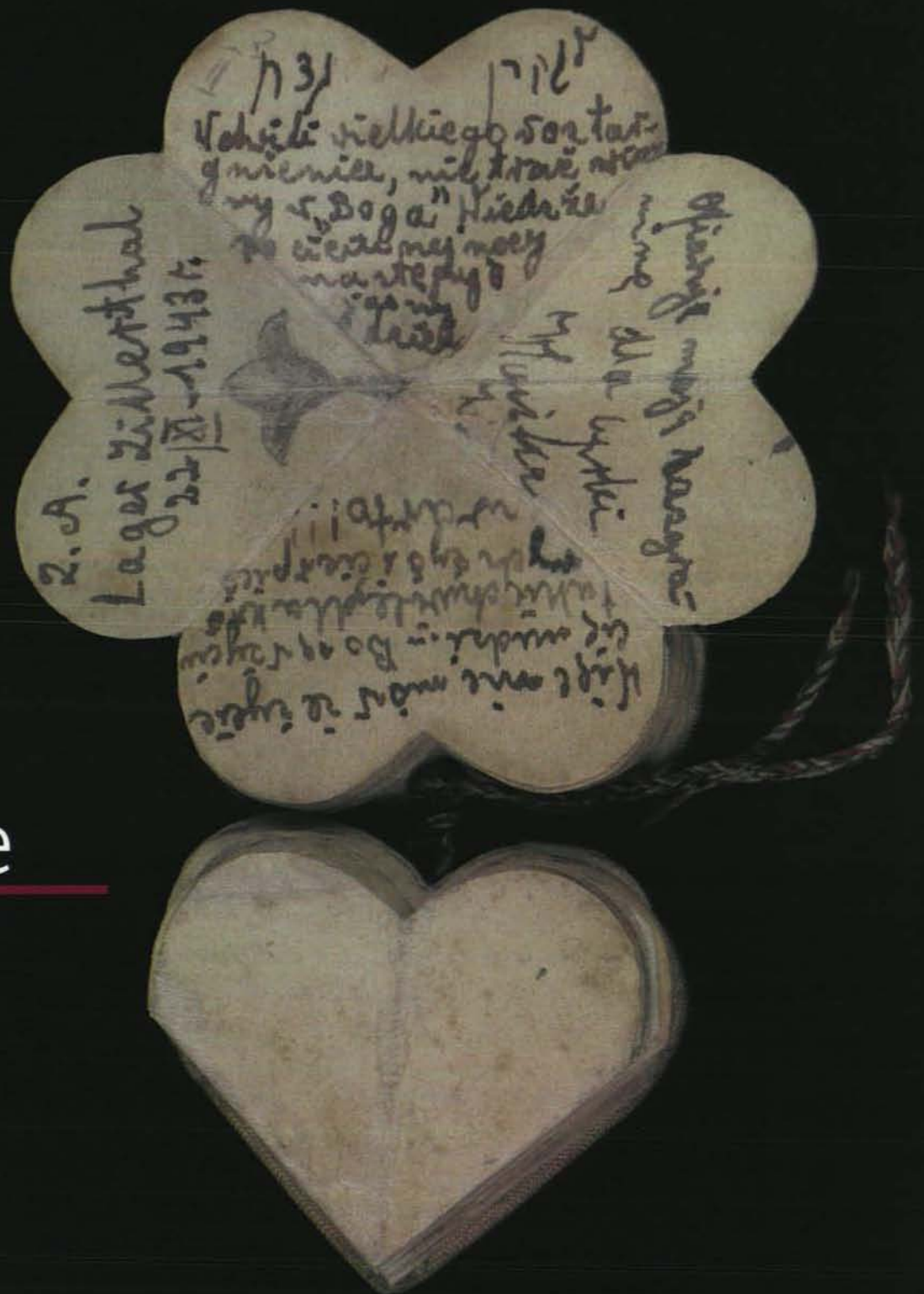


YAD VASHEM JERUSALEM

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A Well of Knowledge

A special issue
on the
inauguration
of the
new Archives
and
Library building



A Genuine Partnership	2-3
The Metamorphosis of Memory	4
The Archivist	5
"I Only Told Bits and Pieces"	6
The Testimonies Section	
With Extra Care;	7
The Conservation Laboratory	
Sheltering the Records;	8
The New Archives and Library Building	
The Archives Go High Tech	9
Romania's Judaica Exodus	10-11
The Boom in Holocaust Literature	12-13
Eye Witness	13
More to Be Done	14-15
Highlights of Work Plan 2000	15
News	16-17
Friends Worldwide	18-19
Events	20

Cover: A birthday card from the Yad Vashem Archives.
See page 7.

"It is not incumbent upon you to complete the work, yet you are not free to evade it either," Rabbi Tarfon tells us in the Mishna. With the completion of the new Archives and Library building on the Yad Vashem campus, a part of the work towards the "Yad Vashem 2001" master plan has been accomplished.

But whereas the building to house the more than 55 million pages of documents has been erected, the documents, photographs, films, testimonies and 100,000 volumes of books already stored here, have yet to be viewed, read, and understood.

Now that the physical part of the work has concluded, the spiritual, mental, artistic effort—that of writing books, essays and commentaries, creating films and theatre, music and art, science and culture—has yet to be accomplished.

The Yad Vashem Archives and Library comprise a potential wellspring of knowledge. However, it is up to you—researchers, scholars, teachers, students, and members of the general public—to draw from these resources and disseminate this knowledge to the world.

Yvette Nahmia-Messinas
Managing Editor

In March 1944, a hideout concealing 35 Jews was discovered by the Nazis in Warsaw. The occupants were taken to Pawiak Prison and, several days later, were murdered amidst the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto. Among them were the great historian Emanuel Ringelblum and his family. By that time, the *Oneg Shabbat Archives*, collected in Warsaw during the war under Ringelblum's tutelage, had already been buried under the ruins. After the war, some of this material was discovered and photocopied, and the photocopies were sent on to Israel.

The Ringelblum Archives, along with tens of thousands of testimonies, documents, diaries, and photographs gathered by the survivors immediately after liberation, are the roots of Yad Vashem's Archives. It was also at that time that the library was established for the collection of all printed and bound material on the Holocaust.

The Archives and Library are the information repository on which the structure of remembrance rests. Over the decades since the war, and in accordance with the Yad Vashem Law (1953), the Archives and the Library have received numerous collections of diverse origins that document the Holocaust from different and complementary angles, as well the most comprehensive collection of documentation from various kinds of Jewish sources.

The knowledge in these databases represents the efforts of a devoted team of professional historians, archivists, and librarians who pursue the sacred labor of collecting, recording, classifying, organizing, and making accessible the vast quantities of material to the public.

The new building, located on the northern slope of the Mount of Remembrance, was built to contain and preserve this copious material—as well as that still to come—and to assure appropriate conditions with state-of-the-art technological tools, for its processing and presentation to scholars and all interested persons.

I would personally like to thank all those involved within and outside Yad Vashem who took part in planning, designing, building, opening the new facility, and, finally, transferring all this precious material to its new facility. I would also like to thank all of our partners and friends who supported us and helped us to attain these impressive results.

Let us congratulate ourselves for having acquired a functional Archives and Library building and, concurrently, a beautiful edifice that will contain the entirety of Holocaust testimony and make it available to all of posterity in Israel and worldwide.

Avner Shalev.

Avner Shalev
Chairman
Yad Vashem Directorate

by Lisa Davidson
and Yvette Nahmia-Messinas

"The Yad Vashem Archives are the central repository for the safekeeping of all Holocaust documentation," Rabbi Dr. Israel Miller, President of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, states emphatically. The Claims Conference, the main donor organization of the new Archives and Library building, has as its objective the support and encouragement of research, documentation, and education about the Holocaust. Therefore, Yad Vashem, in general, and its Archives and Library, in particular, have the best possible partner in the achievement of this shared goal.

A Genuine

At its inception in 1951, the Claims Conference, then under the direction of Dr. Nahum Goldmann, had two broad objectives. The first was to



Rabbi Dr. Israel Miller

gain indemnification for injuries inflicted upon individual Jewish victims of Nazi persecution and restitution for Jewish-owned properties confiscated or destroyed by the Nazis. Even today, the Claims Conference is still active in the slave labor talks, in the International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims, and ongoing negotiations with Austria, among other efforts.

The second objective set by the 23 national and international Jewish organizations that make up the Claims Conference was to obtain funds for the relief, rehabilitation, and resettlement of Jewish victims of Nazi persecution, and to aid in rebuilding Jewish communities and institutions devastated by the Nazis.

Today, with the continued financial aid of the Claims Conference, Jewish communities and institutions have been rebuilt. Still, there



Partnership

A view of the entrance to the new Archives and Library building from the Family Square

are elderly survivors who lack basic human necessities. To address their needs, the Claims Conference supports and encourages organizations and institutions that establish programs to shelter and provide essential services to needy, elderly Holocaust survivors.

Israel has a historical partnership with the Claims Conference. According to the Claims Conference's 1998 Annual Report, 91 institutions and organizations received funding in order to promote a wide range of welfare, research, and educational projects in Israel. The list of beneficiaries consists of a network of senior day care centers and homes for the elderly, as well as universities, museums, and other learning centers. The beneficiaries listed in the report include the Arad Senior Citizen Home, for the construction of 160 housing units for Jewish victims of Nazi persecution; the Association for the Senior Day Care Center in Safed, for the cost of the establishment of the Senior Day Center; and the Association for the Welfare of the Aged in Beer Sheva, for the establishment of a service floor and reconstruction of 40 infirm beds. Avraham Pressler is the Claims Conference Representative in Israel and the Special Consultant for Institutional Allocations.

The establishment of a Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, Yad Vashem, on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, was one of the Claims Conference's first major

contributions in Israel. "I feel that the central place for Holocaust remembrance must be in Jerusalem, the capital city of the Jewish state of Israel," explains Dr. Israel Miller.

Saul Kagan, the Claims Conference Special Consultant and former Executive Vice President adds: "The Claims Conference was the decisive factor in establishing Yad Vashem's first building in Jerusalem, in 1957." The Claims Conference has, through the decades, continued to fund research programs, such as the bibliographical series, *Sources and Literature of the Catastrophe* and *Pinkasei HaKebillot* (Encyclopedias of Jewish Communities). "In the context of programs for research, documentation, and education of the Shoah, Yad Vashem is the single largest recipient of the Claims Conference," Kagan says.

Since Yad Vashem's establishment, the Claims Conference has been a strategic partner. A committed supporter in the realization of the "Yad Vashem 2001" master plan, the Claims Conference's generous contribution toward the new Archives and Library building marks a pinnacle in this partnership. Akiva Lewinsky, former Treasurer and current Honorary Treasurer of the Claims Conference, has been active in their enterprises in Israel, including in their assistance to Yad Vashem.

In January 1999, Gideon Taylor was appointed Executive Vice President of the Claims Conference. Taylor, whose top priorities

include an open and ongoing dialogue with the survivor community, elaborates on the special relationship between Yad Vashem's Archives and the Claims Conference. "We wanted to put the mark of the Claims Conference on a particular area of Yad Vashem," he says. "Although all aspects of Yad Vashem are important, the fact that the Claims Conference has such a huge role in documentation, and making sure material is preserved and recorded for future generations, makes the donation to the Archives most appropriate."

At the start of the 21st century, and as the world becomes more technologically oriented, Miller, Kagan, and Taylor see the importance of moving with the times. "If the themes of education, documentation, and research are to be taken seriously, the tools and means must be available to deal with the technology of today," says Taylor. Miller adds, "With today's modern technology, it is now possible to better preserve the documentation, making it available to scholars and interested persons all over the world."

The importance of the support of the Claims Conference to Yad Vashem's new Archives building is summed up in the words of Saul Kagan: "This contribution will live beyond the lifetime of the survivors. It will serve not only as a remembrance, but as an important educational instrument for future generations and the world at large."

Long ago, society preserved its communal memory through the telling of tales and recitation of poetry, intended to elevate its heroes and instruct society. Professional storytellers, with encyclopedic and stylized versions of events, recited these events in the structure and rhythm of poetry and their versions, like Homer's, were canonized.

Later, architects and artists were called upon to preserve memory, by expressing its messages in Gothic stained glass windows or stone portals to cathedrals; the populace might have been illiterate, but they recognized each figure, scene, and allusion. The memory was

understanding through a process of continuous re-examination of the acquired wisdom one generation bequeaths the next, and re-evaluation of the sources upon which this wisdom was based. As such, archives and libraries, far from being irrelevant to the preservation of memory, have become central. They are the repositories of the facts upon which understanding can be based, and then tested and re-tested; they are the laboratories where existing insights are re-confirmed or cast aside, and new ones are forged.

This centrality is both explained and illustrated by the variety of visitors to the archives, among whom we find the full array

THE METAMORPHOSIS

canonized, frozen into a chosen medium, and often, literally, written in stone and created to inspire awe and adulation.

The Midrash was a far more "modern" type of memory, representing many voices, at times almost a cacophony, but it was scholastic. The source of authority was hierarchical, traditional, rooted in the identity of the teller. The sages deduced their messages from the sayings of their predecessors and from hermeneutic reading of holy texts. Empiric research based on critical analysis of sources was undreamed of.

The ancient Greeks had their historians, as did their Roman successors, but these were often closer to the ancient story-tellers than to the historians of the modern era. It certainly would not have occurred to them to collect their knowledge in archives. The ancient world had its archives, most famously in Mesopotamia and Egypt, but their task was to enable the kings to levy taxes. It probably never occurred to anyone to do research in these archives prior to the 19th century.

The Shoah was a modern phenomenon, and it demands to be remembered in new ways. These include the skeptical inquiries of researchers and scholars who enrich their

of those who create, document, and articulate culture. Historians and educators, scriptwriters and journalists, young students and seasoned philosophers come to the archive to pursue knowledge in an effort to understand this most seminal event of our time.

And finally, archives serve the needs of postmodern memory. None of the previous forms of memory ever had much use for the individual citizen, the little man, not to mention the women whose very existence was implied but only rarely acknowledged. Contemporary archives the world over consistently report that a majority of their users are private citizens seeking information on earlier private citizens. The limelight is shifting from Kings, Knights, Diplomats, Generals and Heroes, to villagers, seamstresses, privates, and heroes—in lower case.

As Yad Vashem prepares to open the new facilities of the Archives and Library, equipped with the technology to serve the needs of an information-saturated public, we look forward to fulfilling the task defined by the Knesset in 1953—to be the fundament on which memory of the Shoah can be built.

The author is Director of the Archives Division

OF MEMORY

“We cannot and should not disconnect ourselves from the past, no matter how difficult it may be,” declares Dr. Shmuel Krakowski, former Director of Yad Vashem’s Archives, as he begins to explain why he has dedicated so many years of his life to the collection and research of documents relating to the Holocaust. He was Director of the Archives from 1978 until 1993, during which the material kept in the Archives increased three fold. “Fulfilling the goals of Yad Vashem has meant gathering everything and anything concerning the Holocaust, as well as doing whatever possible to receive new material,” says Krakowski.

“The Yad Vashem Archives are different from others,” explains Krakowski, who was born

the most difficult conditions during WWII and continued in many countries after the war. In Israel, Yad Vashem undertook the task. Dr. Sarah Friedlander was responsible for collecting documents, until she was killed in 1948 during the War of Independence. Many of the documents gathered by various Jewish institutions and persons at the time of WWII eventually found their way to the Yad Vashem Archives.

Today, the Yad Vashem Archives contain more than 55 million pages of documents, the largest collection of Holocaust material in the world. They include personal testimonies, paperwork from Jewish and non-Jewish institutions, Nazi documentation, records of Nazi war criminals trials, photographs, films, diaries, postcards, letters, memoirs and testimonies.

in a team of younger archivists to join Yad Vashem. Esther Aran was appointed his deputy. Bronka Klibanski, Emmanuel Brand, and Dr. Herbert Rosenkranz were in charge of the Collections, the Trial Records and the Official Records respectively. “In due time, archivists and historians from the former Soviet Union joined us, which was very important in view of the large amount of material in Russian,” Krakowski says.

Among the important events during the first years of Krakowski’s tenure was the establishment of closer ties with the Central Office for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes in Ludwigsburg, Germany. Despite former difficulties, the acquisition of the important interrogations of Nazi war criminals was secured.

In 1988 and 1989 Krakowski went to the former German Democratic Republic and the former Soviet Union. Contacts were established



Dr. Shmuel Krakowski

in Warsaw in 1926 and spent his childhood in Lodz. “There are state archives, city and community archives, archives of various political parties and organizations, institutions, industry and commercial firms, etc. etc.,” he says. “All these offices and institutions produce paperwork and then decide what must be kept for historical reference.”

In contrast, the Yad Vashem Archives are not connected to a particular institution but to a specific subject—the Holocaust. “We gather information on the activities of the various forces and institutions of the perpetrators, the behavior of the onlookers, the struggle and life of the victims, says Krakowski, and even then “we will still never be able to document everything that happened.”

The Archives officially opened in 1953, as one of Yad Vashem’s main divisions, with Dr. Joseph Kermish as its first Director. Efforts to document the events of the Holocaust had, however, begun much earlier, virtually immediately after the Nazis’ rise to power in Germany. Documentation was conducted under

A Holocaust survivor himself, Krakowski claims that it was his experience in Poland that led him to first begin research on the role the Jews played in fighting the Nazis. “In Poland much was written and told about the heroism of the Polish people, but they avoided talking about the role of the Jews in the regular army, the partisans’ units, and resistance movements,” he recalls. Krakowski wrote his M.A. thesis on the military aspects of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

However, as he began work on his Ph. D. at the Warsaw University, he realized it was becoming unacceptable in Poland to write about Jewish heroism. He left his position as Chief Archivist at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and moved to Israel. Here, Professor Yehuda Bauer encouraged him to continue his research at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It took him seven years to complete the thesis, a work for which he received the Yitzhak Sade Prize in 1975.

In 1968, Krakowski was employed at the Yad Vashem Archives. His first task involved arranging the files of the Nuremberg Trials, which the Archives had just acquired. When he became Director of the Archives he decided to reinvigorate the Archives workforce by bringing

with the archives in these countries and the acquisition of material secured. Of special importance were the files of the extraordinary Soviet Commission for Investigation of Nazi Crimes and the archives of the Jewish Antifascist Committee that was active in the Soviet Union during the war. A moving experience was when Yirina Ehrenburg, the daughter of the writer Ilya Ehrenburg a prominent figure in the Jewish Antifascist Committee, succeeded in arranging to have her father’s archive smuggled from Russia to Yad Vashem.

In 1993, Krakowski asked to retire from his position as Director of the Archives, although he continued for some time to serve as its advisor. He has not been involved with the Archives over the past two years, but he is still conducting research at Yad Vashem’s International Institute for Holocaust Research.

Despite the relentless efforts of the Yad Vashem Archives, Krakowski recognizes that the work is far from complete.

Indeed, the continued rise in the acquisition and collection of archival material and the establishment of the newly built Archives and Library building to house them, prove Krakowski right. There is still work to be done.

The Archivist

“The children know what I went through ... and they are very sensitive about it.”

(Renia Kanner-Kaufmann, who spent her childhood and Youth in Lodz and Ravensbrueck)

“No one said—‘Mother, come tell us what you went through, from start to finish,’ no one.... I only told bits and pieces, but I told no one thoroughly....”

(Zippora Katz of Borsa, Transylvania, deported to Auschwitz)

These two diametrically opposed quotations typify the range of statements by Holocaust survivors who come to Yad Vashem to give their testimonies. But regardless of how much or how little they have already divulged about their experience, survivors who visit the Testimonies Section to tell their story are inspired by a variety of motivations that include commemorating a destroyed world and demonstrating their



Dov Gedi interviewing a Holocaust survivor on behalf of the Testimonies Section

present their complete autobiographies, often for the first time. In an effort to preserve historical immediacy, but without compromising their ongoing commitment to historical reliability, the Section staff members encourage the witnesses to retell the most terrible episode in Jewish history the way they experienced it.

The author is Director of the Testimonies Section

The Testimonies Section

commitment to historical memory.

Holocaust documentation began in underground archives established in the main ghettos, such as Warsaw and Bialystok, by men and women with a strong historical consciousness. When the war ended, testimony-gathering centers were established in many locations—Lublin (the Historical Committee), Paris, Bratislava, and the American Occupation Zone (the Committee of Liberated Jews), to name but a few. The first testimonies from survivors who reached Palestine in late 1942 were taken by the Jewish Agency.

In May 1946, the Yad Vashem center, headed by Dr. Sarah Friedlander, opened on King George Street in Jerusalem. Its efforts were interrupted when the War of Independence broke out. After Israel was declared a state, the idea of establishing Yad Vashem as a Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority began to take shape. The idea originated with Mordecai Shenhavi, and Professor Ben-Zion Dinur, then the Minister of Education, who presented a bill to the Knesset in 1953 for the establishment of the Authority. At first, the Testimonies Section was Yad Vashem's most important center of activity.

Testimonies were initially taken in Tel Aviv; several years later, the center relocated to Wolyn House in Givatayim. The first Director of the

Section was the author Rachel Auerbach, who had worked for the Ringelblum Archives in the Warsaw Ghetto. Auerbach was succeeded by Myriam Peleg, the main figure in the *Zegota* in Krakow.

When Yad Vashem was established on *Har Hazikkaron* (the Mount of Remembrance) in Jerusalem, the Testimonies Section moved there gradually. Then, as now, testimonies were taken in various languages. Some testimonies were given in writing by witnesses, others were recorded on audio media, and in the past decade most have been on videotape. The testimonies (Division O3) are an integral and very significant part of the Yad Vashem Archives.

Now that other testimony-taking enterprises have been established around the world, it is frequently asked whether Yad Vashem's testimonies have attributes that make them unique. Dr. Shmuel Krakowski, the former Director of the Archives, stresses that the section went to great lengths to assure the factual historical accuracy of the testimonies it recorded. He adds that many important events that took place during the Holocaust have not been related in other documents, rendering the testimonies the only source describing them.

Today, more than a half century after the Holocaust, witnesses are still coming forward and in even larger numbers than before. They

“
I Only
Told
Bits
and
Pieces
”

“In a minute of great bewilderment not to lose faith in God; Be aware that after a black night a day of light will come....”

With these words Tzilla's three friends tried to wish her a happy birthday. It was October 1943 when Tzilla, interned for several months in the Zillertal Labor Camp (one of the labor camps of the network of the Gross Rosen concentration camp), turned twenty-eight. Her work involved knitting and weaving alongside her friends, Jewish women who had been imprisoned with her.

These felicitations, meant to make Tzilla happy on her birthday, were written on a piece of paper that her friends folded several times over, like an origami, until it formed a valentine that opened in several layers. On each layer, Tzilla's friends wrote encouraging words: “Don't say that life is boring, life has moments for which living and suffering are worth it,” they wrote to her.

Today, the rest of the birthday message is illegible on this affectionately embellished piece of paper. The greeting card came to light many years after it was created, when Tzilla Ehrenfried came forth to give her testimony at Yad Vashem. She had kept the card in her possession all those years until she donated it to the Yad Vashem Archives. The importance of documents, such as Tzilla's, lies in their personal touch. The birthday card and other similar documents



victim, like this birthday card,” Varda says. “When a document reaches our laboratory, our efforts to preserve it include factors such as its physical condition, its historical value, as well as its meaning on a human level,” Varda explains.

The new Laboratory, made possible through a contribution by Danek Gertner, has far more advantages than the previous one. “First,” says Varda, “it's larger and physically more comfortable to work in. Also, we're about to obtain more sophisticated equipment, and the computers we're about to receive will help us retrieve information about a given document from other departments. This will create an additional tool for research and exploration in the future.”

The conservation process takes place in several phases. First, the document is treated as the tests of its components indicate. Then, it is cleaned by washing with water and/or chemicals. If these cleaning methods are not feasible, the document is “dry-cleaned.” Afterwards, it is repaired and strengthened, as required. Each phase entails great skill to avoid damaging the document. The birthday card, for example, was given such treatment. In the final phase, the document is wrapped (in a binder, a box, or a file). The wrapper separates the document from its environment and extends its life span.

“The materials that come into contact with the document are very important, so they, too, have to be chosen carefully,” Varda stresses. Summing up, she says, “I have always considered

The New Conservation Laboratory Donated by Danek Gertner

familiarize us and future generations with the minute details of the everyday lives of the victims and those who survived. They remind us that they are individuals and help us to identify with their emotions and understand what they experienced.

The employees of the Yad Vashem Conservation Laboratory, recently installed in its new premises, are important partners in the task of recognizing such documents. “We literally feel that we're doing holy work,” says Varda Gross, Director of the Laboratory. “We receive large numbers of diaries, maps, letters, photos, and drawings,” she explains.

“We were especially moved by this birthday card. When it reached us, it was so fragile that we had to treat it especially carefully to spare it from further damage,” she says, recalling her excitement.

“We receive many documents; some of them, such as the Lodz Albums or the Auschwitz Albums, are better known than others. But most

exciting, without a doubt, is working with an item that actually belonged to a survivor or a



Interior view of the new Conservation Laboratory
From the left Varda Gross, Director of the Laboratory and
Alexandra Borovok

the laboratory a ‘hospital’ for the documents, and that's how we treat them.”

Finally, the laboratory staff makes sure that the processes it uses are reversible, so that the documents can be re-preserved when new conservation methods are developed.

“I give you these scribbles as a gift, give them over with emotion...” These are the last legible words on Tzilla's birthday card. The rest of the message is illegible, buried in the folds of the paper. Several flowers were drawn on the card, and Tzilla's friends affixed their signatures.

Yad Vashem continues to encourage the submission of the documents and personal effects of victims and survivors, such as Tzilla's birthday card. Today, the card is kept in the Yad Vashem Archives which will preserve it for posterity. Thanks to the conservation process applied in the laboratory, future generations will also be able to observe this human testimony—a fragile yellow relic, still folded in the shape of a heart, expressing best wishes for better days to come.

The Yad Vashem Archives and Library have moved to a brand new building, leaving the tight premises in the ground floor of the administration building and relocating to a state-of-the-art 3,000m² facility. Archives and Library employees are pleased with the move, and if the documents, photographs, films, testimonies and books, stored in 1,500m² of strong rooms, could speak, they would echo the same appreciation for the extra space.

Daniel Lanski, the Haifa-born architect who designed the new Archives and Library building conferred with a team of Archives personnel on the specific functions of the Yad Vashem Archives. The team included Yoram Mayorek, the former Director of the Central Zionist Archives; Yaacov Lozowick, Director of Yad Vashem's Archives Division; Nomi Halpern, Deputy Director; and Esther Aran, Director of Registration and Methods of the Archives. Lanski took into consideration the team's requirements, and integrated their feedback into his design.

Built to house the Yad Vashem Library and Archives, it could be said that the building has two different "faces," an extrovert and an introvert. In the extrovert or public part of the building on the top floor (the entrance floor), a stretch of windows parallel to the foyer, the Information Center, and the Reading and Research rooms opens the building up to its surrounding environment, and bathes the areas in natural light.

The introvert or private part of the building extends from the lower to the middle floor. The lower floor consists only of strong rooms. On the middle

The new Archives and Library building



Sheltering the Records

floor, the research and conservation labs are situated on the building's northern front where they are exposed to the light. Additional strong rooms housing the books and documents are located on the building's southern side. Only Archives and Library employees have access to these areas.

Not being distracted by the magnificent view of the Jerusalem hills from every window of this building is hard to imagine, unless one is secluded in one of the twelve private study rooms available within the Research Room. The administration offices are located beyond this point.

"I wanted to inspire the feeling of a shelter," says Lanski when asked to explain the concept behind the building. Indeed, with only two of its three floors having access to natural light, the building is well protected. Lanski's work, and that of interior designers Leora Vinograd and Tamar Carmi, landscape architect Dan Tzur, and Dorit Harel who designed the signposts, has created a sublime architectural balance where human beings and documents can achieve a synergistic relationship and where the building and its surroundings are in dialogue.

The New Archives and Library Building

The entrance to the new Archives and Library building



The Reading Room



Retrieval by key words:
Children and Theresienstadt
Results of retrieval:
Located in Archives: 542 items,
including:
199 photographs
Pages of Testimony at the Hall of Names
207 documents
60 testimonies
72 books in the library
4 films

*Note: these figures are only estimates.

Efforts to achieve such concise and accurate documentation of Holocaust-related subject areas have already begun at Yad Vashem. However, the process of computerizing the Yad Vashem Archives' databases first began at the beginning of the decade. First, the Aleph software program was implemented to manage the library, and the names, photographs, and archival documentation were catalogued under Context, a program now considered antiquated.

Since then the field of computerization and information systems has been moving ahead rapidly. Thus, in 1995 Yad Vashem drafted a systematic plan to computerize its entire Archives with a view toward the future. One of the topics the plan addressed was the need for a special office to handle computerization throughout Yad Vashem. The Yad Vashem Information Systems Unit, under the management of

computerization campaign gathered momentum when it became necessary to computerize the Pages of Testimony at the Hall of Names for the investigation of the Volcker committee into Swiss bank accounts. This project, conducted in 1999, led to significant improvements in Yad Vashem's computer hardware and software. The project manager, Tadiran Information Systems, Ltd., suggested that the Archives Division use new and advanced software to better manage information in the Archives.

The new software, originally meant for library management, will be used to manage the databases after enhancements at Yad Vashem. The strength of this software is its ability to maintain two separate interfaces: a management interface for Yad Vashem employees, operating in the Windows environment, and another interface for external users. The users' interface looks like a retrieval screen in the Internet environment. It has the advantage of being familiar to and convenient for anyone who has experience in working on the Internet.

Furthermore, when the time comes to make the databases accessible over the Internet, the requisite technical process will be simpler. The software supports complex retrieval options, such as retrieval by title, keywords, date, source of material, places associated with the material, and various combinations of these and additional categories.

The new software will provide general information and a

quantities of information stored in the Archives, links to the Internet and Yad Vashem's internal computer network, information-security equipment, and support for the new software, among other features. All equipment at the Center is the most advanced in its field and permits communication at maximum speed and efficiency.

Esther Aran, Director of Registration and Methods at the Archives, describes how the new system will work with the example of a user who sits at a computer terminal in the reading room and performs simple or complex retrievals or links different documents. While reading the results, the user may mark items that he/she wishes to study physically. The computer sends this list to the storage facilities at the Archives and the Library, where the requested items are prepared and sent to the reading room. The process is immediate and efficient. Users may also mark items in order to prepare personal lists for their own convenience.

In addition to the new building and the new computer system, the new Unit for Service to the Public, headed by Yehudit Levin, will be taking part in the activity. When the new software becomes operational, all users—researchers, students, and families in search of roots—will be referred to computer terminals in the reading room. In this room, a special advisor will provide assistance and guidance. Expert advisors in various fields, stationed in a separate room, will instruct users for whom the immediate assistance in the reading room does not suffice. The team of advisors will consist of members of the Yad Vashem staff from the Library and various branches of the Archives Division: the Document Archives, the Hall of Names, and the Photo Archives. The Unit is developing a service that will provide answers to queries addressed to it by mail, e-mail, and facsimile.

Although the computerization of the Archives is progressing at full steam, much work remains to be done. The public will be given access to the new system in stages, commensurate with the progress made. During the year 2000, the Archives staff expects the new computer system to gradually become operational and accessible to researchers at Yad Vashem. The system already contains synopses of tens of thousands of archive files, possibilities of retrieval for nearly two million Pages of Testimony at the Hall of Names, and synopses of all photographs in the Photo Archives—together with the scanned photos themselves, synopses of the films, and information on testimonies in the Testimonies Unit.

Computerization of Yad Vashem's databases is being facilitated by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, headed by Rabbi Dr. Israel Miller, and by a donation from the Baan Brothers Foundation.



The Computerization, Communication and Information Center

Michael Lieber, was established to deal with Yad Vashem's entire computer needs, including the computerization of the Archives.

"We set ourselves several goals," says Dr. Yaakov Lozowick, Director of the Archives Division.

We wanted a system that would allow users to retrieve material from the library and from all databases—documents, photographs, books, etc.—in one operation. It was also important for us to build a system that would be easy for the public to use and allow the possibility of access over the Internet at the next stage." The

The Archives Go High Tech

synopsis for every item; where Pages of Testimony and photographs are involved, it will also

retrieve the scanned document itself. The option of printing the information for users' convenience will be offered, as well.

Yad Vashem's new Computerization, Communication, and Information Center provides the hardware, the network links, and the skilled manpower needed for the institution's computer needs generally, and those of the Archives specifically. The Center, established with the assistance of philanthropist Danek Gertner, and Cellcom Israel, Ltd., includes massive servers that contain the tremendous



Charity box of the Jewish burial society from Timișoara, 1867

R o m a n i a ' s J U D A I C

by Yvette Nahmia-Messinas

Avinu Malkenu Petah Shaarei Shamayim Letefilatenu. “Our Father, Our King, Open the Gates of Heaven to Our Prayer,” reads a Hebrew inscription carved on a Torah ark’s wooden door. This door from Rădăuți was among 70 artifacts in the largest ever exodus of Judaica from synagogues in Romania. The other items included a *bima* from the Apple Merchants’ Synagogue in Iași, a two-headed eagle from the Torah ark of Bârlad, the upper section of the Torah ark from Cluj, a small ark curtain from Bucharest, a Torah reader’s

pointer, and dozens of other synagogue furnishings and ritual objects.

In 1998, on their first expedition to Romania, Yehudit Inbar, Director of the Museums Division, and Haviva Peled Carmeli, Director of Artifact Retrieval, traveled throughout the country to trace what was left of a once thriving Jewish community. They visited Bucharest, Bârlad, Rădăuți, Cluj, Timișoara, Iași, Dorohoi and Constanța

synagogues and found a wealth of Judaica and synagogue furnishings decaying in run-down synagogues, hermetically sealed since the Holocaust. Although they were once used and cherished by the members of these congregations, the holy arks and the prayer leaders’ lecterns now stood empty, a silent testimony to the absence of what were thriving communities.

A letter from Prof. Nicolae Cajal, the respected President of the Federation of the Jewish Communities in Romania and a member of Romania’s Academy of Science, was



From the left: upper part of a holy ark from Iasi and bima from the Apple Merchants' synagogue of Iasi

Upper part of a holy ark from Bărlad

A E X O D U S

instrumental in giving Yad Vashem's representatives access to these synagogues. The various community heads gave Peled Carmeli permission to pick and choose among the synagogue furnishings and artifacts. With the Jewish authorities' permission in hand and the help of Sorin Julian, Secretary General of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania; Alex Sivan, Director General of the Federation; Osy Lazar, Vice President of the Jewish Community of Bucharest; and Prof. Nicolae Cajal, President of the Federation, Peled Carmeli

arranged and organized every detail of the exodus operation. When the former Prime Minister of Romania, Rado Vasile, gave his official approval to release the artifacts to Yad Vashem during his recent visit to the Memorial, Peled Carmeli arranged for the transportation of the precious shipment.

Stored at the premises of the Filantropia Jewish cemetery in Bucharest, the ten holy arks, *parochot*, and readers' lecterns were now bundled up in protective bubble wrap, and gently transported in two huge containers, from where

they had been languishing, to their new home.

Upon arrival in Jerusalem on a sunny winter day of November, the artifacts were welcomed with an emotional reception by Haviva Peled Carmeli, Shiri Peles, Associate Curator; Yehudit Inbar, Avner Shalev, and Alex Sivan. Here, at Yad Vashem, where their presence will inspire the living to remember, these holy arks and leaders lecterns testify to the existence of the Romanian Jewish community, almost half of which did not survive the Holocaust.

A BOOM IN HOLOCAUST LIT

by Dr. Robert Rozett

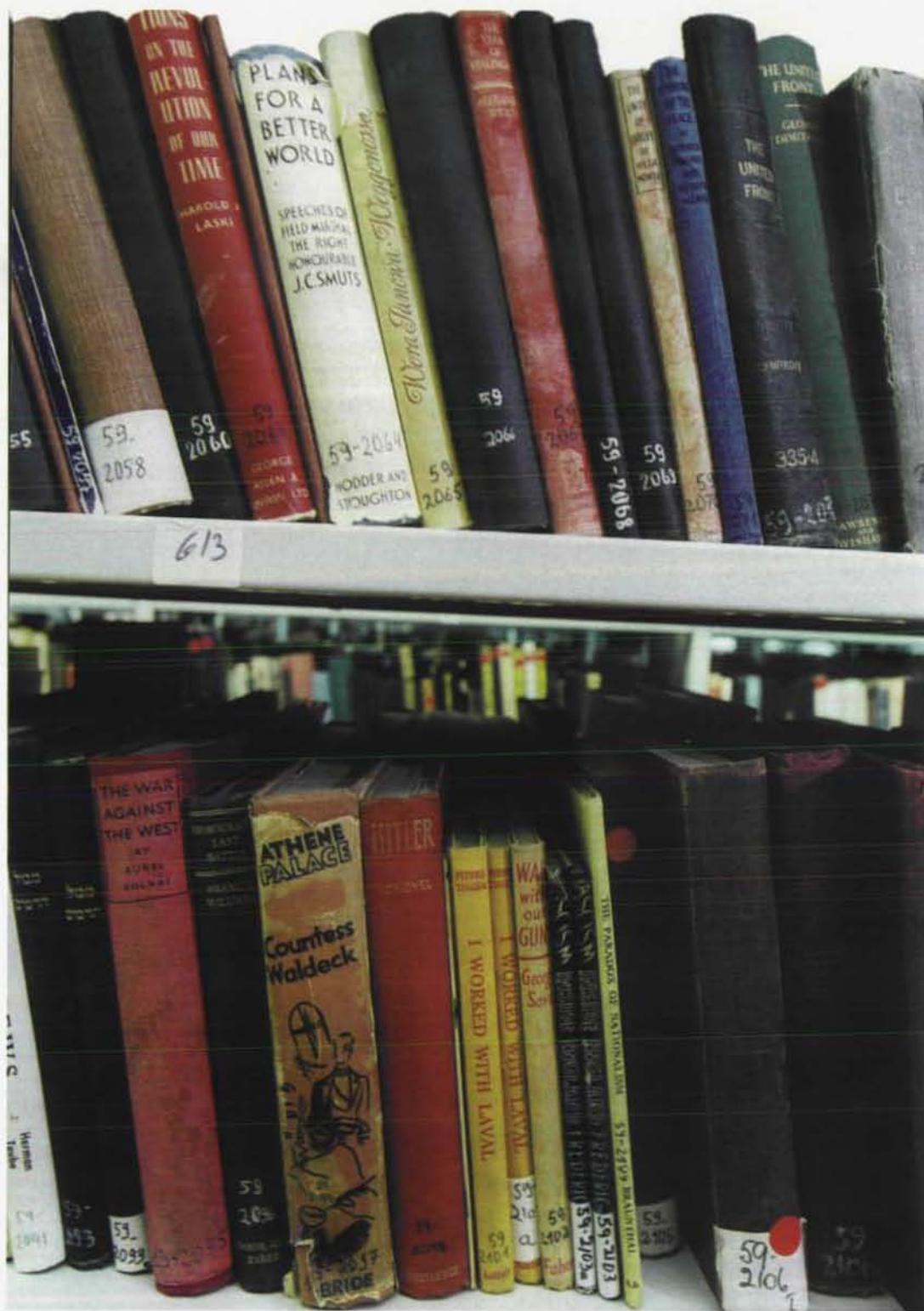
Even the youngest student knows that if you need some information, one of the best places to find it is in a book. Regardless of age, students engaged in research about the Holocaust have access to the Yad Vashem Library, repository of the largest collection (some 80,000 titles) in the world of published material about the Holocaust, its background and its repercussions, and the many subject areas included in this genre.

It is, therefore, the place to which a great many people from throughout the world turn for information. Those who use the library's resources include family members, who search a certain *Yizkor* (Memorial) book, hoping to learn about the fate of relatives. Others want a specific detail—like the date the main synagogue in Warsaw was built, or the Jews of Warsaw were deported. Others have questions that require extensive research into many sources.

Not only do we learn from the contents of books but also from examining certain aspects of their publication. This type of knowledge is known as "bibliometrics," and the computerized catalog of the Yad Vashem Library provides important information of this kind.

Even a quick look at the acquisitions of the Yad Vashem Library over the last decade teaches us a lot about the growing interest in the Holocaust. In 1990, the Library acquired slightly less than 1800 items, of which 90 percent were books.

At the end of the decade the number of acquisitions totaled about 3400 for the year. Of course 1999 was not a normal year for the library, since much of the staff was busy with the computerization of Holocaust victims' names and the move into the new library building. During the previous year, the library acquired over 3800 items. The steep rise in the number of items acquired by the library strongly suggests



that more published information was produced at the end of the decade, than at the beginning.

It would be inaccurate, however, to merely ascribe the growth in our acquisitions to a boom in publications. Better tools for finding published material, and certainly the Internet with its

many resources, have added significantly to our ability to discover titles. The fact that the current Directorate of Yad Vashem has strongly supported the purchase of library materials has also contributed to the rise in acquisitions.

Looking at the publications by language,

by Daniel Uziel

it is striking that throughout the 1990s the number of German language publications acquired by the library remained fairly constant—729 in 1990, 662 in 1995, and 766 in 1999. The number of English language items, however, has risen fairly steadily—400 in 1990, 800 in 1995, and 1100 in 1998, and in 1999. This rise seems to reflect the upsurge in interest in the Holocaust in English-speaking countries, which is also evident from the establishment of major Holocaust museums in the US and in the UK.

It should come as no surprise that the number of publications in Russian has also grown in the last decade. In 1990, slightly less than 70 items in Russian reached our library, whereas in 1999 the number was 200. Another area in which the holdings of the Library have increased dramatically is in French language publications. In 1990, only 75 items in French were added to the collection, while, over 360 were added in 1999. Again, it is hard to say how much of this increase is due to better tools for locating material. Nevertheless, the great difference between the figures strongly suggests that there has also been a significant increase in the number of French language publications dealing with the Holocaust.

Despite the increase in published material related to the Holocaust, scholars are far from having delved into all aspects of its history and repercussions. Several new subjects such as Forced Labor, the Fate of Jewish Property, and Women in the Holocaust, have recently been included. At the same time, there are still relatively few current studies that touch the heart of the tragedy—the fate of the Jews, their families, and their communities during the Holocaust. The history of many ghettos, camps and sites of murder, and the way Jews lived and died in these places, have yet to be tackled by scholars.

A major problem is that of language. Many younger scholars from Israel and the US simply do not have the requisite language skills to research subjects. Also, even though scholars from the former Eastern Bloc countries have begun to look at their own local histories, and to add important information to our pool of knowledge, they seldom approach history from the perspective of Jewish history.

Yad Vashem's challenge for the new millenium is not only to acquire published material, but also to help ensure that quality material is published about the Holocaust as seen from the prism of Jewish history.

The author is Director of the Library

The Films and Photos Archive constitutes an eyewitness of the Holocaust. A significant part of the Archives Division, it has a threefold purpose. First, it gathers all kinds of visual material on Holocaust-related themes, mainly by acquiring material from Israeli and foreign archives and accepting donations from individuals or estates. The types of films collected are documentary, original, and fictional. Second, the Archive is in charge of appropriate storing of the material under "healthy" conditions. Today, all the Archive's material is kept in an area of the new Archives building accessible to authorized employees only.

Eye Witness

The Archive's third function is to keep accurate records stored there. This documentation sometimes requires painstaking searches for support from other archival sources or from an inquiry was made, for example, to interpret photographs collections. By comparing photos taken on the ground with knowledge of the ground photos was enhanced.

The Archive's employees occasionally publish their findings information on each photograph is entered into the Archives' retrievable by means of keywords and search topics.

The Archive has 120,000 photographs related to the history 20,000 photos in 335 albums. Some 50,000 additional administrative collection of Yad Vashem are kept separately. contain 2,100 videocassettes and 172 films on reels.

Some 5,000 new items of all types are received each year. material increased steeply in 1999. This was due to items being the process of moving to the new building and as a result of Collection of Holocaust Victims' Names which elicited large

The unique items, kept and recorded with the Archive, include original albums from the Auschwitz, Esterwegen, Westerbork, and Dachau camps, an original home movie from the Warsaw ghetto, and albums containing portrait photos of some 5,000 Jews in Bedzin, to name but a few.

The Archive, like the rest of the Archives, is undergoing rapid digitization. The entire historical collection has already been scanned, and the files on the server are now linked to the Archives' general retrieval system. Today, the Archive immediately scans every new photo that it receives and intends to digitize its films.

On the Visual Archive

of information on the material historical research and professional literature. Such of Auschwitz from various aerial photos of the camp, our

in professional journals. The computer system and is

of the Holocaust—including photographs from the The Archive collections

The quantity of incoming culled from archive files in the Campaign for the quantities of photographs.



Scanning photographs

Rivka Zunski, a 17 year-old high school student in Poland, and a member of the *Betar* youth movement who played the guitar, was known for her perpetual good cheer. Her uneventful life changed in June 1941 when the German army occupied her hometown, Kozin, near Dubno. From then on, she experienced persecution and hunger, fled from the German terror, and wandered among villages near her hometown. One night in

of the Holocaust. The goal was to ask every person, who has memories, to fill out Pages of Testimony and commemorate their departed relatives. The response has been overwhelming.

In 1999 alone, more than 320,000 Pages were submitted, at least ten times more than what was the norm in the 1990s (27,000-30,000 Pages per year). The Director of the Hall of Names, Alexander Avraham, credits much of the tremendous response to the timing

by Avner Shalev, and the Director-General, Ishai Amrami, promoted and supported the cause. The staff at the Hall of Names devoted lengthy hours to receiving, examining, and processing the information. The staff of the Yad Vashem information systems made considerable effort to assure technical support for the operation. In Israel, the Israel Society for Yad Vashem, chaired by Yoram Berger, set the operation in motion, promoted and advertised it, and mobilized

donors and sponsorships.

"One of the great successes of the operation," says Yaron Ashkenazi, Managing Director of the Society, "was in contacting and mobilizing diverse sectors. Apart from

cooperation with the media and assistance from private individuals, we formed a relationship with survivors' organizations. The National Students' Union pledged itself to the operation to an extent that deserves special emphasis. The union recruited dozens of students who became the operation's

task force. They provided help to survivors who had asked for assistance in filling out Pages of Testimony. Today the Society is also looking into the possibility of cooperative action with youth movements around the country."

Abroad, the Societies for Yad Vashem worldwide, Jewish organizations and Israel's embassies became emissaries of the campaign.

An interesting phenomenon that has come to light in the course of the operation is the special relationship between the survivors' generation and the third generation, that of the grandchildren. Often, Alexander relates, grandparents choose to tell their stories and those of their families to their grandchildren, thereby making the grandchildren better informed about the family history than their parents. This, Alexander explains, creates an



Rivka Zunski, (surrounded by the O) with other members of the *Betar* Youth Movement in Kozin, Poland

1944, she set out to look for food and did not return. Rivka has no grave, not even a date of death that one might observe by reciting Kaddish.

Rivka is one of more than two million people who are memorialized in Pages of Testimony at the Hall of Names. The Page of Testimony at Yad Vashem is the sole memorial of these men, women, and children, who lack even a grave. Yad Vashem has been gathering and memorializing the names of victims of the Holocaust since 1955. One of the main sources for victims' names and personal details are family members and friends who survived and filled out Pages of Testimony.

Shortly before the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day in April 1999, Yad Vashem launched an international operation to collect and commemorate the names of victims

of the operation. In the past few years, he explains, Holocaust remembrance has become a much-discussed topic on the Israeli and world agenda. In the initial post-war years, people found the subject very difficult to address; for this reason, few gave testimony to Yad Vashem at that time.

Today, forty years after the Eichmann trial—a watershed in the attitude toward Holocaust survivors' testimonies—the climate has changed. Additionally, members of the survivors' generation are very advanced in years and realize that this may be their last chance to commemorate, in Pages of Testimony, the names and information that they recall.

The operation became possible due to a joint effort by various departments at Yad Vashem. The Yad Vashem Directorate, chaired

Highlights of Work Plan 2000

impetus to fill out Pages of Testimony.

Aware of the importance of the third generation in carrying out the operation, the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem, headed by Dr. Motti Shalem, produced study kits that contain Pages of Testimony for all junior-high and senior-high schools countrywide. The purpose was to generate awareness of the operation and to obtain the third generation's assistance.

An example of the importance of third-generation involvement is the case of 14 year-old Ron Haber of New Zealand. Ron visited Israel last April, heard about the operation, took home a large quantity of Pages of Testimony, and sat down with his grandfather, a survivor. Together, they filled in some 80 Pages. As it transpired, Ron's initiative came not a moment too soon, as his grandfather died several months later. However, Ron carried on, and assisted by his classmates, had some 300 Pages of Testimony filled in and sent to Yad Vashem from New Zealand.

The team that administered the operation at Yad Vashem provided another example of the interaction between generations. Young students staffed the telephone hotline for the operation. "At first," Alexander relates, "we were concerned about how the adult generation would interact with the young people, who were not experts in Holocaust history. However, we quickly discovered that the two sides formed an excellent relationship. The students prompted the survivors to speak out and helped them fill in Pages of Testimony with complete success."

Although the operation has been going on for nearly a year, much more remains to be done. Many survivors have not yet filled in Pages of Testimony. Some have received Pages but have not filled them in and sent them to Yad Vashem. Others have not even asked for the Pages. Alexander believes that hundreds of thousands of names remain to be rescued and memorialized. "I urge everyone who has ordered Pages of Testimony to fill them in and send them back to us. Those who have not yet requested Pages of Testimony should contact us promptly. Pages of Testimony may be obtained at the Yad Vashem website, <www.yadvashem.org.il>, or by telephone at 1-800-257-777. Abroad, contact the local society for Yad Vashem, large Jewish organizations, or an Israeli embassy or consulate."

The different Yad Vashem Divisions have set before themselves a number of projects for the year 2000. Highlights of their work plan are presented below.

Archives and Library: The dedication of the Archives and Library building will initiate and advance the following projects: The computer system in the reading rooms for retrieval of information from the Archives and Library will be activated. A major, long-term project for the comprehensive and systematic gathering of documentation in various German archives will commence. The scanning of photographs for the computerized collection will be completed and a plan to make a larger proportion of the collection available to users on the Internet will be prepared. The collection of Holocaust victims' names by means of Pages of Testimony will continue. A scholarly conference on the research of names and computerization methods will be organized. The library will be connected to the Internet and the national library system by means of the Aleph program.

Education: In accordance with the full-scale activation of the International School for Holocaust Studies, and in order to implement the Ministry of Education's decision, every Israeli pupil will spend at least one day of study at Yad Vashem. A lengthy curriculum will be used to train 1000 Israeli teachers in teaching the Holocaust. For the first time, the training of overseas teachers will expand to include seminars for Austrian teachers. A comprehensive multimedia program and the new textbook and teachers' manual will be disseminated worldwide. A pilot project will be developed for teaching by means of the Internet.

Museums: The general planning for the organization by various subjects at the new Historical Museum will be completed in accordance with the architectural plans. Teams comprised of historians, researchers, the Museum's curators, and the designer will work together on the displays at the new Museum.

Research: The International Institute for Holocaust Research will hold a scholarly conference at Brandeis University in the United States. A second encounter with third-generation researchers will be held in Germany, after the first encounter in Israel, to expand and intensify the discourse on topics of shared interest. The Institute will host Israeli and foreign researchers for periods of four, six, or eight months. Research on the theft of Jewish property in Europe will be intensified.

Encyclopedias of Jewish Communities (*Pinkasei Hakehillot*): Two new Encyclopedias of Jewish Communities are planned to appear and ten books will be prepared for publication. The comprehensive project of publishing an abridged version of the Records as an encyclopedia in English will continue. The Director of the library, Dr. Robert Rozett, and the Editor of the Encyclopedias of Jewish Communities, Dr. Shmuel Spector, have embarked on a comprehensive project—an Encyclopedia of the Holocaust for Youth, in English—in conjunction with a private publisher.

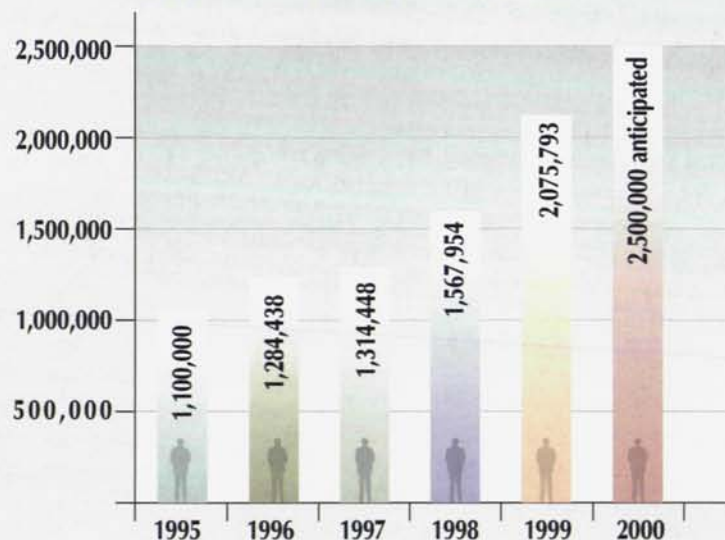
Publishing: In 2000, the publication of twenty-five new books and eleven reprintings are planned. Fifty-two books are in the production process. The first volume of the Lexicon of Righteous Among the Nations, devoted to France, is to be published.

Commemoration and Public Relations: The central theme of Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day will be "The Family in the Holocaust." The Internet site will be developed in conjunction with the staff in charge of education, databases, and museums. Possibilities of direct access to databases will be established.

Righteous among the Nations: Some 700 requests for recognition as Righteous Among the Nations will be processed.

Planning and development work under the "Yad Vashem 2001" master plan will continue. In this context, construction of the Visitors' Center (*Mevoah*) will begin after the infrastructure is prepared and the excavation work is completed. Construction of the new Historical Museum will begin in the summer.

Increase in Visitors to Yad Vashem



Dr. Josef Burg In Memoriam by Keren Gal

A memorial ceremony marking the *shloshim* (thirty days) after the passing of Rabbi Dr. Josef Burg, Chairman of the Council of Yad Vashem, was held in Yad Vashem on 18 November 1999. The moving ceremony took place in the presence of the Burg family, the Yad Vashem Directorate, members of the Yad Vashem Council, and public figures.

During the ceremony, the late Dr. Burg was eulogized by his son-in-law, Professor Menahem Ben Sasson, Rector of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem: "... the day he retired from the Knesset and the Government, [former] Chief Rabbi [Shlomo] Goren approached him and said, "What you will lack now more than anything else is time. Save it, take care of it."

"Do you think I will change my ways?" Burg asked, addressing not Goren but himself, in my presence. After all, the way a person devotes himself to others is determined neither by age, nor by changes in position. Instead, it is a question of the extent to which one measures oneself for others. And the way Dr. Burg measured out his time and attentiveness generously for others in past years, so did he continue to measure himself until his last day. As a person measures others, so is he measured...."

Dr. Burg escaped from Germany in 1939 but never forgot his past, as his son Avraham Burg, Speaker of the Knesset, related in his eulogy: "Father lived nostalgically. He was a nostalgic man. . . . This nostalgia was like a tourniquet placed over an amputation wound that never healed. . . . He remembered who and where he had been, and this was part of his life."

Later on—during and after the war—Dr. Burg devoted his life to helping the Jewish people. He chaired the Yad Vashem Council, and Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate eulogized him in this capacity: "We have lost a friend, a supporter, a guide, and a mentor who was very important to us. . . . Above and beyond everything else, and in the main, we have lost a man in the most profound sense of the term, what we call a *mensch*. . . ."

Dr. Yitzhak Arad, Deputy Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, and Mr. Elyakim Rubinstein, the Attorney General, also delivered remarks at the ceremony.

The cantor Asher Heinowitz performed cantorial works and songs at the ceremony. Heinowitz, a personal acquaintance of Dr. Burg and his wife, selected the Burgs' favorite works to make the event especially moving.

Hans Krasa Remembered



From the concert in memory of the acclaimed Czechoslovakian composer Hans Krasa that took place in November at Yad Vashem. The concert was sponsored by the Hans Krasa Foundation, Terezin, the German Music Council, the Maria Stecker-Daelen Foundation and the Gaunting Community. The program featured works by Viktor Ullmann, Pavel Haas, Gideon Klein and Hans Krasa who composed music in Theresienstadt and were murdered in the Holocaust.

"The Impact of the Holocaust on Contemporary Society" 3rd International Conference

by Dr. Tikva Fatal Knaani

The third of three international conferences scheduled by the International Institute for Holocaust Research for 1999–2000, on "The Impact of the Holocaust on Contemporary Society," will take place at Brandeis University, March 26–29, 2000.

The conference, organized and conducted jointly with the Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry of Brandeis University, will explore the impact of the Holocaust in various fields: political thinking, philosophy, Christian and Jewish theology, twentieth century western historiography, education, and the attitude toward genocide. International law after Nuremberg, survivors' testimonies and historical documentation and the shaping of national and ethnic identity after the Holocaust are the additional subjects that will be discussed.

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate; Yehuda Reinharz, President of Brandeis University; Bernd Greiner, Head of the History and Theory of Violence Section at the Hamburg Institute for Social Research; and Miles Lerman, former Chairman of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, will give congratulatory remarks. Invited to speak at the opening session were U.S. Deputy Treasury Secretary Stuart Eizenstat and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel. Yehuda Bauer, Head of the International Institute for Holocaust Research at Yad Vashem, will give the concluding remarks at the conference.

The Brandeis conference, like the Second International Conference in Warsaw, will be divided into plenary lectures and workshops. Invited lecturers include Shlomo Avineri, Gavriel Bach, Michael Berenbaum, Irwin Cotler, Vahakn Dadrian, Annegret Ehmann, Helen Fein, Norbert Frei, Israel Gutman, Ulrich Herbert, Henry Huttenbach, Shulamit Imbar, Eberhard Jaeckel, Mary Johnson, Steven Katz, Imre Kertesz, Vera King-Farris, Reinhard Koselek, Lawrence Langer, Dan Laor, Dori Laub, Charles Maier, Michael R. Marrus, Reinhard Merkel, Stanislaw Musial, Dalia Ofer, William Parsons, Dina Porat, Aviezer Ravitsky, James Reid, Jan P. Reemtsma, Carol Rittner, John K. Roth, Marcia Sachs-Littell, Anita Shapira, Roger W. Smith, Feliks Tych, D. Cameron Watt, Gerhard Weinberg, and Szewach Weiss.

The conference is being conducted in cooperation with the Hamburg Institute for Social Research, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches. The Gertner Center for International Holocaust Conferences and the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture are the conference supporters.

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

Professor Szewach Weiss to Chair Yad Vashem Council

The Government of Israel has appointed Professor Szewach Weiss as Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, replacing the late Dr. Josef Burg.

Professor Weiss, a Holocaust survivor born in Poland in 1935, immigrated to Israel as a boy in 1947. Weiss is a professor of political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and holds numerous degrees, including a B.A. from the Hebrew University in Political Science and International Relations, an M.A. from the Hebrew University in Political Science and Contemporary Jewry, a Ph.D. from the Hebrew University, and an undergraduate degree in law from Tel Aviv University. He is also an alumnus of the Brookings Institute program for leaders and intellectuals. He has served as a visiting professor in the departments of Political Science and Law at Tel Aviv University and was head of the Department of Political Science at the University of Haifa.

Professor Weiss was a Member of the Knesset for eighteen years, including seven years as Deputy Speaker and four years as Speaker of the Thirteenth Knesset.

Professor Weiss has published dozens of books, mainly on political science and governance in Israel, including several works on the Holocaust.

In 1975, Professor Weiss won a prize for his research on municipal government that he received from the late Dr. Josef Burg, Minister of the Interior at the time. The Government of Poland awarded him the prestigious Brother Albert Prize for his contribution to tolerance, democracy, and war on racism.

Professor Weiss also received the Tolerance Prize of the Movement for a Beautiful Israel; the Amitai Prize, awarded by the Association for Sound Governance and Ethics; and a prize from the Movement for Quality Governance.



Recording the Names

The second "Recording the Names" conference will convene in March 2000 on the occasion of the opening of the new Archives and Library building at Yad Vashem. At the first "Recording the Names" conference, in 1996, Yad Vashem experts had exhibited the Authority's computerized system, which included 240,000 computerized names, to all the foreign participants.

In this conference participants will be shown a working system, including over 3,000,000 names.

Though most of these names are from Yad Vashem's sources, some 15% come from other organizations whose much appreciated cooperation was obtained as a result of the previous conference in 1996. (These lists of names were contributed by the following: Nadace Terzinska Inciativa, Gedenkstaette Bergen-Belsen, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv, Museum of Genocide Victims Beograd, Dokumentationsarchiv des Osterreichischen Widerstandes, Dr. Rita Meyhoefer, Lithuanian Names Project, Stadtarchiv Hannover)

The upcoming conference will reach out to researchers and students in related fields, offering them Yad Vashem's immense database as a resource for their own research. Top professors will demonstrate how Yad Vashem's database can be used for academic study in a myriad of fields, e.g. history, demography, linguistics, economics, and many other academic areas.

Yad Vashem's database can provide necessary information for the study of concentration camps, answering such questions as where did the victims come from, and when did they arrive in the camp? However, the database will be able to do even more than that. If, for instance, the subject is the Jewish community of Lodz, the database will be able to provide information on thousands of people from that community, not only providing their names, but also their birthplaces, professions, education level, and marital status.

It is Yad Vashem's hope that this resource will enhance its understanding of the pre-Holocaust Jewish community of Europe and of the Holocaust itself and will increase the world's ability to remember those persecuted in the Holocaust as individual people.

Construction in Progress



The construction of the Visitors' Center (*Mevoah*) and parking facilities is progressing. In the photo: clearing the ground on which the Visitor's Center will stand.

The Visitors' Center is being constructed with the generous support of David and Fela Shappell from Los Angeles, and with the assistance of Israel's Ministry of Tourism

Documentation from Germany by Lisa Davidson

In October, the German Ambassador to Israel, Theodore Wallau, presented DM350,000 to Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate. This was the first payment of a total of DM8m to be given to Yad Vashem for the research and microfilming of German archival documents.

Presenting the check, Wallau stated the importance of co-operation with Yad Vashem. "I am proud that Germany is taking part in such an essential project, which all levels of the political and professional spectrum see as valuable."

Shalev said that as a result of this project, Yad Vashem's Archives would become the main address for researchers from all over the world for the location of various types of documentation from different sources. "This will add significantly to the over 55 million pages of documentation already stored in the Archives," he added.

It will take 8 years to complete the research and microfilming of archival documents from Germany. This project is the joint initiative of Yad Vashem and the late Ignatz Bubis, former Chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, and of the German Society for Yad Vashem.

The project will be carried out by Yad Vashem's Archives researchers in co-operation with the researchers at the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich.

U.S.A.

The American Society held its 15th Annual Tribute Dinner in November, drawing its largest ever attendance, with over 1,200 guests, including foreign diplomats, community leaders, officers of Yad Vashem, and members of its societies. American Society Chairman, Eli Zborowski, opened the program by memorializing the late David Berg and Isidore Karten, Honorary Vice Chairmen of the Society. Honorees were Jack H. (Shaya) Pechter,



At the Yad Vashem Tribute Dinner. From left: Dr. Israel Singer, Jack H. Pechter, Zygmunt Wilf, Wolf Blitzer, Avner Shalev, and Eli Zborowski.

Chairman of TriStar Management, Inc., who received the Yad Vashem Leadership Award, and Wolf Blitzer, lead anchor for CNN's "The World Today," recipient of the Yad Vashem Young Leadership Award. The awards were presented by Zygmunt Wilf, Dinner Chairman and Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate. Eli Zborowski, and Dr. Israel Singer, Dinner Chairman and Secretary General of the World Jewish Congress, spoke in memory of the late Dr. Josef Burg, Chairman of the Council of Yad Vashem. A video, "A Step away from the Millenium," was screened. The video, which detailed the implementation of "Yad Vashem 2001," led by Campaign Chairman Joseph Wilf, showed Yad Vashem's future plans, and the campaign for the Collection of Holocaust Victims Names. It was produced by Yad Vashem's International Relations Department headed by Shaya Ben-Yehuda, who participated in the dinner.

The first event in Memphis, Tennessee, for the American Society, was held at the home of Jan and Andrew Groveman. Co-hosted by Marilyn



At the event in Memphis, Tennessee. Co-hosts Jack (second from left) and Marilyn Belz, Jan (in the middle) and Andy (second from right) Groveman, and Friderica (third from right) and Leonid Saharovici (first from right), Guest Speaker Elly Dlin (first from left) and Shraga Mekel (fourth from right), American Society for Yad Vashem Development Director.

and Jack Belz, and Friderica and Leonid Saharovici, speakers at the event were Elly Dlin, former Director of the Valley of the Communities, whose presentation "Not Only Wallenberg," related the story of the diplomats who rescued Jews in the Holocaust and Shraga Mekel, Development Director of the American Society, who gave an update on "Yad Vashem 2001." Jan Groveman spoke about her recent visit to Yad Vashem with daughter Ariel. Andrew Groveman encouraged the sixty guests to get actively involved in support of Yad Vashem.

The Atlanta Friends of the American Society for Yad Vashem held a parlor meeting at the home of Hedva and Keith Wiener. Guest speaker was Berendina Eman, who was honored by Yad Vashem as a Righteous Among the Nations for saving Jews in Holland. Cantor Isaac Goodfried, Chairman of the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust and his wife Betty, Carol Nemo, a founding member of the Atlanta Friends of the American Society, and Stan Lefco, one of the leaders of the Atlanta based Second Generation Organization, were among the guests.

At the end of January, the exhibition "No Child's Play," displaying the creativity and play of children in the Holocaust, will start traveling in the communities in the US.

Canada

The well attended Canadian Society's Annual Dinner took place in November chaired by Anna Dan, Dora Kichler and Helen Rosenbaum. The Honorable Elinor Caplan, the first Jewish Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, was honored as Yad Vashem Woman of the Year. Marsha Lederman, Master of Ceremonies, talked of the importance of filling out Pages of Testimony.



From left to right: Genia Grossman, Alex Grossman, the Honorable Elinor Caplan, Avner Shalev, and Hank Rosenbaum

Mexico

The Mexican Society, represented by Meyer Klip and Pepe Chisikowsky, has resumed its activities. We are grateful for the initiative and motivation of David Gorodzinsky, during the many years of important work he undertook for Yad Vashem.

CORRECTION: Joan Constantiner, the late wife of Jaime Constantiner, donor of the Lecture Hall in the new International School for Holocaust Studies, was actively involved in the translation of Holocaust literature into Spanish for the youth of Mexican Jewish communities, and not as previously stated.

Panama

Yad Vashem honors and thanks Zisa Aizenman-Schwartz and family, donors of the Reading Hall, in the new Archives and Library building. Zisa Aizenman-Schwartz, who made her contribution in loving memory of her husband Rachmil (Rafael) Schwartz and beloved son Saul Schwartz, will participate in the official ceremony to mark the inauguration of the Archives building.



Peru

Hirsz Litmanowisz, who will shortly begin representing the Peruvian Society, visited Yad Vashem in late November.



Venezuela

On her recent trip to Venezuela, Perla Hazan, Emissary of Latin American and Spanish-speaking countries, met Hilo Ostfeld and Alexandre Estransky, close friends and supporters of Yad Vashem.

Maritza Pionkowski completed her donation towards Yad Vashem's seminars for Spanish speakers.

Eric Karpel pledged his future support to Yad Vashem.

On the occasion of the inauguration of the new International School for Holocaust Studies building, Yad Vashem honored the memory of close friend, Sonia Badler, the donor of the Pedagogical and Resource Center, who recently passed away.



Brazil

Yad Vashem honors and thanks the late Jakub Halbreich and Eugenia Sperber-Halbreich, donors of the Research Wing, of the new Archives and Library building. The gift is in memory of their brothers Bernard Halbreich and Henryk Sperber, fighters from the Krakow Ghetto. Eugenia Sperber-Halbreich and her son Gustavo will take part in the inauguration of the Archives and Library building.



Belgium

Within the framework of the first Yad Vashem seminar for Belgian teachers, Jacques Graubart, Chairman of the Belgian Friends of Yad Vashem and Nathan Ramet of Antwerp, a staunch, longstanding supporter of Yad Vashem, held comprehensive discussions on "Yad Vashem 2001" master plan and the Belgian role in its development.



Austria

Yad Vashem honors and thanks Danek Gertner, who gave a generous donation for the establishment of the Conservation and Restoration Laboratory in the new Archives and Library building. Danek Gertner has recently established two new endowment funds to support the research and collection of documents from East Galicia and to purchase new equipment for the laboratory.



Varda Gross, Director of the Laboratory and Danek Gertner



The Netherlands

Yad Vashem honors and thanks the Baan Brothers for their contribution towards the Computerization Project of the Archives.



Sweden

Yad Vashem honors and thanks Paul Lipschutz who contributed to the establishment of a Research Center in the new Archives and Library building.



Israel

Cellcom Israel Ltd. recently decided to donate generously to the Computerization, Communication, and Information Center and the purchase of its essential equipment.

Recent contributors to the Campaign for the Collection and Commemoration of Holocaust Victims' Names were the Yad Avi Hayishuy Foundation - Yad Hanadiiv, the Eden Jerusalem Foundation, and Tomer and Carmit Nofech Moses.

On his recent visit to Yad Vashem, Shmuel Goldstein committed himself to furthering his support to Yad Vashem and its activities.

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for its generous contribution towards the new Archives and Library building

and for being a committed partner in the "Yad Vashem 2001" master plan

The Opening of the International School for Holocaust Studies

by Lisa Davidson

The International School for Holocaust Studies was officially inaugurated in December in the presence of Israel's Minister of Education, Yossi Sarid, and Mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert. The main donor of the school, Jack H. (Shaya) Pechter, from Baltimore, who attended together with sister Jean Schreiber, nieces Frances Reitburger and Shirley Blumenfeld, son-in-law William Himmelrich and family, affixed the mezuzah and cut the ribbon declaring the school officially open. Donors participating in the ceremony were Roberto and Arturo Constantiner from the U.S.A., who dedicated the Lecture Hall in memory of their mother Joan on behalf of their father Dr. Jaime Constantiner (Mexico); Maxi Mordechai Librati, from France, donor of the "Children without a Childhood Garden," who was joined by daughter and son-in-law; and Israelis, Nehama and Matityahu Zuckerman; together with friends and family who contributed to the Seminar Room in memory of the members of their families killed in the Holocaust. Taking part in the ceremony were members of the American Society for Yad Vashem, Eli Zborowski, Society Chairman; Joseph Wilf, Campaign Chairman, "Yad Vashem 2001"; Mark Palmer, Society Vice President, and Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate. Also present at the ceremony was close friend and benefactor Danek Gertner, supporters Josef and Irene Grotte, Society Chairmen Herman Kahan, Norway, and Dr. Richard Prasquier, France, and our friend Joseph Bollag from Switzerland.

At the festive dinner to mark the inauguration of the new International School for Holocaust Studies Building, held at Jerusalem's Crowne Plaza Hotel, Yad Vashem's special guests from Israel and abroad celebrated the official opening. The Hannukah lights were kindled at the dinner by Herman Kahan, who entertained the guests with a repertoire of songs in Yiddish.



Cutting the ribbon at the inauguration of the new International School for Holocaust Studies building. From left to right Jack H. (Shaya) Pechter, Eli Zborowski, Minister Yossi Sarid, Joseph Wilf and Avner Shalev



From left to right: Eli Zborowski, Joseph Wilf, Shaya Ben Yehuda and Mark Palmer



Arturo and Roberto Constantiner at the dedication of the Lecture Hall in memory of their mother Joan



Maxi Mordechai Librati from France kindling the Hannukah lights



From left to right: Joseph Wilf, Avner Shalev, and Matityahu Zuckerman