelis and Jews worldwide to submit more than 265,000 Pages of Testimony thus far.

As a result of Yad Vashem's intense advertising, some 40,000 envelopes containing Pages of Testimony have been sent out in Israel.

Anyone who has not yet carried out the important duty to commemorate his/her loved ones is urged to fill out Pages of Testimony and send them to Yad Vashem. The Pages, deposited for perpetuity in the Hall of Names, are being processed and all names are being entered into a computerized data base.

To receive blank Pages of Testimony, please call 1-800-257-777.

## N O T I C E

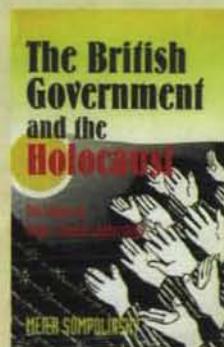
Yad Vashem's telephone numbers have been changed. The new telephone number of the Yad Vashem switchboard is (02) 644-3400. The new fax number is (02) 644-3443.

## EVENTS OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 1999

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>17 October</b>  | Memorial service for Italian Jewry, in the Hall of Remembrance and the auditorium   |
| <b>31 October</b>  | Colloquium in honor of Prof. Eberhard Jäckel's 70th birthday, on "National Socialism and the 'Final Solution'", in conjunction with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in the auditorium |
| <b>1 November</b>  | Symposium on "The Holocaust of Lithuanian Jews," in the auditorium  |
| <b>8 November</b>  | Gathering of the <i>Alumim</i> group (children hidden in France), in the auditorium   |
| <b>30 November</b> | Concert to mark the centennial of the birth of composer Hans Krasse, in the auditorium  |

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

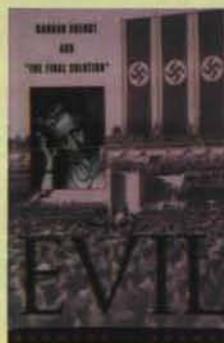
Meier Sompolinsky, *The British Government and the Holocaust: The Failure of Anglo-Jewish Leadership*, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1999, 275 pp.



The forces that shaped the actions of the British Board of Deputies and the British Section of the World Jewish Congress are explained in detail in Sompolinsky's erudite study of the response of British Jewry to the

Holocaust. In particular, his depiction of the valiant, yet mostly futile, actions of the Chief Rabbi of Britain, Joseph Herman Hertz, and those of the lesser-known figures, Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld and Harry Goodman, illustrates the basic political weakness that underscored the response of British Jewry to the destruction of their brethren on the Continent.

Bernard Bergen, *The Banality of Evil, Hannah Arendt and the Final Solution*, New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998, 169 pp.



Bernard Bergen explores the political and philosophical consequences of Hannah Arendt's concept of "the banality of evil." He shows how Arendt redefined the meaning of our most treasured

political concepts and principles — freedom, society, identity, truth, equality, and reason — in light of the horrific events of the Holocaust.

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