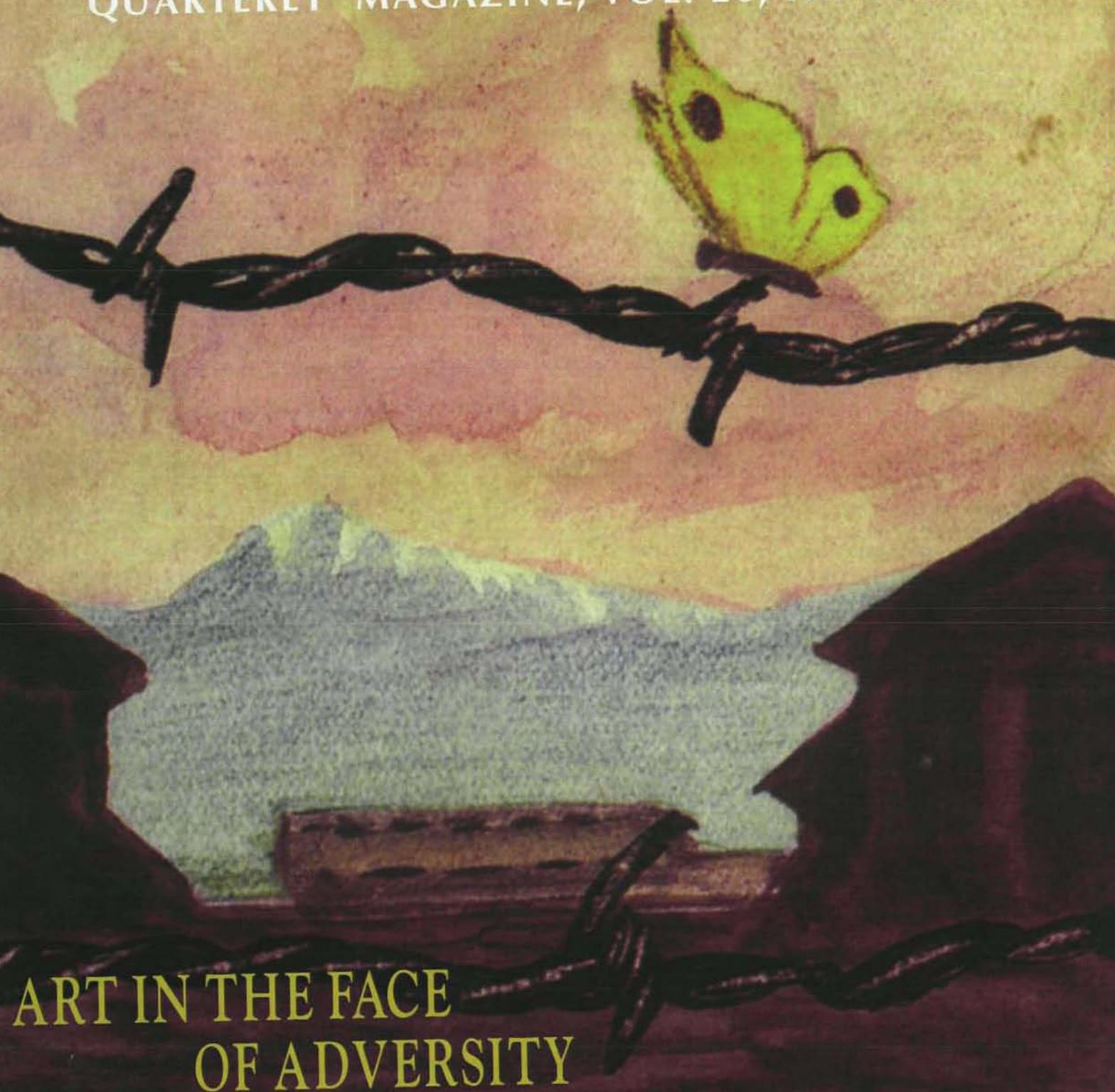


JERUSALEM Yad Vashem

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE, VOL. 20, FALL 2000



ART IN THE FACE
OF ADVERSITY

Cover Story: The New Museum of Holocaust Art

Brothers Reunite... After 59 Years	2-3
Volunteers for Memory	4
Danek Gertner: The Resolve to Survive	5
Education	6-7
Feng-Shan Ho: Visas to Save Lives	8



Holocaust Remembrance Day in the Diaspora	9
Art in the Face of Adversity: The New Museum of Holocaust Art	10-11

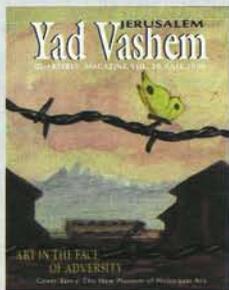


Podium	12-13
Two Sides of the Coin: The Holocaust on the Internet	

News	14-17
------	-------



Friends Worldwide	18-19
New Publications	20



Cover: Karl Bodek (1905-Auschwitz 1942) and Kurt Conrad Loew (1914-1980), *One Spring, Gurs, 1941*, watercolor, ink, and pencil on paper. Gift of Annelies Haymann to Yad Vashem's Art Museum. See article on pp. 10-11

Yad Vashem Speaks Out

Yad Vashem deeply regrets the offensive remarks relating to Holocaust victims recently made by spiritual and political leaders in Israel. These comments create a deep divide within world Jewry and are an affront to the memory of the victims, their families, and the survivors.

Yad Vashem objects to the use of the Holocaust for political debate and calls upon public figures from all political sectors to refrain from doing so.

The Holocaust is becoming more and more of a shared experience among public figures, both in Israel and abroad, stressing brotherhood and Jewish unity. As such, the subject should be approached with all due sensitivity, sobriety, and responsibility.



Yad Vashem welcomes the July approval by US District Judge Edward Korman, of the Swiss Bank settlement of \$1.25 billion for the restitution of Holocaust victims. It also commends the formalization in Berlin of the \$4.8 billion German Foundation to compensate Holocaust forced and slave laborers.

These events signify that moral responsibility is being assumed.

The survivor generation is dwindling and it is of the utmost importance that the next stage—the financial compensation of survivors and the victims' heirs—be executed as quickly and efficiently as possible.



Power and fragility, two seemingly contradictory terms, co-exist in one of the Holocaust's most amazing phenomena—artistic endeavor.

Yad Vashem is building a home for the *objets d'art* created during, and surviving, those benighted, horrific days—the Museum for Holocaust Art. In this issue's cover article, you can read about the museum, currently under construction as part of the "Yad Vashem 2001" masterplan's new Museum Complex.

The moving story of two brothers, reunited after 59 years thanks to Yad Vashem's Hall of Names, is also included in this edition, as is the courageous story of Chinese Diplomat Feng-Shan Ho, who was recently recognized as a Righteous Among the Nations.

In addition, this issue contains the poignant account of the Rosh Hashana *machzor* (festival prayerbook) created under the grim conditions of a labor camp in Germany. The *machzor* was penciled on pieces of a brown paper bag which once held cement, and has recently been published by Yad Vashem in grand album form.

by Orit Ohayon-Madar

“No, I didn't die, I'm alive!” This was Leonid (Leibish) Sheiman's proclamation to his brother, Lazar, after 59 years, during which each brother believed he was the only surviving member of his family. Lazar, stunned, couldn't believe his ears. Only when Leonid reminded him of how they had



run for a full day to flee the first shellings of Lwow, was he convinced that he was speaking with his brother. That very evening Lazar, his wife, and daughter traveled from their Herzliya home to Kiryat Gat, a mere 80km drive, where Leonid was waiting outside his house in tense anticipation. There, the brothers passionately embraced—for the first time in 59 years.

This moving revelation was a direct result of the unique Pages of Testimony enterprise initiated by Yad Vashem's Hall of Names, whereby the names of Holocaust victims are collected through the testimony of relatives and acquaintances.

The two brothers, who parted ways in 1941, were reunited after one of them filled in Pages of Testimony to commemorate his relatives, and the other subsequently asked members of the Yad Vashem staff to check if anything was known about his family.

“In 1991, my wife and I took a trip to Jerusalem and she suggested we pay a visit to Yad Vashem,” says Lazar, who settled in Israel in 1957, and soon after began a family. “That is where we first encountered the Pages of Testimony that are used to gather victims' names. I decided to fill in the Pages and commemorate the names of my parents, brothers, and sister.”

Leonid (Leibish) Sheiman lived in the FSU until he, too, came to Israel in 1995. “When my daughter immigrated to Israel three months ago, she heard about the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem. She talked me into writing them a letter, asking them to check if they had any details about the fate of my family.”

Thus, about two months ago, Rimma Lerman and Ala Posternak, staff members at the Hall of Names, received an inquiry from Leonid (Leibish) Sheiman, written in Russian. In his request, he reported what he knew about his family: the names of relatives, their years of birth, and town of origin, Tomaszow-Lubelski.

Posternak searched the computerized database of Pages of Testimony and found seven Pages mentioning the names and dates that Leonid (Leibish) had cited in his letter. On the bottom of each page was the signature of Lazar Sheiman. Lerman called Leonid to impart the news to him, then mailed him the findings. However, even after receiving the reply letter



From left to right: Leonid (Leibish) and Lazar Sheiman

Others

Reunite

A f t e r 5 9 Y e a r s



The picture of Reizel Sheiman, mother of Lazar and Leonid (Leibish)

“He asked me if I remembered my **brother Leibish**,” Lazar recalls. “I said of course **I remember him, but he died** in the war. Then Leibish said, ‘**No, I didn’t die, I’m alive!**’”

from the Hall of Names together with copies of the Pages of Testimony, it took Leonid a week to muster up the courage to phone his brother.

“My wife answered the phone,” Lazar recalls, “and someone spoke to her in Russian. Since she didn’t understand a word, she asked me to take the call and translate for her.

“The man on the phone asked me if I had brothers. I said I used to but that all of them had died in the Holocaust. He asked me what

their names were, and I began to list them: Haim, Shlomo. . . . He went on to recite the names with me and said, ‘and I’m Leibish!’” Stunned at first, Lazar did not understand what Leonid (Leibish) was trying to say.

“He asked me if I remembered my brother Leibish and what became of him,” Lazar recalls. “I said of course I remember him, but he died in the war. Then Leibish said, ‘No, I didn’t die, I’m alive!’”

Since that moving conversation, Leonid and Lazar have introduced each other to their families, children, and grandchildren, who were no less moved.

A month after the reunification of the Sheiman family, Lazar and Leonid visited Yad Vashem to share their experiences.

When recounting to the Yad Vashem staff how their family got separated during the war, Lazar explained: “When the war reached our area, the whole family fled inland, toward Russia. At first we were all together, but then they inducted Leonid into the Red Army and no one saw him afterwards. The rest of the family also scattered, and I carried on alone.”

After the war the two brothers searched for each other, but to no avail.

“We contacted all sorts of people,” says Lazar, “always getting the same reply—that no one in the Sheiman family had survived. Whenever my wife and I came across the name Sheiman, even in a phone book, we’d call up to ask. Maybe. . . .”

“I thought the only remnant of my family is this picture of our mother, which I always kept with me and which kept me alive,” Leonid adds, as both brothers clutch the picture of their mother.

They say they are slowly recalling their childhood experiences and sharing them with their children. Then, addressing the staff of the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem, who were privileged to have reunited the brothers, they add, “We don’t have enough words to thank you.”

“With a lump in my throat, picturing the face of my younger sister’s one-day-old baby girl, who died the day she was born, I approached the representatives of the Society after they finished their speech at the old-age home and said, ‘I can’t hold in the pain any longer. Please help me fill in the Pages

population of over 70,000 Holocaust survivors. To this end, it established an extensive plan, headed by Moshe Friedman, to encourage the latter to fill in Pages of Testimony, as well as to present Holocaust artifacts and documents to Yad Vashem.

The director of the Society, Yaron Ashkenazi, explains, “We decided to do comprehensive research in advance, on the way residents of old-

relations,” Moshe Friedman remarks.

Over 1,200 Pages of Testimony were gathered at the two old-age homes in the course of the pilot project, and video and audio testimonies are still being recorded. In addition, documents and artifacts were gathered, such as an authentic 1938 deportation order bearing the stamp of the Nazi German authorities;



Members of the volunteer committee of “Zevet” during their visit to Yad Vashem

MEMORY

photographs taken surreptitiously on “Boycott Day,” April 1, 1933, in which German policemen are seen standing at the entrance to an office building, clutching a sign with the message, “Don’t Use Jewish Lawyers”; and letters and postcards from parents en route to death camps to their children.

In view of the material gathered and the favorable response of the residents of the two old-age homes, the Society intends to extend the project in future years to include a large number of old-age homes nationwide. The professional staff at Yad Vashem cannot do this alone. “We, members of Israel’s founding generation, should consider this project a national mission of the highest order, and we should volunteer to carry it out,” states Nitsa Ganot, one of the volunteers who participated in the project.

Part of the Society’s activity, which has strengthened and intensified relations between the Israeli public and Yad Vashem, was the establishment of the “Volunteers Forum” in 1999. The Forum’s first volunteers, members of the National Students’ Union, have helped people all over Israel who found it difficult to fill in Pages of Testimony. Shirin Ezekiel, Students’ Union International Relations Coordinator, whose parents are from India, explains that she, “regards the task of gathering and commemorating the Holocaust victims’ names as one of [her] life’s major purposes.”

Recently, the Society has been in intensive contact with representatives of other organizations in Israel with the aim of getting them involved in its volunteer activities. These include the chairman of “Zevet,” the volunteer committee of the Organization of IDF Pensioners, Brig.-Gen. (Res.) Izhak Zeid; the president of the Israel Bureau of Certified Public Accountants, CPA Ofer Minirav; the chairman of the Finance Committee of the Israel Bar Association, Adv. Juda Talmon; and a member of the Finance Committee of the Israel Bar Association, Adv. Yishay Aizik.

The representatives of these organizations have expressed their eagerness to participate in the Society’s volunteer endeavors, and activities incorporating them are already being planned.



An authentic 1938 deportation order received by the parents of Chaim Ben Dov (resident of the Bat-Yam Mediterranean Towers old-age home)

of Testimony and commemorate the members of my family...” recounts a resident of a Mediterranean Towers old-age home.

It has always been one of Yad Vashem’s principle missions to gather the names of Holocaust victims and to

memorialize them. In this vein, on Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Day 1999, Yad Vashem inaugurated a comprehensive project in Israel and abroad, spearheaded in Israel by the Israeli Society for Yad Vashem.

The Israeli public’s response to the project has been immeasurably greater than expected and in 1999 alone, Yad Vashem collected over 325,000 Pages of Testimony.

However, the Society was aware that much work remained to be done among residents of old-age homes in Israel, who represent a potential

age homes behave and act, and to immediately follow this with a pilot project at two old-age homes in the Mediterranean Towers chain, in Bat Yam and Kfar Sava. Our expectation is that the pilot project and its conclusions will create a basis for our future activity in this field.”

In the first phase, representatives of the Society arranged for the management of the Mediterranean Towers chain to visit Yad Vashem. Immediately afterwards, the Society organized an initial gathering at the old-age home in Kfar Sava, to which all of the home’s residents, numbering over 250, were invited and at which Ashkenazi and Alexander Avraham (Director of Yad Vashem’s Hall of Names) spoke. The next day, and for several subsequent days, the Society stationed a team at the old-age home, comprised of volunteers and representatives of the Hall of Names, to help residents fill in and submit Pages of Testimony. Representatives of the Museums Division handled the collection of artifacts, and representatives of the Archives Division gathered documents and took testimonies.

“As the preparations for the project were under way, we realized that the professional staff from Yad Vashem had to be reinforced with a large number of volunteers. Thus, we recruited, trained, and consolidated a team of volunteers with whom the Society had previously developed

Danek Gertner has known no inner peace since 1945. To this day, he relentlessly and repeatedly asks himself three questions that beset many Holocaust survivors: Why did I, of all people, survive? How can one explain the savagery of those who participated in the extermination of other people? Is this brutality and barbarity embedded more firmly in certain peoples than in others?

The descendant of rabbis, Danek Gertner was born in Żabie, a village in Galicia, to a Zionist family at whose home the members of the local Jewish intelligentsia regularly assembled. He had a happy childhood, boating on the Czeremosz River, going horseback riding in the fields, and skiing in the mountains. "We felt very confident and optimistic about our future," he recalls.

The beginning of WWII, along with the Soviet occupation of Galicia, transformed the lives of the Jews there, including the lives of the Gertners, in many ways. For one, Danek was ordered to report for military service. Then, when the German forces



D a n e k G e r t n e r

The Resolve to Survive

reached Żabie, in early October 1941, the first *Aktion* took place (on October 10), claiming the life of Danek's eldest brother, Arye. In subsequent *Aktionen*, which followed each other in swift succession, additional relatives were murdered. So, the Gertners fled to Kosów, where Danek's uncle, Yehoshua Gertner, a member of the local *Judenrat*, lived.

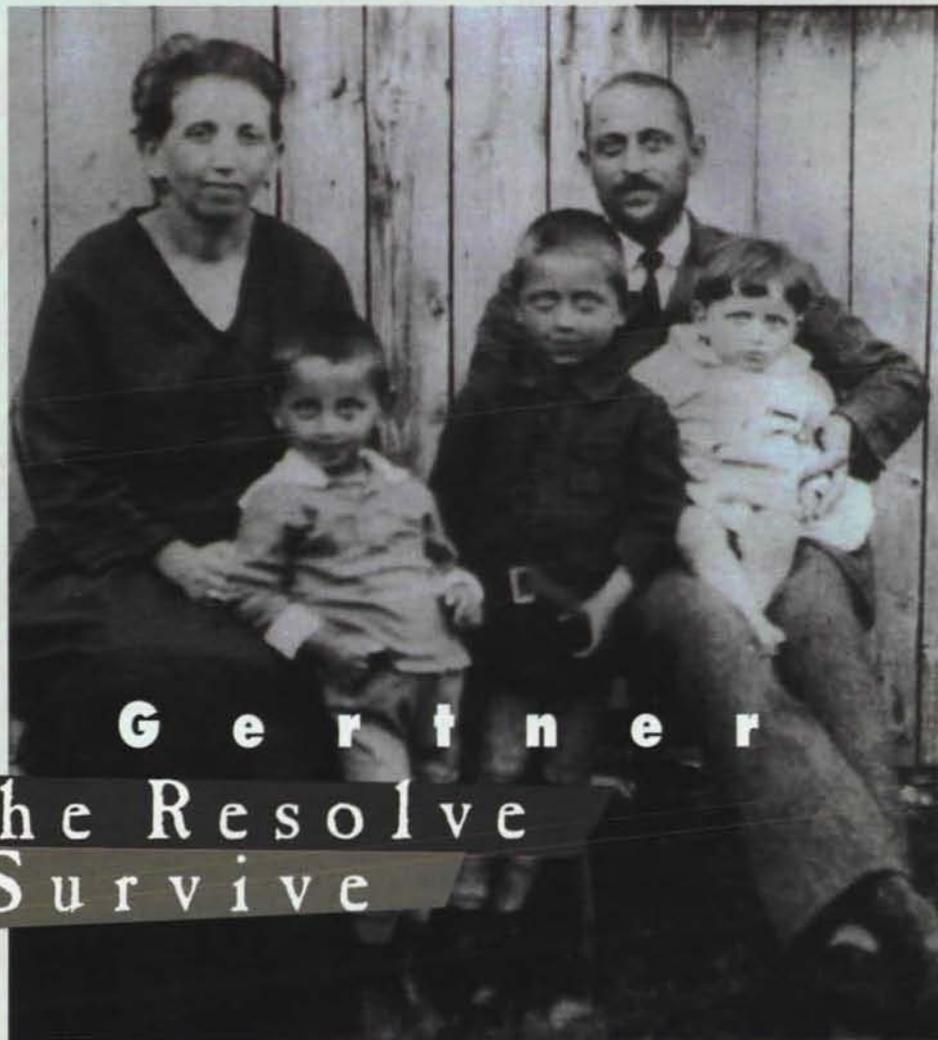
On September 7, 1942, Danek and his brothers were arrested and taken to the town's sports field. There, they underwent a *Selektion* by SS and Ukrainian militiamen, who assigned them to the group condemned to the camps. While they were marching towards Kolomyja, Danek, in a momentary flash of audacity and resolve, raced down a hill and began to flee. Although bullets perforated his coat, he managed to reach a cemetery, where he hid among the corpses strewn there.

The next day, Danek found his way back to Kosów and joined a group that was preparing to cross into Hungary. Before they were able to carry out their plans, another *Aktion* took place, and he and his comrades were captured and put aboard a train bound for an unknown

destination. Once on the train, Danek's determination and boldness manifested themselves again. Using a pocketknife, he cut the barbed wire covering a paneless window in the railroad car and, along with other young men, leaped from the moving train. He returned to the ghetto in search of his mother but, not finding her there, he joined a group that helped smuggle him across the Carpathian Mountains

self-defense, resistance, and repression, thus attaining the opposite of the intended goal.

"It isn't effective to try to 'reproach' or 'reprimand' a German or Austrian teenager making him blame his grandfather. Instead, we ought to persuade him to think, as a matter of knowledge and choice, that this isn't the way, and to develop in him the understanding and the ability to help keep such things from recurring.



Gertner's parents with their sons (from left to right): Schimek, Danek, and Mirek

and reach Hungary.

In Hungary, Danek met his future wife, Jadzia, who survived by posing as an Aryan after escaping from a Gestapo lockup.

Following the war, Danek became a successful businessman whose philanthropy has aided many cultural enterprises, including activities for Holocaust remembrance. "I believe one should approach the complex topic of Holocaust remembrance with a maximum of sensitivity," Danek says. "My perception of the matter is that the focus in studying the topic and bequeathing it to posterity should be its meaning for the future. The perspective should be one of preventive education and not a power-focused attitude of hatred and spreading of accusations."

Danek explains that a vengeful approach or dogmatic preaching merely evokes reactions of

"WWII claimed 60-70 million human lives, and although all were enveloped in the tragedy, it should be borne in mind that only Jews were murdered for the purpose of obliterating them as a people. Yad Vashem should continue to strive to know and learn about the events from this perspective; this is also what makes it unique. Yad Vashem should serve as a main resource for information about the Holocaust and its significance and a focal point for the production and dissemination of scholastic materials and teaching programs, in conjunction with educational institutions around the world, as it does today. This should be done to ensure that such events never happen again to any people anywhere," Danek stresses.

The author is the Director and Senior Editor of the Publications Department

Birthright at Yad Vashem

For the past year, Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies has been cooperating with Project Birthright, an initiative of Jewish activists and philanthropists Charles Bronfman and Michael Steinhardt.

Project Birthright targets young Jews in the Diaspora who have not participated in any other educational project in Israel, entitling them to an all-expense-paid visit, thus providing thousands of young people with an initial acquaintance with the country. The visits are organized by various Israeli and Diaspora organizations, the largest of which is Hillel, the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life. Each participant is given a choice of visits, varying in religious and ideological emphases, and is thus able to select the type of trip that he or she finds most appropriate.

Yad Vashem is an important stop on the Project Birthright itinerary, and the International School for Holocaust Studies has prepared a unique, day-long workshop to meet this challenge. The workshop focuses on the theme of the Holocaust, and also discusses Zionism, Judaism, and values such as the Jewish mutual guarantee, personal choice, and responsibility. The workshop concludes by discussing the role of the Holocaust in each participant's personal, Jewish, and universal identity. Afterwards, the names of Holocaust victims are recited in a ceremony at the Hall of Remembrance.

The immediate feedback from participants over the past year has been moving, demonstrating that the workshop greatly contributes to reinforcing their sense of identity and affiliation with the Jewish people and Israel.

The author is the Awards Coordinator at the International School for Holocaust Studies

Seminar at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum

In July 2000, the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum hosted a two-week study seminar on "Auschwitz Awareness in Poland and Worldwide," with the participation of 17 employees from Yad Vashem and three from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

During the seminar, participants attended lectures on topics such as: Poland under German and Soviet occupation, the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, Jews in Poland during and after the war, the problem of the symbolism of Auschwitz, the conflict between the way in which the Jews and the Poles remember events, and the meaning of the cross in Christianity.

Participants attended lectures by senior museum staff on the museum's archives, collections, preservation and maintenance measures, and on future plans for its development.

Personal testimonies were given by Righteous Among the Nations, Jerzy Radwanek, the Polish Air Force officer known in Auschwitz as the "Jewish Uncle"; by the director of the Auschwitz Museum between 1955 and 1990, Kazimierz Smolen; and by Holocaust survivor and professor of history at the University of Warsaw, Marian Turcki.

Participants were given guided tours of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Buna, followed the path of the death march, and visited Jewish sites such as the renovated synagogue in Oswiecim, the Kazimierz quarter (the Jewish quarter) in Kraków and the cemetery in Warsaw.

On the Sabbath eve, the group met Righteous Among the Nations, Wanda Tazbir, in Warsaw, where she recounted her fascinating story in Hebrew.

The author is a researcher for the Encyclopædia of Jewish Communities Destroyed During the Holocaust

Courses for Educators from Around the Globe

"The program was physically and mentally exhausting, but I can't decide what I'd have given up—no actually, I wouldn't have given anything up," declared a participant from Nordrhein Westfalen at one of the courses for educators at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies this summer.

Approximately 200 educators participated in eight different courses at Yad Vashem between June and November this year, which were held



First-ever course for educators from Italy

in German, French, English, Spanish, Russian, and Italian.

The classrooms at the International School for Holocaust Studies were packed during the summer months with teachers; university professors; Catholic educators; community leaders; clergy; and students from Switzerland, the FSU, Germany, Latin America, the US, Austria, and Great Britain. Lectures were given by Yad Vashem staff and by faculty members of the Universities of Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, and Be'er Sheva.

A mixture of both Jewish and non-Jewish educators provided for an interesting exchange of educational ideas at the bi-annual, three-and-a-half-week-long English language course for educators from abroad. Participants arrived in late June from the US, the UK, Italy, the Netherlands, and Austria, and since the course's completion, the group has remained in regular contact.

Sixteen future Jewish leaders from the FSU, ranging in age from 18-24 years, arrived at Yad Vashem in July for a six-day course. The course was held in conjunction with Beit Hillel (FSU branch), the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life. All lectures were held in Russian.

A group of 45 educators from the US attended the yearly Teacher's Program Seminar at Yad Vashem in July. Prior to arriving in Israel, the group, accompanied by Benjamin and Vladka Meed of the Jewish Labor Committee, spent a week in Poland visiting several death camps and places where Jewish life had flourished prior to the Shoah.

In September, Yad Vashem hosted the first-ever course for educators from Italy, which lasted two weeks and which was conducted within the framework of the Executive Protocol of the Italian-Israeli Inter-Governmental Cultural Agreement.

A further course, for educators from the official teacher-training institute of the State of Bavaria took place in October, over a two-week period, and the first-ever course for Austrian educators, a course now scheduled to take place three times a year, was held in November.

The author is the Coordinator of Seminars for Educators from Abroad

Professional Development Seminars in North America by Richelle Budd Caplan

A team of educators from the International School for Holocaust Studies, led by Pedagogical Director Shulamit Imber, is giving an intensive series of professional development seminars to hundreds of teachers in five cities throughout North America in November, over a period of some two weeks.

Reflecting on the program, Imber notes that, "although it can be draining to travel great distances across North America, I find it very gratifying to have an opportunity to work with such a diverse population of committed educators. I believe that we have established a pedagogical dialogue with them as to how the Holocaust should be taught. Our work throughout North America—from rural areas such as Georgia's Vidalia onion fields through to bustling cosmopolitan centers such as New York City and Los Angeles—has been extremely rewarding."

One of the professional development seminars will be given at the Holocaust Memorial of Miami and will be organized by Dr. Miriam Klein Kassenoff, Chairperson of the newly established Association for Southern Holocaust Organizations. Klein Kassenoff, a long-time friend of Yad Vashem, volunteered during the summer of 1999 to help coordinate the Second International Conference on Holocaust and Education.

Seminars will also be held in conjunction with the Florida Holocaust Museum, located in Tampa-St. Petersburg, Florida, and will be organized by Noreen Brand, a 1998 Yad Vashem seminar graduate.

Another seminar, for inner-city public school teachers, will be given in

Atlanta in conjunction with the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust, and will be directed by Sylvia Wygoda.

In addition, a one-day seminar will be organized in Toronto, in conjunction with the League of Human Rights of Bnai Brith Canada and co-sponsored by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem. The following day, the team of educators will present the educational unit, "The Legend of the Lodz Ghetto Children," in Hebrew and in English, during a professional development seminar for over 1,000 educators working in Jewish day schools, and coordinated by the Bureau of Jewish Education of Toronto of the UJA Federation.

For more information on these seminars, please contact Richelle Budd Caplan at mshalem@yad-vashem.org.il or Education Director for the American Society for Yad Vashem, Dr. Marlene Warshawski Yahalom at marleneyv@aol.com

The author is the Coordinator of Overseas Programming at the International School for Holocaust Studies

Course for Instruction in Eastern Europe By Inbal Kiviti

The 10th course for youth instruction in Poland, Lithuania, and the Czech Republic ended in September. The course, held for the first time at the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem, took place, like its precursors, in conjunction with the Youth and Society Administration of the Ministry of Education.

Twenty-eight applicants were chosen through a competitive selection process to participate in the course, which began in February. They came from all sectors of Israeli society: religious and secular, male and female, mature and young.

Participants attended lectures and workshops on various essential topics for instructors in the field of Holocaust Education, which focused on four major subjects: the eight centuries of Polish Jewry, the Holocaust and WWII, Poland and Polish culture, and methodology and didactics. The course also included a two-week trip to Poland and the Czech Republic, guided by the course staff and by the participants, themselves.

The course program included workshops at various Holocaust study centers in Israel—Beit Lohamei Hagetaot, Beit Terezin, and Moreshet-Giv'at Haviva, among others—and lectures from instructors at the Diaspora Museum and the Ot Va'ed Institute.

On completion of the course, participants embarked on their first instruction assignments with youth, thus joining the varied pool of instructors in this field.

Registration for the course to take place in 2000/2001—also at Yad Vashem—is under way, with more than 200 applicants having already expressed interest.

The author is the Director of Study Seminars at the International School for Holocaust Studies

by Avraham Milgram

New Map of the Ghettos

The topic of the ghettos is one of the central subjects in Holocaust education.

This is reflected in the Ministry of Education's compulsory curriculum for Israeli high schools, in the educational activities of the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem, and in other educational institutions both in Israel and abroad. Furthermore, towns that had ghettos during the Holocaust are on the itineraries of tours to Poland and Lithuania taken by thousands of young people.

With this in mind, and to help school-teachers and instructors in the field of informal education teach about the ghettos, the International School for Holocaust Studies has produced a map of the ghettos. The map shows the approximately 400 main ghettos established by order of the Nazis between 1939-1944 and marks them by size and by the year in which they were established. The map also presents ghettos that were in existence for only a few months, which the Nazis established for the purpose of concentrating and deporting Jews to Auschwitz (such as in Hungary and areas under Hungarian rule).

The ghettos are listed alphabetically and their location on the map is clearly indicated for easy identification. The map, 100 x 70 cm., is printed in color, and is currently available in Hebrew. An English version is soon to follow.

The author is the Research Director of the Museums Division



The title of Righteous Among the Nations has been awarded by Yad Vashem to Feng-Shan Ho, who served as the Chinese consul-general in Vienna during 1938-1940.

After Austria's annexation to Nazi Germany in March 1938, the 185,000 Jews there were subjected to a severe reign of terror, which resulted in intense pressure to leave the country. In order to do so, the Nazis required that Jews have entry visas or boat tickets to another country. However, the majority of the world's nations refused to budge from their restrictive immigration policies, a stance reaffirmed at the Evian Conference, in April 1938.

Unlike his fellow-diplomats, Ho issued visas to Shanghai to all requesting them, even to those wishing to travel elsewhere but needing a visa to leave Nazi Germany.

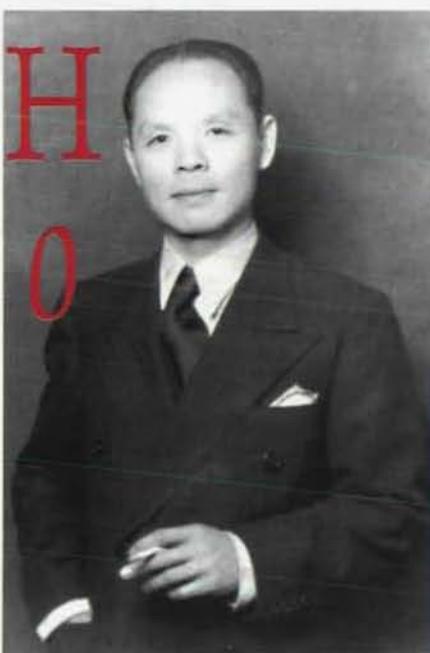
Many of those helped by Ho did indeed reach Shanghai, either by boat from Italy or overland via the Soviet Union. Many others made use of their visas to reach alternate destinations, including Palestine, the Philippines, and elsewhere, such as the parents of Secretary-General of the World Jewish Congress and Vice Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, Dr. Israel Singer, who traveled to Cuba.

Eric Goldstaub, now living in Canada, relates how, in July 1938, he received Chinese visas for his entire family after spending "days, weeks, and months visiting one foreign consulate or embassy after the other trying to obtain visas for [himself, his] parents and [their] near relatives, numbering some 20 people."

Lilith-Sylvia Doron, now living in Israel, met Ho accidentally as both watched Hitler entering Vienna, on 11 March 1938—a time when physical assaults were being waged by the Nazis against the city's Jews.

"Ho, who knew my family, accompanied me home," says Doron. "He claimed that, thanks to his diplomatic status, the [Nazis] would not dare harm us as long as he remained

Feng-Shan Ho
Visas to Save Lives



in our home. Ho continued to visit our home on a permanent basis to protect us from the Nazis."

When Doron's brother, Karl, was arrested and taken to Dachau, he was released thanks to a visa issued by the Chinese consulate. Doron and her brother left Vienna in 1939 for Palestine.

The rush for visas assumed panic proportions during and immediately after Kristallnacht, in November 1938, when thousands of Jews were thrown into

concentration camps, only gaining release if their relatives produced visas or tickets for travel to other destinations. Gerda Gottfried Kraus, based in Canada, relates that after Kristallnacht, her husband waited in a long line for admittance into the Chinese consulate. Seeing a car approaching the consulate's gates, he thrust his application form through its window. "Apparently, the consul-general received it, because [my husband] then got a call and received the visas."

Ho refused to abide by the instructions of his superior, the Chinese ambassador in Berlin, Chen Jie. Chen Jie, hoping to cement closer ties between China and Germany, had forbidden Ho to issue visas on such a large scale, estimated to run into the hundreds, perhaps even thousands. Although visas were not required for entrance to Shanghai, such a document was, as noted, a prerequisite for Jews wishing to leave Nazi Germany. It is believed that the "demerit" which was entered in Ho's personal

file, in 1939, at the Chinese Foreign Ministry was linked to his insubordinate behavior towards his immediate superior, the ambassador in Berlin, on the issue of the visas. After a long diplomatic career, Ho retired in 1973, and died in 1997, at the age of 96.

It was only after his passing that evidence by survivors who benefited from Ho's aid began to reach Yad Vashem. After carefully evaluating the case, the Commission for the Designation of the Righteous decided, recently, to award Feng-Shan Ho the title of Righteous Among the Nations for his humanitarian courage in issuing Chinese visas to Jews in Vienna in spite of orders from his superior to the contrary.

The author is the Director of the Righteous Among the Nations Department

According to reports from Israeli diplomatic missions to the Diaspora Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day was observed around its Jewish date, 27 Nissan, in many countries around the world.

The picture that emerges from their reports spans almost the entire globe, from India to Costa Rica, and from New Zealand to South Africa. Events included memorial services, screenings of Holocaust films, recitations of the names of Holocaust victims, and state ceremonies attended by representatives of local governments, held in conjunction with Israel's embassies worldwide.

Below is a synopsis of only a few of the many events:

On 2 May, for the first time in Quebec City, an official memorial ceremony was held in the Parliament Plenum. It was attended by members of the cabinet, heads of Montreal's Jewish organizations, and numerous personalities, and came in the wake of the government of Quebec's approval, in early December 1999, of a law designating 2 May as Holocaust Remembrance Day.

In Massachusetts, 30 April was designated by the governor as Holocaust Day. In a well-attended ceremony, the governor passed a law absolving recipients of Holocaust-related compensation from taxation, thus making Massachusetts the sixth US state with such a statute. A ceremony was also held at Hyde Park School, located in a disadvantaged Boston neighborhood. The school is participating in a program launched by the Boston mayor several years ago, whereby each year a school is chosen for expanded Holocaust studies.

In Washington, D.C., the names of Holocaust victims were recited on Capitol Hill on 2 May. The official US ceremony took place on 4 May, in conjunction with the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and with the participation of Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson.

Various Holocaust remembrance events took place in Madrid during the first week of May, including discussions and lectures headed by local speakers and organized by the city's Jewish institutions and organizations, as well as by the Israeli Embassy. The main ceremony was held on 3 May at Madrid's parliament building, where the president of the parliament noted that this was the inaugural event. He also stressed the importance of the obligation to remember, educate, and commemorate the Holocaust, in

view of the Stockholm Conference. After the ceremony, an exhibition of paintings by Israeli artist Sarah Atzmon, a Holocaust survivor, was opened to the public. This was the first time that such grand-scale events took place in Madrid outside the confines of the Jewish community.

The Vilna Jewish community in Lithuania organized a ceremony at the central monument in Ponar, with the participation of diplomats from various countries, including the ambassador of Austria. Prior to the ceremony, a "March of the Living" youth delegation visited the mass execution site and heard the testimony of a

and was followed by a discussion of the film's main topic and its implications.

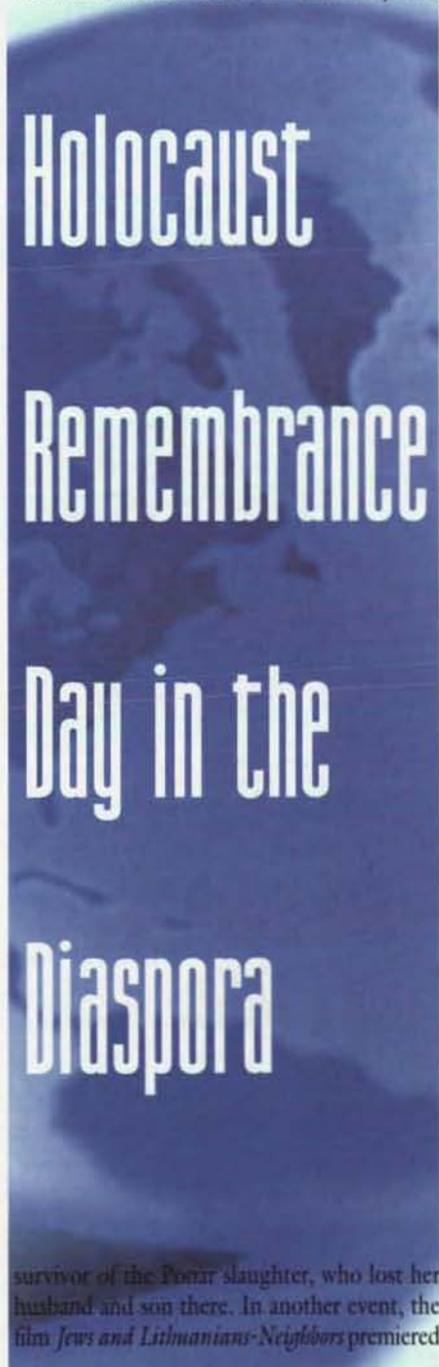
A memorial ceremony was organized by the Czech Jewish community at the Pinkas Synagogue in Prague, where the names of Jews who perished in Theresienstadt were recited. In Theresienstadt, a state military ceremony was held in which, for the first time, President Vaclav Havel participated. Havel stated that the Holocaust caused irreparable damage to the spirit of coexistence among nations.

The names of Berlin's 55,696 Holocaust victims were recited over a 30-hour period, as part of the "Unto Every Person There Is a Name" ceremony near the Brandenburg Gate. Yad Vashem also honored four Berlin residents as Righteous Among the Nations at a ceremony at the Israeli Embassy. Additional ceremonies marked the liberation of the Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen, and Dachau camps.

In London, the local Jewish community held its Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony on 7 May, with the participation of survivors and many young people. The organizers noted the importance of conducting memorial events on the Jewish date of Holocaust Remembrance Day, in addition to commemorating the National Holocaust Remembrance Day, to be observed in the United Kingdom on 27 January, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

At a ceremony in Nicosia, Cyprus, Auschwitz survivors, Haim and Esther Rafael, presented their testimony and gave a personal account of the tragedy that befell the Jews of Greece. Their testimony did much to enhance the consciousness of the Cypriots, most of whom had never had the opportunity to meet Holocaust survivors and hear their stories firsthand. Participants included the first lady of Cyprus, cabinet ministers, several ambassadors, and the directors-general of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education. The Israeli ambassador stressed the importance of Holocaust education and related that he had spoken with the new director-general of the Ministry of Education about the inclusion of Holocaust studies in the Cypriot high-school curriculum. In the course of the ceremony, slides from the Yad Vashem collection were shown and the names of Jewish victims from Salonika and Corfu were recited.

In Kinshasa, Zaire, a ceremony was held with the participation of visiting Israelis and members of the Jewish community. The Israeli ambassador presented a copy of the book *Tommy*, published by Yad Vashem, to the chairman of the Jewish community.



ART

in the Face

by Yehudit Inbar

While doing research for Yad Vashem's new Museum of Holocaust Art, Senior Art Curator, Yehudit Shendar, approached a collection of Holocaust-era *objets d'art* together with one of the Historical Museum's experienced researchers. Seeing them, the researcher, who examines Holocaust-related documents and other materials as a matter of routine, became emotional and was on the brink of tears. His response illustrates the unique quality of the Yad Vashem art collection, which depicts the singular, concentrated, refined expression of the human experience during one of history's darkest events.

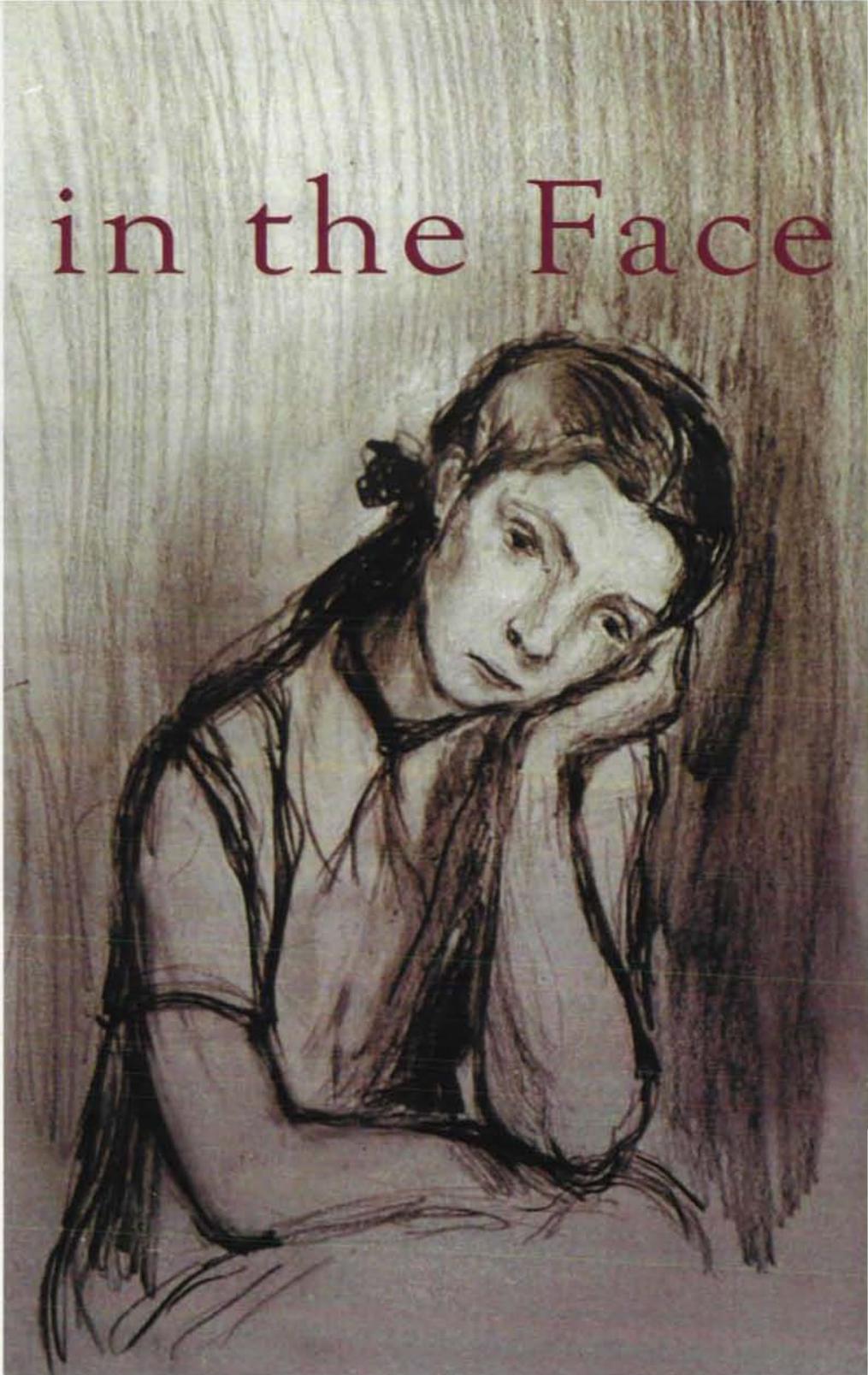
During the Holocaust, artists drew what they witnessed and felt on scraps of paper, using pencil, charcoal, and anything else with which a line could be sketched. It is difficult to understand from where they drew the psychological strength to be creative, when their main preoccupation in life was immediate survival. How did they muster the expressive force that erupts so powerfully from their desperate sketches? How was such outstanding art produced amidst the darkness of that horrific period?

For some of the artists, art was a way to describe what they and those around them saw and experienced. Since art was the only documentary tool they were familiar with, they availed themselves of it to that end.

For others, art was a device that made psychological survival possible. It was their personal way of coping with the crisis that had befallen them. Some painted the past, so as to escape from the present for a few fleeting moments; others painted for the future, such as the father in hiding who drew Biblical scenes so as to bequeath his heritage to his infant daughter.

All these works of art have a remarkable quality, most conspicuously manifested in their dualism of strength and fragility. They reflect almost nothing of the materialism that is usually typical of art and are, rather, like a song, a lace of the spirit.

A home is now being built for them at Yad Vashem—the Museum of Holocaust Art—which will be open to the general public, as well as to persons specifically interested in the subject. Visitors will undergo an extremely powerful



Ilka Geđo (1921-1985), *Seated Girl, Budapest Ghetto, 1944*, pencil on paper

artistic and human experience.

The Museum of Holocaust Art is being built thanks to the generous support of Sheldon and Miri Adelson, long-time friends and supporters of Yad Vashem. The museum's architect is Moshe Safdie, who designed the new Museum Complex. The museum's plan is intentionally simple, modest, and introspective, the aim being to provide the sublimely intimate works of art with only a basic structural framework, rather than to overshadow them.

Yad Vashem owns the world's largest collection of art created in ghettos, hideouts, camps, on the run, in forests, and in places where one would consider artistic endeavor impossible. While some works of art were lost, thousands more were preserved, against all the odds.

These *objets d'art* were produced under especially harsh conditions, without appropriate tools. Thus, very few oil paintings were produced. This makes the goals of the Yad Vashem Museum—to both display the works of art to

of Adversity

The New Museum of Holocaust Art



Arnold Daghani (1909-1985), *Street in the Bershad Ghetto (Transnistria)*, 1943, watercolor on paper



Alexander Bogen (born 1916), *Partisans*, 1943, charcoal on paper



Leo Haas (1901-1983), *Transport from Vienna, Theresienstadt*, 1942, ink and ink wash on paper. Gift of Aliza Shek



Peter Ginz (1928-
Auschwitz 1944),
Houseboat,
Theresienstadt,
1942-1944,
watercolor on paper

the public, and also to preserve them for perpetuity—a contradiction in terms. To solve the problem, each work is first treated in the conservation laboratories and then put on display under strict preservation conditions. Moreover, the works of art are regularly rotated.

In addition to the exhibition, the Museum of Holocaust Art will gather information and background material on the Holocaust works

of art housed at Yad Vashem and anywhere else in the world, and will establish a computerized world information center that museum visitors may access.

Post-Holocaust works of art will be displayed in a different building in the Museum Complex, a building reserved for temporary exhibits.

The author is the Director of the Museums Division

by Dr. Robert Rozett

Internet-users interested in finding out information about the Holocaust are liable to access antisemitic tracts being sold by reputable booksellers, auctions of Nazi memorabilia, or the sophisticated manipulations of Holocaust deniers. However, authentic, factual information about the Holocaust, thought-provoking interpretations of its complex history, and excellent recommendations for further reading can also be found. On Yad Vashem's website (www.yadvashem.org.il) users may also memorialize a Holocaust victim by downloading a Page of Testimony from the site and filling it in.

How can one navigate the mass amount of information about the Holocaust that appears on the Internet? And how should one respond to the information that one accesses?

First, one must understand that while the Internet allows for the easy posting and accessing of information, it also enables the defying of serious editing, censorship, or restrictions. Anybody anywhere can create his own website. Therefore, anyone seeking information on the Holocaust through the Internet must be aware of the motto: "Buyer Beware!"

Perhaps the single most important way to evaluate the information for accuracy is to note its source. Reliable and accurate information about the Holocaust can be found on websites hosted by internationally-recognized institutions such as Yad Vashem, or the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, as well as by leading universities and research institutes. Other sites, hosted by virtual organizations such as JewishGen, Inc. and Nizkor, can provide valuable data and links, as well as important forums for discussion.

The sites of reputable organizations and institutions should be viewed differently from those created by individuals or marginal groups. That is not to say that some of the latter do not contain reliable material but, rather, that they should not be taken at face value and should be further researched to determine accuracy.

Attention should also be paid to information provided by major search engines. For example, Yahoo!, one of the most popular search engines, indicates when a site belongs to the category of Holocaust denial or revisionism. Even so, sites sponsored by Holocaust deniers may be

unwittingly accessed, as a result of deliberate disguises employed by their creators. The likelihood of accidentally accessing a revisionist site is, in actuality, relatively slight, in light of research conducted by Yad Vashem. For, in addition to the information provided by the main

about the nature of the Holocaust-related material on the Internet.

A recent Web search for the words "Holocaust," "Holocaust denial," and "Holocaust revisionism" yielded a fairly wide range of results, underscoring the aforementioned

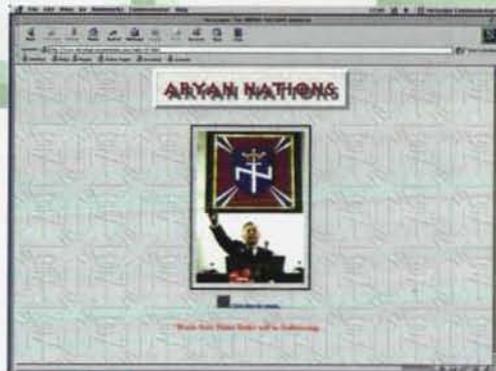
Two Sides of the Coin

search engines regarding the site located, many Holocaust denial sites have a different appearance than those created by legitimate information-purveyors.

Holocaust denial material seems to be only a small minority of Holocaust related pages posted on the Web. It is difficult to statistically analyze the sources of material about the Holocaust on the Internet. It is also clear that results obtained from different search engines, or even from the same search engine, on the subject, may vary significantly from day to day. It has, in fact, been estimated that even the best search engines cover only a fraction of existing websites. Nonetheless, a random check can give general indications

The Holocaust

problem. The one constant factor indicated by the results was that only a minority of pages found in these searches were created by the Holocaust deniers themselves. Many of the pages accessed as "Holocaust denial," or in which the words "Holocaust" and "denial," or "Holocaust" and "revisionism" appeared, actually dealt with the phenomenon and were not posted by the



deniers themselves.

Nevertheless, the problem of the phenomenon of Holocaust denial on the Web should not be dismissed. The total number of such pages runs into the thousands, and the material contained in them is hateful and offensive. Moreover, the popularity of various Internet discussion groups and email user groups makes it easier than ever for those seeking a like-minded community to locate one. Holocaust deniers and other antisemitic groups no longer need to live in close proximity of one another

Although it is necessary for people around the world to be aware of deniers' arguments, it is crucial that responsible content-providers continue to supply accurate and reliable information about the Holocaust to Internet-users. It is to be noted that the many sources that publish trustworthy information about the Holocaust, among them Yad Vashem, generally do so to foster a better understanding of the Holocaust and to perpetuate the memory of the victims, rather than to directly oppose Holocaust denial.

information providers to ensure that users access reliable information (although it is certainly important). It is also the responsibility of the users. The more users understand the Internet, the subjects being researched, and the pitfalls in the interface between the two, the more likely they are to obtain the kind of information they seek.

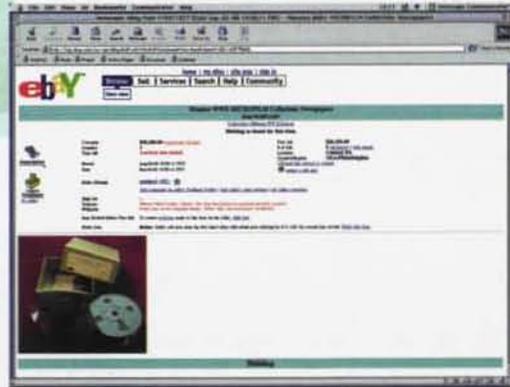
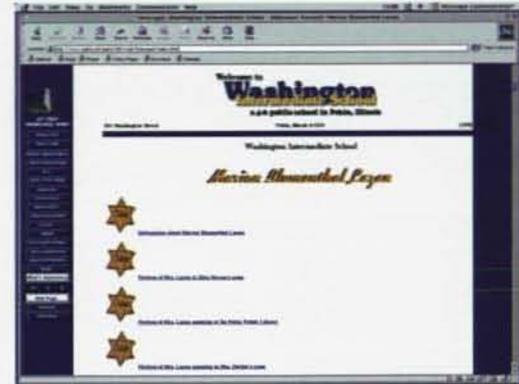
The author is the Director of the Yad Vashem Library

caust on the Internet

in order to exchange ideas and feel that they belong to something bigger than the individual.

Since it is difficult both to censor the Internet and to shut down venomous sites, perhaps it is more effective to draw people's attention to such sites. Search engines should be obligated to tag revisionist sites appropriately, thus helping to alert Internet-users to them.

The Internet is a constantly evolving medium, with mass quantities of new web pages being created daily and sites being continually posted. The issue of freedom of speech versus sensitivity to the victims and the trivialization of the Holocaust will continue to occupy us for a long time. Since the Internet is an interactive medium, it is not solely the role of the



By Dr. Bella Gutterman

Rosh Hashana Prayerbook from Wolfsberg Camp

Among the moving items in the Yad Vashem Archives are pieces of a brown paper bag which once held cement, and which served as a Rosh Hashana *machzor* (festival prayerbook) during the Holocaust.

It was on these scraps of paper that Naphtali Stern z"l, penciled the evening service prayers in the Wolfsberg labor camp, part of the



Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, Professor Szewach Weiss (l.) and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev (r.) present Stern's *machzor* to the President of Israel, Moshe Katsav

Gross-Rosen complex, for Rosh Hashana 5705 (1944). Stern reconstructed the prayers from memory so that he could lead the other prisoners in worship, even in the impossible conditions of a forced-labor camp. In addition to the prayers, he recorded the names of fellow-Jews from Satmar who had died in the camp, as well as various verses. He paid for the paper and the pencil stub by forfeiting several bread rations—a quantity that often was enough to determine whether a prisoner would live or die.

Stern was born in Hungary and lived in the Satmar ghetto until he and his family were deported to Auschwitz in the last transport, in May 1944. His wife and children perished in the camp, while he was transferred to the complex of labor camps that had been established in Lower Silesia.



First page from Naphtali Stern's Rosh Hashana prayerbook

Yad Vashem has published Stern's *machzor* for Rosh Hashana 5761 (2000), in an unparalleled album edition, edited by Dr. Bella Gutterman and Naomi Morgenstern. The album includes a facsimile reproduction of the prayers; an article on the *machzor* and its author, by Rabbi Nachman Kahane; an article on religious faith and prayer during the Holocaust, by Professor David Halivni, a survivor of the Wolfsberg camp; an article on the Wolfsberg camp, by Dr. Bella Gutterman; and an article on religious life in the camps as reflected in ghetto and camp art, by Yehudit Shendar, Senior Art Curator at Yad Vashem. Original drawings and sketches from the camp accompany the articles.

The *machzor* was presented to the President of Israel, Moshe Katsav in a ceremony attended by Stern's family.

The 1999 Balance

In its July meeting, the Yad Vashem Directorate approved the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority's balance for 1999. The Authority broke even in 1999, and in comparison with 1998, Yad Vashem's activity increased. This increase can be credited to a growth in its raising of financial resources. The activities in 1999 included the computerization of the names of Holocaust victims for the Independent Committee of Eminent Persons for the investigation of Swiss bank accounts (the Volcker Committee), the Project for the Collection of the Names of Holocaust Victims, and the commencement of regular operations at the new International School for Holocaust Studies and the Archives and Library building.

The Directorate was also shown an update of the multi-annual budget for the "Yad Vashem 2001" masterplan, which includes the construction of a new Museum Complex, a Visitors' Center, an entrance and parking complex, the International School for Holocaust Studies building, the Archives and Library building, computerization of the Yad Vashem databases, and expanded research activity.

The multi-annual budget for the development plan, which was initially implemented in 1995 and is to be completed in 2004, was adjusted from \$66 million in November 1997 to \$82 million today. This, due to the completion of planning for the new Museum Complex, a central component of the "Yad Vashem 2001" masterplan. The adjustment was coordinated with the government officials involved and with the contributing organizations. The latter include the American Society for Yad Vashem, led by Eli Zborowski; Campaign Chairman of "Yad Vashem 2001" masterplan, Joseph Wilf; Yad Vashem's societies worldwide; and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany led by Rabbi Dr. Israel Miller. Yad Vashem's financial and executive committee approved the budgetary adjustment.

Browsing the Database

Visitors to Yad Vashem's Hall of Names can now use computer workstations to access the database where names of Holocaust victims are listed, view actual Pages of Testimony on screen, and print out copies of the Pages for themselves.

At the Archives and Library Building visitors may browse through this same database, as well as view and print out copies of the some 130,000 scanned photos from the photo archives contained in a second database. Computer searches can be conducted in order to locate other material stored in Yad Vashem's archives without viewing the material on screen.

At present, the database of names of Holocaust victims contains 2.3 million names that have been gathered from Pages of Testimony and various lists. Additional lists of names are in the



process of being computerized, and the hundreds of thousands of names contained in these lists will soon be added to the database.

While today, the information in these two databases can be retrieved from the workstations at Yad Vashem, according to plans, in the future, the majority of the material contained within these databases will be accessible

to users worldwide on the Internet. Yad Vashem is also continuing to catalogue its archival materials, to translate the existing directories into English, and to computerize other archival directories—such as the documents archives, which contain more than 55 million pages of documentation, and the testimonies archives, which include some 40,000 testimonies in various formats. Furthermore, it has been agreed upon, that testimonies gathered by Steven Spielberg's Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation—totaling 50,000 testimonies to date—will be presented to Yad Vashem.

Akiva Lewinsky: A Life of Public Service

Akiva Lewinsky z"l, passed away in August. Born in Switzerland in 1918, Lewinsky moved with his family to Leipzig, Germany in 1924 and immigrated on his own to Palestine in 1934, at age 16, after the Nazis came to power in Germany.

By 1936, he was one of the founding members of the *Ma'ayan* core group, which later established Kibbutz *Ma'ayan Zevi* (near Zichron Ya'acov) and of which he remained a member until his death.

In 1938 he joined the Jewish auxiliary police force in Palestine and helped to establish new "tower and stockade" settlements.

Using his Swiss passport, he left for Berlin in 1939 on his first mission on behalf of the Jewish people—to help organize humanitarian aid for families in distress. In 1943, he set out for Istanbul with the goal of rescuing European Jewish children. After the war, in 1945, he visited 11 European countries in order to help rehabilitate Holocaust survivors, ending his activities in Casablanca, Morocco.

During his life, Lewinsky undertook many public missions and served in a variety of public positions, including Chairman of the Association of Regional Colleges in Israel, Vice President of the Claims Conference, and—for a full decade—Treasurer of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

In the capacity of his role with the Claims Conference, he was one of the leading supporters of the "Yad Vashem 2001" masterplan.

Lewinsky was an outstanding personality and a man of vision and action. A beloved figure and an accomplished man of good deeds and achievements, he made a great contribution to the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

Profile of Hansi Brand by Hava Baruch

Hansi Brand passed away on the eve of Passover.

She was a major activist in the Relief and Rescue Committee of Budapest (the *Va'ada*), that attempted to rescue Hungarian Jewry in 1944, together with her husband, Joel Brand, and with Dr. Rezső (Israel) Kasztner.

Born in Budapest in 1912 as Hajnalka Hartmann, she was a consequential figure in the Zionist youth movement in Hungary from an early age. Her lifelong sense of commitment to others and to the community was instilled in her by her parents, who were active Zionists.

Hansi first met Kasztner in the course of her activity in the *Va'ada*, which she described as a turning point in her life.

When the Germans occupied Hungary, the *Va'ada* established contacts with the SS, headed by Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi responsible for the plan to exterminate Hungarian Jewry. In light of similar contacts that Jewish organizations had established in Slovakia, and in view of the circumstances in Hungary, Kasztner believed that Jews could be rescued by negotiating with the Germans. The SS, therefore, was given sums of money and, in May 1944, Joel Brand was sent to Istanbul to negotiate the release of a large number of Jews in exchange for deliveries of trucks and miscellaneous materials to Germany. Prior to his trip, Joel Brand introduced his wife, Hansi, to Adolf Eichmann, who gave her, instead of Joel, the responsibility of being the liaison for the *Va'ada*.

In late May 1944, the Hungarian secret police arrested Hansi in order to discover the purpose of her husband's trip. The investigators, the Germans' rivals for control of the property of Hungarian Jews, subjected Hansi to severe torture. She withstood the agonies tenaciously, sincerely believing that negotiating with the Germans offered some chance of saving Jews and that, for this reason, the details of the contacts with Eichmann must be concealed from the Hungarians. She bore the scars of her ordeal for the rest of her life. After the Hungarians released her, Hansi Brand and Dr. Kasztner continued to negotiate with Eichmann to halt the mass deportations. They continued to do so even after Joel Brand was arrested in Turkey, following his rescue of some 1,685 Jews in the famous "Kasztner train."

Hansi remained in Budapest with her two small children until the end of the war, and continued to be active in relief activity.

Following the war, she, her husband and her sons settled in Israel, where they endured a grim struggle for survival during and after the War of Independence. Hansi was employed by an educational institution in Tel Aviv which, with her on its management, evolved into an important college, *Michlelet Tel Aviv*, where she worked until her last days.

Shortly before her death, Hansi shared her testimony with students and with Yad Vashem.

Jan Karski: Alerting the World at Large

by Dr. Mordecai Paldiel

Professor Jan Karski passed away in mid-July, at the age of 86. He is best known as the person who tried to alert the world to the Holocaust which was taking place in his native country, Poland.

In late summer 1942, on the eve of a secret mission to London on behalf of the Polish underground, he met two Jewish leaders of the Warsaw ghetto (believed to be Leon Feiner and Menachem Kirschenbaum) in the Aryan side of the city. They appealed to him to call upon the aid of Jewish leaders from Great Britain and the US to pressure the Allied governments into taking drastic measures to stop the massive extermination of the Jewish people.

Prior to his mission in London, Karski had been smuggled inside the Warsaw ghetto, so that he could witness first-hand the liquidation of the Jewish population there. He had also been smuggled into one of the camps, dressed as a Latvian guard, to observe the brutal treatment reserved for the Jews brought there.

Upon arriving in London, Karski relayed the terrible fate of the Jews to Szmul Zygelbojm, of the Bund movement. The latter was so devastated that when the news subsequently arrived of the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, on April 19, 1943—an event viewed as the Jews' last stand against the Nazi Regime, having received little outside intervention or rescue—he committed suicide.

Karski continued from London to the US, where he relayed the desperate situation of the Jewish people in Poland to President Roosevelt, to other top government officials, and to Jewish leaders, such as Jewish Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter.

Although attentively listened to, he was generally not believed. Deeply hurt by this lack of response and traumatized by the frightful events he had witnessed, Karski receded into a long period of silence. "I wanted to run away after the war. I saw too much misery, hatred, ruthlessness, human losses. I saw horrible things. What I learned from the war made me silent for 30 years."

Unable to return to Nazi-occupied Poland due to the publicity he received in the US (he published a book in 1944 on conditions in Poland), he settled for an academic career, teaching Eastern European Affairs at Georgetown University, in Washington DC.

In 1981, at a gathering of Holocaust survivors, he gave his first public address since the war years. The following year, during a visit to Israel, he was awarded the title of Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem, and he planted a tree in the Avenue of the Righteous. In 1994, he was awarded honorary citizenship of Israel.

Karski will best be remembered as the Polish underground courier who jeopardized his life in an attempt to stop the Holocaust by sounding a cry of alarm in countries at war with Nazi Germany. Tragically, his appeal went unheeded.



Jan Karski pictured next to the tree planted in his honor at Yad Vashem

Events: August-October 2000

August 2 Memorial ceremony to commemorate the 58th anniversary of the deportation of Dr. Janusz Korczak and the children to Treblinka. The event took place at the monument to Korczak and the children, with the participation of members of the Janusz Korczak Society, representatives of Yad Vashem, and many young people.

August 15 Yiddish cantorial music concert in the Valley of the Communities, in conjunction with the Tel Aviv Cantorial Music Institute.



Yiddish cantorial music concert in the Valley of the Communities

August 29 Annual gathering of the Zionist pioneering underground in the Netherlands.

September 4 Memorial service for Italian Jewry and an event heralding the publication of the book *There's a Place on Earth*, by Giuliana Tedeschi. At the latter event, the debut of a 1943 piano composition by Jewish-Italian composer, Mario Melli, who perished in Auschwitz, was performed.

September 5 Event heralding the publication of the book *Cry Little Girl*, by Aliza Barak-Ressler at Bet Wolyn in Givatayim.

September 25 Annual memorial service and ceremony of the Association of Survivors Landsberg/Kaufering Outer Camps of Dachau.

October 4 Memorial ceremony and commemorative assembly for the Jews of Serbia.

October 5 Annual memorial service and commemorative assembly for Jews murdered on Ukrainian soil—victims of the slaughter at Babi Yar, Bogdanovka, Kharkov, and the surrounding areas—at the Hall of Remembrance and in the Valley of the Communities.

October 17 World Conference for Jews from Zaglebie, in the Valley of the Communities.

October 25 Memorial service for Jews from the Baltic countries at the Hall of Remembrance, followed by a ceremony in the auditorium.

Permanent Holocaust Exhibition at the Imperial War Museum

The permanent Holocaust Exhibition at the Imperial War Museum in London was officially opened by HM Queen Elizabeth II in early June, in the presence of the Duke of Edinburgh, the Duke of Kent, British Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, and Holocaust survivors. Yad Vashem was represented by Chairman of the National Charitable Trust and Advisor for the Exhibition, Ben Helfgott, and by Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev.

The exhibition, which took four years to put together, tells the story of the Nazis' persecution of the Jews and other groups before and during WWII. Personal artifacts, documents, films, photographs, and video testimonies are on display.

Honorees at the American Society Annual Tribute Dinner



JUDITH WILF, National Vice Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem, is the recipient of this year's Yad Vashem Remembrance Award. Born in Poland, where she was an active member of the Zionist youth group, *Hanoar Ha'zioni*, Wilf was expelled from her home at the outbreak of WWII

and spent the subsequent years in Siberia and Uzbekistan. It was only on her return to Poland, at the end of the war, that she learned that she had lost many family members and close friends.

Judith Wilf is the widow of the late Harry Wilf—one of the founders of the American Society for Yad Vashem—and has been an active participant in the US Jewish community for 30 years. She is a devoted philanthropist and has contributed to organizations such as Shaarei Zedek Medical Center, Jerusalem; UJA; Israel Bonds; the Mount Sinai Medical Center; and Yeshiva University. Yad Vashem's new Historical Museum is currently being constructed through the generous support and leadership of the Judith and Harry Wilf Family and the Elizabeth and Joseph Wilf Family.

Leonard, the only son of Judith and the late Harry Wilf, is also a leading supporter of Jewish causes, and a generous benefactor of the United Jewish Federation and the United Jewish Appeal, amongst others. He was recently appointed by US President Bill Clinton to the US Holocaust Memorial Council.



BARRY STERNLICHT, the recipient of this year's Yad Vashem Young Leadership Remembrance Award, is the son and grandson of Holocaust survivors. His father, Mark, who founded the Holocaust Memorial in Stamford, Connecticut 25 years ago, was born in Kraków, and survived the Shoah by escaping to Bratislava and joining the partisans. A graduate of Brown University and Harvard Business School,

Sternlicht is the Chairman and CEO of Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc—one of the world's largest hotel and leisure companies, with over 700 hotels spanning 80 countries. He is also one of the youngest and most respected leaders in the hotel industry today.

Sternlicht, a dynamic and innovative business leader, who inspires new products and programs with immediate global appeal, also attaches great importance to humanitarian causes, and was the recipient of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation Exceptional Leadership Award. Through job shadowing and mentoring programs, as well as by donating community service hours, his employees at Starwood serve a number of charitable organisations throughout the world.

The recipient of numerous honors and awards, Barry Sternlicht holds an Honorary Doctor of Business Administration in Hospitality Management from Johnson and Wales University, and received the Preston Robert Tisch Distinguished Industry Leadership Award from New York University School for Hospitality, Tourism, and Travel Administration.

Cooperation with the US Holocaust Museum

Senior Archivists Brewster Chamberlin and Radu Ioanid of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) visited Yad Vashem in July for a two-day seminar with their Israeli counterparts, Yaacov Lozowick and Nomi Halpern. The four coordinated the ongoing cooperative venture between the two institutions, whereby each institution represents both itself and its counterpart when microfilming archival collections.

As part of the framework of both institutions' initiatives in Europe, representatives of Yad Vashem in Germany, supported by the German Federal Government, have ordered unusually large collections of documentation from various archives in Germany this year, while the USHMM has identified important collections in Poland and in France.

At the successful conclusion of the conference, the participants briefed Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev, who, in turn, re-affirmed the importance of the ongoing cooperation between both institutions.

During his visit to Yad Vashem this August, Chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Israel, Sallai Meridor, called for the intensification of Holocaust education among Jewish youth in Israel and around the world in order to deepen their feeling of unity with the fate of the Jewish people.

Meridor emphasized that during Jewish Agency educational tours for Jewish youth to Israel, visits are made to Yad Vashem. However, he is convinced that there is a need to strengthen Holocaust education through trips to Poland, lectures, and seminars.



Sallai Meridor (l.) receiving the Yad Vashem candelabrum from Avner Shalev

"All Jewish youth in Israel and abroad must visit concentration camps after going through a period of study at Yad Vashem, as that is a fundamental component in the conscience of the Jewish people," Meridor declared at the end of his visit.

U.S.A.

The American Society, chaired by Eli Zborowski, holds its Annual Tribute Dinner on 19 November at the Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers, with honorees **Judith Wilf**, National Vice Chair of the American Society, and **Barry Sternlicht**, Chairman and CEO of Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide. General Dinner Chairmen are **Edgar M. Bronfman** and **Dr. Israel Singer**, and Dinner Chairmen are **Dr. Andrew L. Sternlicht** and **Zygmunt Wilf**. The theme of the dinner and commemorative photo journal is *The Jewish Child: From Then to Now*. Journal Chairman is **Yehoshua Trigor**, Minister Plenipotentiary (Ret.), and Vice-Chair is **Keren Toledano**, daughter of Marcia and **Dr. Yaacov Toledano** and granddaughter of **Julia** and the late **Isidore Karten**.

Fred Kort, CEO of Imperial Toys Corp., has been named West Coast Chairman of the American Society. **Kort** takes over from former chairman **Abe Spiegel** who held the position for many years. **Kort**, active in a number of organizations dedicated to the preservation of Jewish memory, is a survivor of Treblinka.

Philip Belz z"l, a Yad Vashem benefactor, passed away at the age of 96. Yad Vashem extends its sincerest condolences to the **Jack and Marilyn Belz family**, close friends of Yad Vashem. Together with **Philip** and **Sarah Belz z"l**, the **Jack and Marilyn Belz family** are donors of the library floor of the new Archives and Library Building. The **Belz Family** resides in Memphis, Tennessee.

Professor Laszlo Tauber, a well-known Washington surgeon, and friend and supporter of Yad Vashem, has committed himself and friends to supporting Yad Vashem by establishing a Chair at the International Institute for Holocaust Research. The Chair is for the exploration of the subject of Jews who saved Jews during the Holocaust, which will enable young and old to learn and to take the responsibility of building the Jewish collective and safeguarding the continuity of the Jewish people. **Laszlo** himself saved many Jews in Budapest during the Holocaust. This is the first time that thorough research on this topic will be conducted.

A Maryland Chapter of the American Society has been inaugurated under the initiative of the **Pechter** and **Schreibman Families** of Baltimore. **Jack and Marilyn Pechter**, major donors of the International School for Holocaust Studies Building, hosted a dinner for community leaders with speakers **Professor Franklin Littell**, Holocaust scholar; and **Avi Granot** of the Israeli Embassy. At a further meeting of the chapter in Baltimore, the main speaker was **Dr. Robert Rozett**, Director of the Yad Vashem Library.

Recent visitors to Yad Vashem included **Mayer Mitchell**, of Mobile, Alabama, Chairman Emeritus and former Chairman and President of AIPAC. He visited together with his son, **Richard Mitchell**, of Atlanta, Georgia, his grandson, **Jonathan**, and other family members, on the occasion of **Jonathan's** Bar Mitzvah. Guests also included **Sara Alterman** of Atlanta, Georgia.

CANADA

David Smuschkowitz, founding member of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, was a recent visitor at Yad Vashem together with his wife, **Luba**, their children, and grandchildren. His children are actively involved in the Society.

On his visit to Israel, member of the Board of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, **David**



From left to right: David Smuschkowitz with Avner Shalev

Young, visited Yad Vashem with his wife and family. The visit took place on the occasion of the Bar Mitzvah of his son. **Young** is a member of the Ontario Provincial Parliament, and a strong advocate for the Jewish community.

Solly Kaplinski has been named Director of the English Desk in the International Relations Division. **Kaplinski**, who holds an MA in Psychology, is a clinical psychologist and licensed teacher, and has headed Jewish Day Schools in Cape Town, Toronto, and Vancouver. He is also a graduate of the Jerusalem Fellows.



Solly Kaplinsky

FRANCE

A memorial ceremony to commemorate the 39 French rabbis killed in the Holocaust took place in early September at the La Victoire Synagogue in Paris, under the auspices of the French Society for Yad Vashem and the Consistoire de Paris. **Dr. Cynthia Haft**, Director of the French Desk, represented Yad Vashem at the event.

BELGIUM

A special dinner was held at the home of President of the Belgian Society for Yad Vashem, **Jacques Graubart**. Special guests included Minister of State and Member of European Parliament, **Willy De Clercq**, and Honorary Member of the European Parliament, **Professor Dr. Van Hemeldonck**. Taking part in the dinner were **Shaya Ben-Yehuda**, Managing Director of the International Relations Department, and **Dr. Cynthia Haft** from Yad Vashem. **Professor George Schneck** and **Nathan Ramett** supported the event.

GERMANY

On their recent visit to Germany, **Shaya Ben-Yehuda** and recently appointed Director of the German Speaking Countries Desk, **Benny Ilisar**, met with Chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, and Chairman of the *Freundeskreis* of Yad Vashem in Germany, **Paul Spiegel** to discuss future plans, and the establishment of a new board. They also met with friends in Frankfurt, as well as members of various German Jewish communities.

Gauting Mayor, **Dr. Knobloch**, was asked to support Yad Vashem by heading efforts to initiate a project in memory of the death marches.



Benny Ilisar

NORWAY

"Help Jews Home"—an organization supporting the employment of new immigrants at Yad Vashem—chaired by **Anne-Marie Gravdahl** is celebrating the 10th anniversary of its founding.

LATIN AMERICA

Venezuelan, **Salvador Chocron**, visited Yad Vashem together with a 4 member delegation, which included **Chimolina Chocron**, former Chairperson of Wizo Jerusalem. Their visit to Israel took place on the occasion of the Bar Mitzvah of his son **Salomon**.

YAD VASHEM

MAGAZINE, VOL. 20, Cheshvan, 5761, November 2000

Published by:



The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes'
Remembrance Authority

Chairman of the Council: Professor Szewach Weiss

Vice Chairmen of the Council: Dr. Yitzhak Arad
Dr. Israel Singer
Professor Elie Wiesel

Chairman of the
Directorate: Avner Shalev

Director General: Ishai Amrami

Head of the
International Institute

for Holocaust Research: Professor David Bankier

Chief Historian: Professor Dan Michman

Members of the Yad Vashem Directorate:

Shlomit Amichai, Dr. Joel Barromi, Dr. Avi Bekker, Abraham Duvdevani,
Noach Flug, Stefan Grayek, Professor Israel Gutman, Chaim Klein, Linda
Olmert, Yossi Peled, Dov Puder, Raoul Saporta, Sara Stern-Katan,
Szymonowicz Szamai, Eli Zborowski

THE MAGAZINE

Editor-in-Chief: Iris Rosenberg

Managing Editor: Shachar Leven

Associate Editors: Lisa Davidson
Kobi Rivlin

Editorial Coordinator: Ilanit Pinhasi

Language Editor: Denise Levin

Translated by: IBRT, Ltd.

Assisted by: Ayala Appelbaum
Yaron Ashkenazy
Alexander Avraham
Rachel Barkai
Shaya Ben-Yehuda
Zvi Berhardt
Susan Fraiman
Dr. Bella Gutterman
Ephraim Kaye
Jacob Klein
Yaacov Lozowick
Dana Porat

Photography: Isaac Harari
Sasson Tiram-Tav-Or

Production: Dfus Kal

Design: Stephanie & Ruti Design

This Magazine was published with the assistance
of Canit Hashalom Investments LTD.

Jerusalem Yad Vashem Magazine
P.O. Box 3477, Jerusalem 91034, Israel
Tel: 972-2-6443413, Fax: 972-2-6443409
spokes@yad-vashem.org.il
www.yadvashem.org.il
ISSN 0793-7199

©Articles appearing in this issue may be reprinted
with proper acknowledgement.

Yad Vashem's activities are supported by
the Ministry of Education
and the Jewish Agency for Israel

On the occasion of his son, Eduardo's, Bar Mitzvah, Paul Hariton, President of Keren Hayesod in Venezuela, and his wife, Florence made a trip to Israel. On their visit to Yad Vashem they were joined by a delegation of 35 people including Roberto Vainrub, Member of the Directorate of the Union Israelita de Caracas, and wife, Lylian; Alberto Herman and wife, Dalia; and Rafael and Eva Perlmutter.

Active member of the Venezuelan Jewish community, Sadi Cohen, visited Yad Vashem with his wife, Simy.

On a visit to Israel in celebration of the Bar Mitzvah of his grandson, Ricardo, Leon Schidlow, former Chairman of the Weizmann Institute branch in Mexico, visited Yad Vashem together with his wife, Lily; son and daughter-in-law, Jacobo and Paulette; and Nicolas and Eva Fainsod.

Ives Harar, Vice-President of "Asociacion Israelita de Caracas," visited Yad Vashem together with his wife.

ISRAEL

In June, Jorma Ollila, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Nokia Worldwide, visited Yad Vashem together with his family. He was accompanied by Jacob Perry, President and CEO of Cellcom Israel, Ltd., and by Eli Mor, CEO of the Eurocom Group, Nokia's representative in Israel. The guests were welcomed by Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, Professor Szewach Weiss, and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev. During their tour they visited the Historical Museum, the Hall of Names, and the Children's Memorial, and laid a wreath at the Hall of Remembrance. At the conclusion of the visit, Ollila wrote in the Yad Vashem visitors' book: "My visit to the Historical Museum, which recounts the saddest period in the history of mankind, was an experience which I will never forget."

Malka and Gershon Bergson recently raised a generous donation for Yad Vashem to establish a scholarship fund at the International School for Holocaust Studies.

Erika Greif, resident of the Mediterranean Towers old-age home in Bat Yam, donated a generous amount towards the creation of an explanatory cassette on preparations at Yad Vashem and by the Yad Vashem Society in Israel for the 21st century.

Aba Yaakov Manillewicz visited Yad Vashem in July. Manillewicz has contributed to an educational project run by the International School for Holocaust Studies.

Brothers, Shmuel and Yosef Reich, visited Yad Vashem in July. The visit was in preparation for an upcoming visit by their nephew, who heads the family's philanthropic fund.

As part of the activity spearheaded by the Yad Vashem Society in Israel, to strengthen and reinforce relations between Yad Vashem and Israelis, in general, as well as between Yad Vashem and residents of old-age homes, in particular (Holocaust survivors and others), residents of the Mediterranean Towers Home for the Aged in Kfar Sava and in Bat Yam, and of the Leon Recanati Home for Aged Jews from Greece in Petah Tikva visited Yad Vashem during the summer. Recently the Society established contacts with several organizations in Israel in order for their members to volunteer for various tasks for the Society and Yad Vashem (See article on page 4).

Adv. Yishay Aizik, a member of the Finance Committee of the Israel Bar Association, expressed willingness to join the Society's board and to help by volunteering in professional legal matters dealt with by the Society and in matters of real estate relating to Yad Vashem.

The Association of Sandomierz (Tzoizmir) Jews in Israel recently decided to consider the donation of a property it owns in Tel Aviv to Yad Vashem.

Bedouin and Arab students in the field of education visited Yad Vashem as part of the project of commemorating the Holocaust among the Israeli Arab sector. The project was supported by an anonymous foundation in Israel.



Construction in Progress at Yad Vashem



Construction of the new Visitors' Center—Mevoah



Construction of the new Historical Museum

The construction of the Visitors' Center—*Mevoah*—and the new Historical Museum is moving ahead. The *Mevoah* is being constructed with the generous support of David and Fela Shappell from Los Angeles, and with the assistance of the Israeli Government—the Ministry of Tourism.

A Books and Resources Center to adjoin the Visitors' Center is being built with a contribution from David and Stephanie Azrieli from Israel.

A new 70m long, 7m high freestanding wall, dedicated to survivors who re-established their lives after the Holocaust, is being constructed with the support of Ira Drukier, Vice Chairman of the American Society. The wall will connect the public transport and parking area with the Entrance Plaza.

The new Historical Museum is being constructed with a major sum donated by the Harry and Judith Wilf Family and the Joseph and Elizabeth Wilf Family.

The new Hall of Names, which will be attached to the new Historical Museum, will be built with the meaningful support of the Caesarea Edmond Benjamin de Rothschild Foundation.

A new Museum for Holocaust Art will be constructed with the generous support of Sheldon and Miri Adelson.

A Learning Center will be built with the assistance of Sam Skura, Vice Chairman of the American Society.

A Square of Remembrance is to be constructed with a donation from Edmund Safdie from Brazil.

The Janusz Korczak Square will be built with the support of Maxi Mordechai Librati.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, led by Rabbi Dr. Israel Miller, is continuing to actively support Yad Vashem with its generous contribution to the new Museum Complex.

The Israeli Government—the Ministry of Finance—is supporting the new Museum Complex.

New:

Encyclopedia

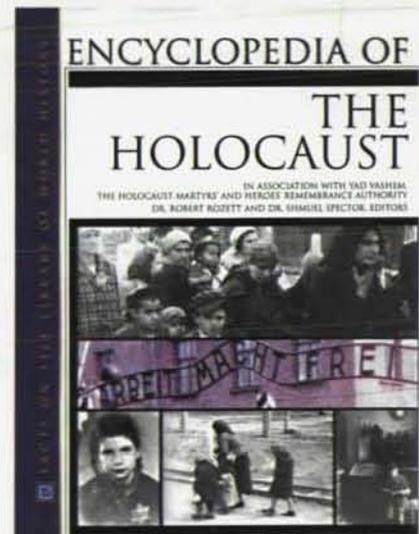
of the Holocaust in

English for Student

The new *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* in English is a comprehensive, authoritative one-volume reference book that provides a factual perspective on the Shoah for students. Among its contributing authors are:

Professor David Cesarani of the University of Southampton, Dr. Daniel Fraenkel, Dr. Guy Miron, Dr. Aharon Weiss, and David Silberklang of Yad Vashem.

The encyclopedia is divided into two sections. The first section presents eight essays on the history of the Holocaust and its antecedents, and covers the history of European Jewry and its contributions to European culture, as well as the rise of antisemitism and Nazism. The second section contains over 650 encyclopedic entries on the major subjects related to the Holocaust, including people, cities and countries, camps, resistance movements, and political actions and outcomes. Approximately 300 illustrations—many of which have never before been published together, a general bibliography, and a detailed index help make this an invaluable resource for



students, teachers, and general readers requiring accurate, unbiased information on the Shoah. The encyclopedia, edited by Dr. Robert Rozett and Dr. Shmuel Spector, was published by Yad Vashem and the Jerusalem

Publishing House Ltd. and co-published with Facts On File, Inc.. It contains 528 pages, and is priced at \$95.

To order Yad Vashem publications please call: 972 (2) 644 3501
fax: 972 (2) 644 3506, or e-mail: publishing@yad-vashem.org