“Kaddish - I Am Here”
Unique Concert Performed in Warsaw Ghetto Square (p. 17)

American Society Marks 30 Years of Dedication to Holocaust Remembrance (pp. 12-13)
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The weekly antisemitic newspaper Der Stürmer (literally, “The Stormer,” or “Attacker”) was founded in 1923 in Nuremberg by Julius Streicher, a local and not particularly well-known member of the Nazi party. Throughout his career, Streicher climbed the Nazi party hierarchy, eventually becoming the notorious Gauleiter (regional Nazi party leader) of Franconia in Bavaria. He continued to serve as publisher and editor-in-chief of Der Stürmer until the end of WW II, taking advantage of his position to promote his paper and increase sales. Der Stürmer was known for its extreme and explicit antisemitic content. Unlike other strongly antisemitic newspapers, such as the SS newspaper Das Schwarze Korps (The Black Corps), which also dealt with other issues and did so with a certain amount of sophistication, Der Stürmer addressed the lowest common denominator among its readers, and made antisemitism its main fare.

The circulation of Der Stürmer reached its peak in the 1930s, after the Nazis rose to power. During Streicher’s trial in Nuremberg, it was reported that some 600,000 copies of the paper had been distributed weekly in 1935. Despite Streicher’s own lack of popularity within the Nazi party’s elite, he won the highest levels of support; Hitler approved the publication of Der Stürmer during the war years, even as other papers closed down due to lack of newsprint. However, the paper’s circulation fell during the war.

The vulgarity of Der Stürmer was well known also outside Germany, and its name became synonymous with Nazi antisemitism. After the war, the Allies convicted Streicher of crimes against humanity, and he was hanged.

During its circulation, the editorial staff of Der Stürmer created an archive, maintained in the cellar of the editorial building at 19 Fanenschmidstrasse, in Nuremberg. Part of the collection came from various official sources, but a significant portion was collected from readers who responded to the editors’ frequent publicized requests to send in interesting material. So, for example, soldiers stationed in Poland dispatched photographs of Jews and Jewish institutions. Those who had looted Jewish homes forwarded books, works of art and other items. The collection also included...
Basement of Der Stürmer

Yad Vashem Website

Dr. Daniel Uziel

Yad Vashem has begun to upload photographs of unidentified Jews from the Der Stürmer archive, with the hope that some of them may be identified.

Der Stürmer during the war is reflected by the relatively small amount of material collected during this period. The bulk of the collection (41.8%) was created from 1933 to 1938.

Due to the keen interest of writers, curators and researchers, the materials were digitized and meticulously catalogued in the 1990s, and in 2003, Yad Vashem acquired a digital copy of the collection. Following the launch of the Yad Vashem photographic database on the Internet early this year, staff at the Nuremberg municipal archive and Yad Vashem have begun to upload photographs of unidentified Jews from the Der Stürmer archive, with the hope that some of them may be identified.

"In October, 219 photographs were chosen from the collection and released to the public on our online database," explained Dr. Haim Gertner, Director of the Yad Vashem Archives. "As with the entire catalog of photographs, Yad Vashem welcomes all valuable comments from visitors to the collection that will help restore the identities of the people in these historic pictures."

The author is Director of the Yad Vashem Photo Archive in the Archives Division.
In March 2011, Lilia Skok, a high school history teacher and adviser at the History Teachers Association in Surazh, Russia, attended a seminar at the International School for Holocaust Studies, coordinated in conjunction with the Russian Research and Educational Holocaust Center in Moscow. In Russia, Skok had been thinking about how she could educate her students about Jewish life in Surazh before WWII, and raise awareness about what had happened to Russian Jewry during the Holocaust. Walking around the school building, she noticed a sign on one of the walls that read, “From 1941-1943, in this building and in this area, the fascists tortured and murdered 900 Soviet citizens.” Skok decided to ask her students to research the origins of the sign, as well as the monument that stands next to it commemorating the victims.

Skok’s students went out to interview residents who had witnessed the events of that time. They also visited the local archives, where they discovered a piece of information that very few local citizens had known or spoken about for over seven decades: the area in which their school now stands had been a ghetto in which 2,000 Jews from Surazh had been cruelly incarcerated during the Holocaust. Furthermore, all of the 900 “Soviet citizens” commemorated on the plaque had been Jewish.

“We uncovered more and more details about what had actually happened to the Jewish community in Surazh,” explains Skok. “My students were shocked, but I was able to turn their outrage into positive action: we set about organizing the school’s International Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony on 27 January. The children used the personal stories of witnesses and Holocaust survivors to create an exhibition that told the heart-wrenching story of the ghetto, and the horrifying mass murder that had occurred in the vicinity.”

8th International Conference on the Holocaust and Education

Save the Date

June 21-27, 2012

The author works in the European Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.
A dozen journalists, editors and commentators from Canada came to Yad Vashem in July to participate in a special seminar at the International School for Holocaust Studies. The seminar, supported by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem and the Adelson Family Foundation, is part of the ongoing effort to provide tailor-made programs for opinion-shapers from around the world. Similar seminars were recently held for members of the media from Spain, France, Russia and Hungary.

The program featured in-depth lectures and discussions on a variety of Holocaust-related topics and their relevancy today. Top researchers, educators and historians of the Holocaust addressed the participants on a number of current issues, including Holocaust art, Holocaust denial, and how Yad Vashem is embracing the digital age to help spread its messages of remembrance and education. The group also had a roundtable discussion on “Covering Israel Today,” with colleagues from the Israeli and foreign media based in Israel, including Aron Heller (AP), Amiram Barkat (Globes), and veteran newsman Yaacov Ahimeir (Channel 1 TV).

“Holocaust survivor Frieda Klieger’s talk put a human face on the events of Auschwitz, a face that is rarely seen in textbooks or Holocaust museums outside of Israel,” wrote Canadian radio and television pundit Andrew Lawton after the seminar ended. “Despite having a university education and being relatively well-read, when it comes to the Holocaust, knowing who was behind it, how many Jews were killed and how they were killed just isn’t enough. Yad Vashem aims to answer the question of why it happened, a question I’d never appreciated the relevance of before stepping foot on the campus in Jerusalem.”

“Echoes and Reflections” Workshops Held across the US

The “Echoes and Reflections” Holocaust educational program received a tremendous boost this August when three International School senior staff members traveled across the US to deliver educational workshops using the program’s innovative curriculum. Director for International Seminars Ephraim Kaye, Desk Head for International Seminars in English Stephanie McMahon-Kaye, and European Department Desk Head for Seminars from Poland Orit Margaliot introduced close to 500 high school teachers and Holocaust museum staff in eight different states to the multimedia and interdisciplinary program, which helps students connect history with contemporary issues and develop skills to become active members of an informed citizenry.

“This was one of the most helpful seminars I’ve ever attended,” said a teacher who participated in the workshop held at the University of Northern Colorado. “I leave with a wealth of exciting and engaging resources that will no doubt help my students grasp the difficult concepts associated with the Holocaust.”

“Echoes and Reflections: A Multimedia Curriculum on the Holocaust” is a collaborative program developed by the Anti-Defamation League, the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education and Yad Vashem, and is generously funded by Dana and Yossie Hollander.
On 15-17 July 1941, the Einzatsgruppen (German mobile killing units) and local collaborators murdered some 1,800 Jews from Plunge, Lithuania – fifty percent of the town’s population. To commemorate seventy years since the mass murder, Abel and Glenda Levitt, a couple from South Africa who are deeply involved in commemorating their relatives and other members of the Plunge Jewish community, decided to erect a memorial in the town. For some eight years, the Levitts have been exploring ways with the International School for Holocaust Studies to promote educational activities in Lithuania, and it was decided to combine the ceremony with a three-day educational program for Lithuanian teachers. Forty-five educators attended the program, which included lectures on Jewish life in Plunge before and during the Holocaust, tours of Jewish sites in the old city of Plunge, and workshops explaining Yad Vashem didactic materials. Participants also came from the local Center of Tolerance, an extra-curricular program organized by Danute Serapiniene, a high school teacher in Plunge and graduate of the International School. The Center teaches students about the Holocaust and the former Jewish community in Plunge, emphasizing the Jewish story as part of Lithuanian history and focusing on issues of tolerance and respect. All the participants were invited to attend a full seminar to be held at the International School in the near future.

Among the attendees was Jacob Bunka, the only remaining Jewish resident of Plunge and a well-known sculptor. Bunka was presented with a certificate of appreciation from the International School for Holocaust Studies for his lifelong dedication to furthering Holocaust commemoration. The ceremony itself was held in the Kausenai Forest, where the Jews of Plunge were murdered and buried in six mass graves. The monument consists of a wall made of stones from the destroyed central synagogue in Plunge, on which are inscribed 1,200 names of the Jewish victims; Yad Vashem and Bunka are working to recover the remaining 600 names. “The act of recording these names gives this burial place a new dimension to those of us who come here to mourn and weep,” Abel Levitt said at the unveiling. As the monument was vandalized only a week earlier, he also encouraged Lithuanian teachers to continue educating their students about the Holocaust. Three hundred people attended the ceremony, including diplomats from ten different countries as well as representatives of the Lithuanian government.

The ceremony itself was held in the Kausenai Forest, where the Jews of Plunge were murdered and buried in six mass graves. The monument consists of a wall made of stones from the destroyed central synagogue in Plunge, on which are inscribed 1,200 names of the Jewish victims; Yad Vashem and Bunka are working to recover the remaining 600 names. “The act of recording these names gives this burial place a new dimension to those of us who come here to mourn and weep,” Abel Levitt said at the unveiling. As the monument was vandalized only a week earlier, he also encouraged Lithuanian teachers to continue educating their students about the Holocaust. Three hundred people attended the ceremony, including diplomats from ten different countries as well as representatives of the Lithuanian government.

The author is Head of the Russian Desk, International School for Holocaust Studies.

Holocaust survivor and sculptor Jacob Bunka (right) meets Lithuanian teachers during their workshop in Plunge.
The last time 87-year-old Wolf Hall saw his 90-year-old sister Esther Bielski (née Hauszpiegel) was in 1940 in the Lodz ghetto. Wolf was 17 at the time, and had left the ghetto together with his parents and six of his siblings for Krasnik, the first in a series of several relocations during the war. Esther’s fate, however, took her to the Radom ghetto, and Wolf never heard from her again.

In 1980, believing he had no surviving family, Wolf submitted a Page of Testimony to Yad Vashem commemorating his relatives killed during the Holocaust, including Esther. But Esther had in fact survived; she had married Aaron Bielski in Radom, given birth to a daughter in Germany and immigrated to Israel, where she lives today.

Esther’s daughter Rachel Vered grew up believing that her mother was alone in the world. Her father Aaron had spoken about his wartime experiences, but explicitly instructed his daughter to honor her mother’s request never to inquire into her past, leaving Rachel with a deep void and no information about her maternal family.

Rachel’s search for her mother’s roots began in earnest around two years ago, in the wake of Aaron’s death. After visiting Yad Vashem and following a frustrating journey to Lodz to seek out information from the local archives that yielded no new information, Rachel enlisted the assistance of journalist and genealogist Zack Oryan, who painstakingly searched the Pages of Testimony at Yad Vashem relating to the name Hauszpiegel from the Lodz area. His focus brought an interesting result: the Page submitted by Wolf, who upon his arrival in the US had changed his surname to Hall. After cross-checking with the genealogical research he had already gathered primarily from Jewish Records Indexing – Poland (JRI-Poland), Oryan contacted Wolf on Rachel’s behalf.

Upon receiving the call, Wolf was overcome with emotion. His daughter, Esther, joined the conversation. “For some reason, my sister was always on my mind, so I gave my younger daughter her name,” explained Wolf. He then recounted details of his family’s history, including Esther’s birth date, her nickname (Adja) and their father’s profession (shoemaker). Unfortunately, due to fragile health conditions the two siblings were unable to meet each other in person, but were “virtually reunited” when they conversed via Skype. Plans were made, however, for Rachel to travel to Seattle to meet her newfound family in person.

During her emotional visit to the Wolf family home this September, Rachel presented her uncle and cousins with gifts: family heirlooms belonging to her mother Esther to ensure “they would each possess a physical object from my mother’s home – a symbolic piece of my mother.” She admitted that before her visit she had been apprehensive. “I knew I had family, but I didn’t know these people. I had no idea if we would feel a connection. But as the saying goes, ‘blood is thicker than water.’ Even if I had grown up with this family I wouldn’t have had a better connection with them than I do now. It is truly amazing.”

Nearly 70 years have passed since the Holocaust, and the era of reunion stories such as this is drawing to a natural close. Nevertheless, for Wolf too, the experience was one he could never have dreamed of. “I was so happy to learn I had a sister, although sadly I can’t meet her. Still, I found somebody; I became an uncle. This is a bittersweet joy.”

A movie recently released to mark the 70th anniversary of Operation Barbarossa provides a behind-the-scenes look at Yad Vashem’s Shoah Victim’s Names Recovery Project in the Former Soviet Union. In Search of Lost Memories follows the efforts of Names Recovery staff as they seek to commemorate the name of each individual murdered in this area during the Holocaust – a goal hampered for decades due to the rupture in relations between the Soviet Union and Israel. The 35-minute film includes moving footage of visits to remote villages, where volunteers conduct interviews with eyewitnesses in a last-minute attempt to collect information and names that would otherwise have been lost forever.

Directed by Boris Maftsir, In Search of Lost Memories is in Russian and Hebrew with English subtitles. To order a DVD copy, write to: names.outreach@yadvashem.org.il

www.yadvashem.org for the Hauszpiegel and other reunion stories in the Names Recovery Project’s “Connections and Discoveries” section
″Please Do Not Stop Writing″

Cherished Letters Donated to Yad Vashem

Lital Beer

As part of the national “Gathering the Fragments” campaign conducted by Yad Vashem this year, a collection day was held on Holocaust Remembrance Day 2011, encouraging the public to bring personal items from the Holocaust era to Yad Vashem for safekeeping. One of the donors that day was Mazal Matilda Levy, who donated letters and artifacts belonging to her family. This August, Mazal added photographs and more items to the collection, which tells the story of the Hunio family of Rhodes.

Mazal’s mother, Rosa Levy, née Hunio, immigrated to Eretz Israel in 1938 together with her brother, Avraham. Their parents, Yoseph and Mazal Tov Hunio, remained in Rhodes, then under Italian rule. The other children managed to reach the United States and Uruguay. Rosa stayed in touch with her relatives by mail.

Among the many letters Mazal gave to Yad Vashem, one is written in Hebrew in Sephardic cursive script, sent by Yoseph and Mazal Tov Hunio to their children in the Holy Land:

With God’s help, 5 Heshvan 5700
Rhodes (may the Supreme One preserve it)

To my beloved relatives... siblings never to part, the children of Yoseph and Mazal Tov Hunio, Avraham and Rosa (may God preserve them and give them life), Jerusalem, Tel Aviv (may they be built and preserved speedily and in our day, Amen)

...Today we received a letter from you and we read it avidly and with great love because we had been waiting such a long time for some word from you. Blessed be His name, now that we know you are well, may it be His will that you always remain so forever and ever. You should know that I am trying hard to send your father to you. And I shall also send you the items left at home, together with the machine. I will then finish up my business and other matters and also come, and we will all live together. But please do not stop writing to us, because the letter we received was from six weeks ago, and we were so worried that we had not heard from you in so long... I would only like to hear how you are, and how all your friends and acquaintances are, and pray for your well-being... Greetings from your father and your mother and from all the members of the household. Greetings, we are your father and mother who bless you day and night.

Before donating this letter to Yad Vashem, Mazal Levy never knew of her grandparents’ plans to immigrate to Israel.

Before donating this letter to Yad Vashem, Mazal Levy never knew of her grandparents’ plans to immigrate to Israel. Sadly, their plans were never realized; Yoseph Hunio died and was buried in Rhodes in 1942. In July 1944, Mazal Tov Hunio, née Philosoph, was deported together with the other Jews of Rhodes to Athens and from there to Auschwitz, where she was murdered on 16 August 1944.

“Gathering the Fragments” continues unabated. In the 30 collection days held from May through September, some 1,500 people donated 22,000 items to Yad Vashem, including 63 diaries, 233 works of art, 560 personal artifacts, 4,390 letters and 8,640 photographs.

Yad Vashem, in conjunction with Yedioth Aharonot and accompanied by Reshet Bet of Kol Yisrael, is renewing its call to the Israeli public to donate Holocaust-era items. A joint project with Amigur Asset Management Ltd., a subsidiary of the Jewish Agency, will be launched in the coming months. Amigur runs 55 sheltered housing units throughout Israel, with a population of some 7,500 elderly residents, many of whom resided in the FSU during the Holocaust. These residents, as well as the general public, will be invited to gather in the housing units on specified dates, where Yad Vashem staff will be on hand to document their stories and receive their treasured artifacts for preservation at Yad Vashem.

“Gathering the Fragments” is conducted by Yad Vashem in partnership with the National Heritage Project at the Prime Minister’s Office, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Senior Citizens Affairs. For more information, please call (in Israel): 1-800-25-7777.

The author is Head of the “Gathering the Fragments” Project in the Archives Division.
“One, I never met my grandmother. Two, my name is Danielle Rina Cohen Levy. Three, my grandmother’s name was Renata Braun, later Rina Levy. Four, my grandmother died at the age of 38. In 12 years, I will be older than she ever was. Five, she died of breast cancer. That’s why, every year, I’m being screened. Six, for forty years my grandfather kept a secret in his attic. Seven, everything I’m telling you here is the truth.”

These were the opening words of Danielle Cohen Levy’s one-woman show, performed during a ceremony held at Yad Vashem in July to honor her late grandmother, Renata Braun. Seven artworks created by Braun as a young girl in hiding in Lwów between 1943 and 1944 were recently donated by her husband and children to the Yad Vashem Art Collection. The story behind the artworks came to light almost by accident. Some four years ago, an article in the Israeli daily Haaretz caught the attention of Yehudit Inbar, Director of Yad Vashem’s Museums Division. The article, devoted to contemporary artist Maya Cohen Levy, mentioned her mother Renata, who had painted as a child during the Holocaust. Inbar, whose field of research deals with the experiences of children and their creativity during the Shoah, contacted Cohen Levy to learn more about her mother and the drawings she left behind.

During WWII, Renata Braun was hidden in the cellar of the home of a Mrs. Vogel, the widow of a Polish physician, in Lwów. At first, 11-year-old Renata was able to maintain contact with her parents in the ghetto thanks to Vogel, who passed on her letters. However, at the end of May 1943, all contact was lost. Renata’s parents, Dr. Karol and Luzia Braun, did not manage to escape as planned to the “Aryan side.” They were probably murdered in the Aktion to liquidate the ghetto that began on 1 June 1943.

Renata remained in hiding at Vogel’s house until the end of the war. In the long hours in the basement, the young girl found refuge from terror and loneliness in the far reaches of her imagination, through intensive reading and painting. She expressed her longing for her family in portraits of her mother based on photographs she had lovingly kept. She also depicted scenes from well-known Polish books and fairytales.

After liberation, the Jewish community helped Renata reach Kraków. From there, she emigrated to Eretz Israel, where she studied art full time. She married Chasid Levy and the couple had three children. Renata – now Rina – found work as a preschool teacher, but continued painting until she succumbed to cancer at the age of 38.

The gouache paintings and drawings by Renata that were given to Yad Vashem were all on paper and in poor condition. They underwent a long process of cleaning and preservation in Yad Vashem’s conservation laboratories. On the back of one of the works, musical notes, probably hummed by Renata while she was painting, were discovered. Three of the artworks were identified by museum staff as scenes from Pan Tadeusz, the famous Polish epic poem by Adam Mickiewicz.

Adam Mickiewicz, while a fourth was based on a classic artwork by Jan Matejko, a prominent 19th-century Polish artist. Facing the destruction of her universe, Renata held tight to the anchors of literature, art and music she had learned to cherish at home during the brief blissful years prior to the war.

During their visit to Yad Vashem, Renata’s family was thrilled to learn about the research conducted and see four of the works they had donated displayed in the Museum of Holocaust Art. “The artworks hanging here are testimony to a victory over horrific suffering,” said Maya Cohen Levy, who spoke on behalf of the family. “These innocent works represent a ray of light emerging from that dark place, and give evidence to the boundless power of the human spirit.”

The artworks and story of Renata Braun will form part of an exhibition on the dreams and hopes of children during the Holocaust, curated by Yehudit Inbar, presented by Yad Vashem at the UN on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 27 January 2012.

The author is Art Curator in the Museums Division.
At the end of July, the Yad Vashem Visual Center uploaded its film database to the Internet. Comprising more than 6,500 film titles, the database is both the largest catalog of Holocaust-related films and a work in progress, with film titles from around the world added on a regular basis.

In an interview for Yad Vashem Jerusalem, Director of the Visual Center Liat Benhabib explained how the online database will enable researchers and the wider public around the world to obtain information about each film, as well as the unrivalled wealth of material contained in the Center’s film library:

**What kinds of films does the Visual Center collect?**

The Digital Film Library at the Visual Center currently contains 6,682 titles, all of them Holocaust-related. Nearly 4,000 of these are documentaries and 1,000 are full-length feature films. We have some 400 television series, 250 amateur videos and personal commemoration films, as well as other visual media, such as video art, video dance, news items, war newsreels and short films.

The Visual Center collection also contains many unique works by important directors. There are rare feature films from pre-WWII Russia, movies produced by the former East German film studio DEFA, films by students from a variety of film academies, a large variety of quality Israeli, American and European documentaries, dramas, feature films and many other types. In addition, we house the complete Yad Vashem and USC-Shoah Foundation Institute (Steven Spielberg) survivor testimony collections.

**Can anyone watch these films?**

Once filmmakers deposit their films in our collection, we ensure they are protected by special software and then make them available for viewing only in our digital film library. Anyone over the age of 16 is welcome to visit the Visual Center in Yad Vashem’s Museum Complex to see the films. Viewing is free and no pre-registration is necessary, but we do limit each person to three hours on busy days. We also have a team of staff members available to answer questions and give advice.

**Can people actually view the films online?**

Not yet. Although Yad Vashem has the technological ability to provide online viewing of the films, we do not have the legal rights to do so. However, there is broad international interest in acquiring films online for personal and public use. We hope that in the near future, producers and distributors will identify the potential of media centers and catalogs like ours to reach wider audiences and provide new platforms for film distribution and viewing.
So what does the online film database provide?
The online film database (www.yadvashem.org – “Digital Collections”) contains detailed information about the films, including artistic, technical, commercial, historical and geographic data. Films can be found by title, release year, director, language and film length. The database can be easily searched using keywords, for example: “kindertransport,” “anti-Jewish legislation,” “rescue,” “children,” “music,” and more. You can also search for specific geographical locations according to variable spellings, and then locate the town, county or country on a Google map within the database.

Once the intended film is found, a further click reveals more detailed information, including a summary of the story as well as data about the producer, crew, actors and participants. The “My Films” icon allows you to save your selected films in a personalized list, which can be sent to an e-mail address, printed, or shared through a variety of web services, including Facebook, Twitter and other social networks.

Another useful feature is the “User Comments” tab, which invites members of the public to send us requests regarding specific films, or to propose additions or corrections to the information provided for each film record. Requests are directed to Visual Center staff, who endeavor to respond as quickly as possible.

What benefits will the online database provide?
There is no doubt that allowing access to such detailed information about the films in our collection will aid educators, programmers, researchers and the general public in promoting the use of film to cultivate Holocaust remembrance. We call on filmmakers and the general public to join with us in continuing to expand what is now the leading digital film library and most comprehensive database of Holocaust-related cinema in the world.

The uploading of the Online Film Database to the Yad Vashem website was made possible through the support of Holocaust survivor Avraham Harshalom-Fridberg, in memory of his parents Moshe and Cyra Fridberg, and his brother Sioma-Shlomo Fridberg, who were murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau early in 1943.

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Leah Goldstein

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In Memory of his Family: Avraham Harshalom

Avraham Harshalom (Adam Fridberg) was born in the village of Pruzhany (Pruzana), Poland (today Belarus). Together with his parents Moshe and Cyra Fridberg, his brother Sioma-Shlomo and his grandmother, Avraham was deported on the fourth and final transport to Auschwitz-Birkenau in early 1943. He was the only one to survive.

At the end of 1944, Avraham escaped from a transport by jumping into a coal train on its way to Prague. There he found refuge with Irina Sobotkova – later recognized as Righteous Among the Nations – until the end of the war. Avraham joined the Czechoslovakian forces to fight the retreating Germans. In 1949, he emigrated to Israel, serving in the Israeli Air Force during the War of Independence. He became a successful international businessman and played an important role in the development and construction of the State of Israel. Avraham has three children – Tzeira, Moshe and Aharon – and a number of grandchildren, and is an active partner in ensuring that the memory of the Holocaust is preserved and handed down through the generations.

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Three Decades of Partnership

Yad Vashem honors the American Society on its milestone anniversary. We are indebted to our thousands of dedicated donors, whose support enables us to impart the legacy of the Holocaust to future generations. We pay tribute to our Benefactors from the United States:

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Dr. Jacqueline Heller
Julia & Isidore Karten & Family
Seryl & Charles Kushner

The annual Tribute Dinner of the American Society is the premier event on the organization’s calendar, attracting over 1,000 guests. For the survivors, it is an affirmation – more than 60 years after liberation – that the memory of the Holocaust has not dimmed. For younger generations, it is an inspirational evening dedicated to the “State of Remembrance.” Our Young Leadership Associates, founded in 1997, constantly renew their commitment to Shoah remembrance, in word and in action. As Adina Burian, a fifth-generation survivor, put it, “The first and second generations built the infrastructure which ensures that our past will never be forgotten. It is the task of the third generation, and indeed the generations to follow, to guarantee that the past is linked inexorably to the spirit, unity and vibrancy of the Jewish future.”

Eli Zborowski
Founder and Chairman, American Society for Yad Vashem
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Ruta & Felix Zandman
Diana & Eli Zborowski

It is an honor and a privilege for me to represent the American Society’s Board of Trustees on this auspicious occasion – the 30th Anniversary of its founding.

I would like at the outset to pay tribute to our chairman Eli Zborowski, who has been the unifying force behind this organization for three decades. Early on, Eli marshaled the efforts of my father, Harry Wilf z”l, and my Uncle Joe to become active in the cause of remembrance. Both of them took leadership positions in the Society, and in turn have inspired me and my cousins Zygyg and Mark to become deeply involved.

My father, a founding member of the American Society, was a leading light in the organization until his passing in 1992. Eli Zborowski remembers the vitality and wholehearted enthusiasm my father generated in his testimonial: “Our achievements in the American Society, and by extension at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, are due in large measure to the guidance and leadership Harry provided in those early years. He gave unstintingly of his time and resources. He was truly an inspiration to us all.”

Growing up in the home of survivors, I was constantly amazed by my parents’ optimism, tenacity and courage – characteristics that motivated them to pick up the shattered pieces of their lives after the war and translate their innate commitment to Klai Virsrael into providing support for cultural, educational and health care services in the United States and Israel. Passionate Zionists, their imprint on the growth of the State of Israel is prevalent throughout the country.

When my father passed on, with my mother Judith’s encouragement and support, I took it upon myself to continue in his legacy. I hope that my children, Orin, Halle, Jenna and Harrison, will provide an unbroken chain of commitment to the causes their grandfather held so dear.

Sadly, we are witnessing a growing manifestation around the world of those who wish to deny or diminish the Holocaust. Yad Vashem, the Jewish people’s principal memorial to the Shoah, is a reminder to the world of what can transpire when antisemitism goes unchecked. It is for this reason that I am fervently committed to support Yad Vashem’s mission in ensuring the noble cause of Holocaust remembrance and education for the sake of a better and brighter future.

Leonard Wilf
Chairman, Board of Trustees,
American Society for Yad Vashem

With each passing year, the world has fewer and fewer survivors who can speak of their own personal memories of the Shoah. While many believe that today’s young people have little interest in the dark and “distant” past, we have found that our contemporaries view it as a moral imperative to remember this chapter of Jewish history, to embrace it, and to learn from it.

We are both grandchildren of survivors who have had the privilege of hearing firsthand of their encounters with discrimination, terror and tragedy. Their stories have taught us so many important lessons of hope and renewal, even in the face of adversity. Their faith and commitment to Jewish continuity have inspired us to share their heritage with our own young children.

In 1997, the American Society for Yad Vashem founded the Young Leadership Associates (YLA), whose goal is to transmit the precious legacy of European Jewry to future generations.

Over the years, attendance at our range of programs and activities has swelled to over 800. An annual highlight of the YLA calendar is a professional development conference for public school teachers on Holocaust education. Employing the wealth of resources created by Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies, conference themes have included “Holocaust Education Towards the Next Century,” “Using Survivors’ Testimonies: Witnesses to the Past and Voices for the Future,” and “Echoes and Reflections: A Multimedia Curriculum on the Holocaust.” We firmly believe that is only through education and dialogue that we can increase awareness and tolerance, both in our own community and around the world.

It is a Jewish custom when visiting a cemetery to place a stone on the gravesite of a deceased family member or friend. This gesture is a way of saying: “We remember.” Through every program we sponsor, we endeavor to place another symbolic stone on the memories of those who perished. In this way, we ensure that the world will remember not only how the Jews of Europe lived and how they died, but also how those that survived have fulfilled their obligation to secure the perpetuation of the Jewish spirit.

Caroline Massel and Jeremy Halpern
Co-Chairs, American Society Young Leadership Associates
“Language Contains Everything”

International Workshop on the Use of Language during the Holocaust

Leah Goldstein

“Language Contains Everything”

International Workshop on the Use of Language during the Holocaust

Leah Goldstein

To discuss cutting-edge research on a number of related topics, such as the use of metaphors and mythological symbols in Nazi and Jewish discourse, changes in narrative over time, real-time perceptions of the Shoah, and postwar descriptions of individual suffering during the Holocaust.

Schroeder spoke about the articulation of concentration camp prisoner experiences by the medium of a diary. “Shifting our focus from what was said or written to the question of how it was articulated, we can learn more about the ways in which these prisoners used linguistic markers and strategies to communicate information, feelings and experiences,” Schroeder explained. “This approach takes issue with the common conception of the Shoah as laying beyond the scope of language, as being ‘unrepresentable, indescribable, unsayable.’ As Lilly Zielenziger’s diary shows, the prisoners themselves were well aware of the problematic nature of their utterances regarding the horrors around them. Nevertheless, they wrote, and in writing they tried to break this apparent boundary. Though they were certainly conscious of the inadequacies of their language, they did not fall silent, but struggled to write about their experiences and sufferings as best they could.”

However, she continued, the completely alien nature of the living conditions in the concentration camp could not be adequately communicated in the mother tongue, which made the invention of a new language specifically for the camp, a so-called “camp language,” necessary.

“Taking into account the concrete situations in which the use of Lagersprache became

News from the International Institute for Holocaust Research

Symposia on the Bergson Group; Romanian Jewry and the Holocaust

An international symposium on “The Bergson Group and America’s Response to the Final Solution” was held on 17 July 2011 by the International Institute for Holocaust Research and the International School for Holocaust Studies of Yad Vashem, in partnership with the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies.

Hillel Kook, a.k.a. Peter Bergson, dedicated substantial efforts to raising awareness among Americans about the events of the Holocaust.

Speakers at the symposium included Prof. Dan Michman, Head of the Research Institute and Incumbent of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies; Dr. Joel Zisenwine, Director of the Deportations Project at the International Institute, who spoke about what the Allies knew about the Holocaust and when; Prof. David S. Wyman (emer.) of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, who addressed “America, the Bergson Group and the Holocaust”; and Dr. Rafael Medoff of the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, Washington, D.C.

The symposium was attended by close to 200 participants, who held an animated discussion about the impact and importance of the Bergson group’s activities.

On 22 September, the International Institute for Holocaust Research held a symposium marking 70 years since the annihilation of Jews in Romania and the territories it annexed during the war. Researchers from across Israel spoke on a range of topics related to these events, as well as the efforts to educate the world via online courses run by the International School for Holocaust Studies.

“For decades, the story of the Holocaust in Romania and the territories its government seized during the war, in particular the area of terror known as Transnistria, did not receive the attention it deserved, either in general Holocaust research or in the public consciousness,” explained Institute Head and Incumbent of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies Prof. Dan Michman. “The late historian Jean Ancel, who researched the Holocaust in Romania at Yad Vashem for many years, was a pioneer in its historiographic transformation, which began at the end of the 1980s. Surprisingly, the fall of communism in Romania did not bring about an immediate turnaround in the attitude of the Romanian people, as they were suddenly faced with the fact that Romania itself, unconnected to the German authorities, was responsible for the murder of close to 400,000 Jews. Only in the past decade has a real change occurred in national awareness of its responsibility for the events, due among other things to the international conference of historians on the subject organized by the Romanian government, in which Yad Vashem played a central role.”

Both symposia were held with the generous support of the Gutwirth Family Fund.
Though they were certainly conscious of the inadequacies of their language, they did not fall silent, but struggled to write about their experiences and sufferings as best they could.

Prof. Timothy Snyder Discusses “Bloodlands” Dr. Leonid Rein

On 21 June 2011, Prof. Timothy Snyder (Yale University) gave a lecture at the International Institute for Holocaust Research in the wake of his widely discussed and controversial study Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin, published last year. Both Prof. Snyder’s book and his lecture focused on the area of eastern Central Europe which he defines as “Bloodlands”, stretching from western Poland to western Russia, whose populations were subjected in the 1930s and 1940s to constant violence on the part of two dictatorial regimes – the Soviet communists (“Stalin”) and the German Nazis (“Hitler”). The vast majority of those who fell victim to both Soviet and Nazi terror, so his thesis goes, were killed in this limited area (about 14 million people). It was here, he says, that the Holocaust was unleashed.

While a significant part of Prof. Snyder’s lecture focused on the Holocaust, he defined the Holocaust not as a complexity of antisemitic measures directed against Jews that culminated in physical extermination, but more as a deliberate mass murder resulting from the interplay between ideology and economy, with the economic factor being of the same importance, if not being more important, than an ideological one. Emphasizing the qualitative and quantitative uniqueness of the Holocaust, Prof. Snyder therefore places the Holocaust in the context of the violence that washed over the Soviet-controlled territories in the second quarter of the 20th century. Nevertheless, he refuted the idea that Nazi terror was a reaction to Soviet terror, or that Jews under Nazi rule paid the price for their alleged collaboration with the Soviet authorities in 1939-1941. He equally rejected the post-Soviet era idea of a “double genocide,” now popular in the FSU, especially in the Baltic States and Ukraine.

The lecture, which was delivered in a packed hall, was followed by a lively discussion. Many incisive questions put forward by researchers in the audience dealt with the role of ideology in the murder of the Jews, as well as the definition and parameters of the Holocaust in Prof. Snyder’s model.

The author is a researcher in the International Institute for Holocaust Research.

Notes

Schröder concluded with a quote by Buchenwald political prisoner Jorge Semprun, who expressed doubts about the possibility of narrating the Holocaust, but added: “What was experienced was not unspeakable. It was unbearable, which is something quite different. [...] Everything can always be said: in the end, language contains everything.”

The “Language, Semantics and Discourse in the Shoah” workshop was generously supported by the Gutwirth Family Fund.
“My grandfather survived the Holocaust in hiding and I would like to know if his rescuers were recognized by Yad Vashem”; “Did Yad Vashem recognize any Righteous from my town?”; “I’m interested in issues of medicine during the Holocaust. Were any doctors recognized as Righteous Among the Nations?” These are only some of the many questions that people from all over the world address to Yad Vashem every day.

The stories of the Righteous Among the Nations have high moral and inspirational value to Jews and non-Jews alike. These true stories demonstrate that even in times of war and tyranny, men and women retain the innate right and ability to act upon moral precepts. The concept of Righteous Among the Nations has therefore become a universal paradigm, and Yad Vashem’s program continues to generate great interest especially among educators, who recognize its potential to engage students of all backgrounds, and thereby strengthen democratic and human values.

Since the establishment of the program to formally recognize and thank those non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jewish people during the Holocaust, Yad Vashem has bestowed the title of Righteous Among the Nations on close to 24,000 men and women from 46 countries. In 2012-2013, Yad Vashem will mark the 50th anniversary of the endeavor, which has won enormous renown worldwide. Approaching this landmark, a comprehensive project has been launched to preserve the program’s archive for the benefit of future generations and to create a user-friendly online resource with information about the Righteous, rescue stories and photos. Yad Vashem’s sophisticated information systems are embedded in the database, enabling searches by place, name, profession, nationality or other keywords, irrespective of spelling or language.

Investigating Ukrainian Greek Catholic rescuers, for example, users will find the story of three Jewish boys hidden in the Monastery of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Uniow. The three boys who were saved by Hieromonk Daniil Tymchyna represent three very different life stories. Born in places far apart, fate brought them together in Uniow, and after the war they rebuilt their lives in three continents: Oded Amarant, who had been born in Tel Aviv but was visiting his grandparents when the war broke out, returned to Israel; Adam Daniel Rotfeld, born in Przemyslany, stayed in Poland after the war and in 2005 became its Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Leon Chameides, born in Katowice, after liberation joined his grandparents in England and emigrated with them to the United States.

Those looking for doctors will find a number of moving narratives, among them the story of Lieneke van der Hoeden. Like many Jewish families, the van der Hoeden family took the painful decision to split up and hide in different places, out of touch with one another. In April 1943 Lieneke van der Hoeden, today Nili Goren, was brought to the home of a village doctor, Hein Kohly. On her eleventh birthday in May 1944 she received a little booklet which her father had written and illustrated, brought to her by the Dutch underground. A few pages from the diary are visible online.

The concept of Righteous Among the Nations has become a universal paradigm, and Yad Vashem’s program continues to generate great interest

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The first step in this long-term project saw the database of the Righteous from the Netherlands and Ukraine uploaded to the Yad Vashem website in October 2011, with more countries planned to be added throughout 2012.

The digitization of the Righteous Among the Nations archives is supported by the Genesis Philanthropy Group, the European Jewish Fund, the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, the Claims Conference, the Maror Fund, the Levi Lassen Foundation and the Dutch Friends of Yad Vashem.

The author is Director of the Righteous Among the Nations Department.
"Kaddish – I Am Here": First Performance in Israel

I thought to myself,
My goodness!
I'm here!
I survived,
and look who is with me!

These powerful words from the testimony of Naomi Warren, a survivor of Auschwitz, Ravensbrück and Bergen-Belsen, were heard in a unique concert, "Kaddish – I Am Here" by Dr. Lawrence Siegel, held on 8 September in Yad Vashem’s Warsaw Ghetto Square in the presence of the Speaker of the Knesset, some 2,000 Holocaust survivors and their families, members of the Diplomatic Corps, and distinguished guests from Israel and abroad including State Comptroller Justice Micha Lindenstrauss and Bank of Israel Governor Prof. Stanley Fischer.

“Kaddish” is based on the personal stories of Holocaust survivors, including William Morgan (Yosele Marguiles), revealing details about daily life in Europe before and during the Shoah. After a “litany” of names of Holocaust victims, the Kaddish is recited is in memory of the Holocaust martyrs, and the piece ends with the words of Naomi Warren, in recognition of the survivors determined to rebuild their lives and establish new families. Composer Dr. Lawrence Siegel also wrote the libretto, incorporating verbatim testimonies, to afford listeners a minute glimpse into the world of the survivors.

The concert was performed by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra IBA, conducted by Gil Shohat, and featured two choirs as well as soloists from the United States. The work was premiered at the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Keene State College, New Hampshire. This first performance in Israel is part of Yad Vashem’s ongoing efforts to commemorate the legacy of the Shoah through music and the arts.

The performance at Yad Vashem of the “Kaddish – I Am Here” concert was initiated by Yad Vashem Builder Benjamin Warren, sponsored by UBS, and supported by Jan and Rick Cohen among other valued friends. Photos and video of the concert can be viewed on the Yad Vashem website.

Kites Flown for Korczak

It is absolutely imperative for each and every child in the valley to have a kite.
Janusz Korczak, after his visit to Eretz Israel, 1936

On 4 August, members of the Mahanot Ha’alum youth movement gathered at Yad Vashem to mark the 69th anniversary of the murder of Janusz Korczak, his assistant Stefania Wilczynska, and the children of the orphanage they administered in Warsaw. Korczak, a physician, writer, journalist and renowned educator, and Wilczynska refused to leave the children in their care, and were deported together with them to Treblinka.

In the spirit of Korczak’s words, the youths congregated in Warsaw Ghetto Square, where they released dozens of colorful kites into the air. The kites bore requests and messages they had written to express their desires for a world based on respect, love and equal rights.

Participating in the ceremony were Poland’s Ambassador to Israel H.E. Ms. Agnieszka Magdziak-Lindenstrauss and the Romanian Ambassador to Israel H.E. Mr. Edward Iosiper.

Commemoration for Iași, Romania

“The massacre started on the road to the police station and many of those walking were shot dead... Those who were still alive were left until the following day... What my eyes saw and was burned into my memory – the memory of a 13-year-old boy in the early morning hours of that day, from the packed train car... Today, I celebrate my personal revival and my beautiful family – my wife Haya, my two children, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

They symbolize my great victory, for the glory of the Jewish State of Israel and the fulfillment of the Zionist vision.”

On 17 July, survivor Mendy Porat (Fruchter) related his personal story in front of dozens of Holocaust survivors at the commemoration service marking 70 years since the Iași pogrom. Some 14,000 Jews were murdered in the town on 29 June 1941, also known as “Black Sunday.”

The memorial ceremony was conducted jointly by the United Association of Romanian-Born Jews in Israel (AMIR) and the Romanian Jewry Memorial Organization. Rabbi Ephraim Gutman, Rabbi of the Community Center of Romanian Jews in Tel Aviv, spoke at the ceremony, as did the Romanian Ambassador to Israel H.E. Mr. Edward Iosiper.

The author is Assistant to the Events Director, Commemoration and Public Relations Division.
Noah Flug z”l: “A leader who worked on behalf of Holocaust survivors”

Yad Vashem is deeply saddened by the recent passing of Noah Flug, Chairman of the Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel and a member of Yad Vashem’s Directorate.

Noah Flug was born in 1925 in Lodz, Poland. During WWII, he was imprisoned in the Lodz ghetto, where he was conscripted to a forced labor brigade. In 1944, he was deported to Auschwitz and from there to the Gross-Rosen concentration camp. During a death march towards Mauthausen, he was liberated by American troops. At the time, he weighed only 32 kg (70 lbs). Noah immigrated to Israel in 1958 and settled in Jerusalem. In 1987, he founded the Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel and served as its Director General. In 2003, he was appointed the organization’s Chairman. He dedicated his life to helping Holocaust survivors and memorializing its victims. He also served in senior positions in a variety of organizations, including AMCHA – The National Israeli Center for Psychosocial Support of Holocaust Survivors and the Second Generation, the World Jewish Restitution Organization, the International Auschwitz Committee and the Claims Conference.

“Noah was, above all, a social leader who worked tirelessly on behalf of the welfare of Holocaust survivors,” said Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev. “I worked hand in hand with Noah, and saw from up close how his personality and many talents helped advance the rights of Holocaust survivors. As a member of Yad Vashem’s Directorate, he was instrumental in passing on the legacy of the Holocaust to future generations. May his memory be blessed.”

Online Now: www.yadvashem.org  Dana Porath

German YouTube Channel

In September 2011, Yad Vashem’s YouTube channel in German was inaugurated, joining the existing channels in English, Hebrew, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Farsi. The German channel contains over 100 videos, including survivor testimonies, video lectures by German-speaking historians and archival footage, as well as a multimedia presentation on the Auschwitz Album. All of the videos are linked to related texts and resources about the Holocaust in German on Yad Vashem’s website, providing important historical context and background. It is anticipated that the German channel will be of great interest to the general public and will provide an invaluable resource for German educators.

The Yad Vashem YouTube Channel in German was developed with the support of The Future Fund of the Republic of Austria, Friends of Yad Vashem in Austria and the Swiss Society for Yad Vashem.

Online Exhibition: “The Jerusalem of Lithuania”

On the eve of the Shoah, Vilna was the spiritual center of Eastern European Jewry, the core of enlightenment and Jewish political life, and the heart of Jewish creativity – a community bursting with cultural and religious movements and parties, educational institutions, libraries and theatres, rabbis and gifted Talmudic scholars, intellectuals, poets, authors, artists, craftspeople and educators. In the Jewish world it was known as “The Jerusalem of Lithuania.”

International Workshop Investigates New Ideas for Names Recovery  Zvi Bernhardt

In July 2011, Yad Vashem convened the “Recording the Names” international workshop for professionals collecting and computerizing names of Holocaust victims around the world. This year, the workshop converged with Yad Vashem’s leading role in the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI), funded by the European Union, bringing together experts in the field of names recovery and digitization from Europe, Israel and beyond.

In the formal sessions, participants presented the projects they are working on, but some of the most important moments of the workshop were the informal ones, where participants discussed the many dilemmas they face, including questions of privacy when making biographies public; how to best utilize new forms of social media while maintaining the dignity of the data about those persecuted; and the many technical questions of how to make this varied material most accessible to the public.

“In similar workshops held over the past decade, participants discussed how to advance the computerization of well-known sources of names of Shoah victims,” explained Alexander Avraham, Director of Yad Vashem’s Hall of Names. “To date, the Yad Vashem online database includes information on four million of those murdered in the Holocaust; the mutual challenge for the future is to uncover additional sources to help identify the remaining names.”

The author is Head of Data Processing in the Hall of Names.
RECENT VISITS TO YAD VASHEM

During July–September 2011, Yad Vashem conducted 175 guided tours for more than 1,800 official visitors from Israel and abroad. These guests included heads of government and ambassadors, military leaders, NGO representatives and media personalities. Following is a small selection of our honored guests over the summer months:

■ President of Greece Dr. Karolos Papoulias (second from left) visited Yad Vashem on 12 July. He was guided through the Holocaust History Museum by Deputy Director of the Museums Division and Senior Art Curator Yehudit Shendar (right). Greek Defense Minister Panos Beglitis toured the campus on 6 September.

■ On 4 September, Prime Minister of Belgium Yves Leterme (left) was guided through the Holocaust History Museum by Yad Vashem Senior Historian Dr. David Silberklang (right).

■ Prime Minister of Slovenia Borut Pahor visited Yad Vashem on 25 July.

■ Ecuador's Vice President Lenin Moreno laid a wreath in the Garden of the Righteous in memory of Holocaust victims and in honor of Ecuadorian Righteous Among the Nations Dr. Manuel Antonio Muñoz Borrero during his visit to Yad Vashem on 29 June.

■ During his visit to Yad Vashem on 13 July, German Defense Minister Dr. Thomas de Maiziere toured the Holocaust History Museum, including the Hall of Names.

■ On 19 May, WWII veteran First Lieutenant Frank W. Towers visited Yad Vashem. Mr. Towers was one of the liberators of the Bergen-Belsen train on which 2,500 Jews were headed towards their deaths. After a special tour of the Holocaust History Museum, Mr. Towers (left) presented Director of the Commemoration and Public Relations Division Rachel Barkai (right) with a photograph of a work of art by train survivor and artist Sara Atzmon. Mr. Towers, today President of the 30th Infantry Division Veterans of WWII, received a souvenir from Yad Vashem of his visit to Israel, during which he met with Holocaust survivors he had rescued from the train during the war.

■ On 2 September and toured the Holocaust History Museum, guided by Director of the Internet Department Dana Porath (right).

■ Martha Stewart (left) visited Yad Vashem on 2 September and toured the Holocaust History Museum, guided by Director of the Internet Department Dana Porath (right).
Ida Fink z”l

Yad Vashem mourns the author Ida Fink, Holocaust survivor and Israel Prize Laureate, who passed away at the age of 90 in October 2011.

Ida Fink was born in Zbarazh, eastern Poland (now Ukraine) in 1921. Her father was a physician and her mother, a teacher. During the war, Ida and her sister fled the Zbarazh ghetto using false papers, and lived for two-and-a-half years in hiding among Polish villagers and farmers, who later became the basis for her fictional writings.

In 1957, Ida immigrated to Israel and worked at Yad Vashem collecting testimony from Holocaust survivors. Her short stories discuss the terrible choices, or lack thereof, that Jews faced during the Nazi period, as well as the hardships that survivors encountered after the war. In all, she wrote nine books, all in her Polish mother tongue, which were translated into Hebrew and other languages.

Ida Fink won a number of literature prizes, including the 1995 Jacob Buchman Foundation Memorial Prize, awarded by Yad Vashem’s International Institute for Holocaust Research, and the Israel Prize for Literature in 2008. May her memory be blessed.

Using Archives to Expand Education

At the end of October 2011, the European Department at the International School for Holocaust Studies organized a three-day seminar for German-speaking graduates of the International School. This first-ever seminar was developed in conjunction with the International Tracing Service (ITS), and was held at the ITS building in Bad Arolsen, Germany.

During the seminar, ITS and Yad Vashem staff demonstrated how to search archival collections, and offered pedagogical guidance to the graduates on how to implement this primary source material in the classroom.

The seminar also connected graduates from different German-speaking countries and regions, enabling them to exchange ideas and opinions. Arno Braendle, a secondary school teacher in Liechtenstein, has already developed a curriculum that addresses issues of racism and works to combat his students’ growing interest in neo-Nazi culture, “I came looking for additional materials to continue this program,” Braendle explained. “Here I found sources that will help me focus on topics that are currently less prevalent in the education system, such as the death marches or forced labor. This will widen my students’ perspectives and provide a more meaningful comprehensive understanding of the Jewish experience during the war.”

The author is Head of the German-Speaking Desk, International School for Holocaust Studies, and co-organizer of the seminar together with Dr. Susanne Urban, Head of the ITS Research and Education Department.

Wunderkinder Wins Yad Vashem 2011 Chairman’s Award

Liat Benhabib

Marcus O. Rosenmüller, director of the film Wunderkinder (Germany, 2011) was presented with the 2011 Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman’s Award at the 28th Jerusalem International Film Festival this July.

The film, produced by daughter and father Dr. Alice Brauner and Artur Brauner, tells the story of three children, Hanna (German), and Larissa and Ahrascha (Jewish), best friends and classical music virtuosos living in Poltawa, Ukraine, at the beginning of the 1940s. When the war reaches Poltawa, their friendship is put to the test. The young musicians see only one way out: to help each other and win over the adults by using their musical gifts.

“Wunderkinder tells the story of the friendship between children growing up during the darkest time of the Jewish people,” commented the jury, which consisted of Dean of the Sha’arei Mishpat College Aviad HaCohen, senior lecturer at the Hebrew University Avner HaCohen, Educational Director for Rabbis for Human Rights Rabbi Nava Hefetz, and journalist and screenwriter Stuart Schoffman. “Their tale is imparted in an unusual and delicate manner that steers away from banality. The choice to include children in each of the film’s scenes is remarkably thoughtful. We also commend the depiction of a Jewish family hiding a German one, and vice-versa.”

Upon receiving the award, Alice Brauner said: “I am committed to continuing my father’s mission to produce not only entertainment movies, but also films dedicated to the victims of the Holocaust. I see this award as recognition for decades of commitment to this purpose, and we, the producers, the director and the entire team at CCC Filmkunst, are profoundly grateful for this acknowledgement of our work.”

An honorable mention was also granted this year to director Britta Wauer, for her documentary film, In Heaven, Underground: The Weissensee Jewish Cemetery – a fascinating documentation of the German burial ground that reveals the country’s Jewish life in all its diversity over the past two hundred years.

The annual Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman’s Award for Holocaust-Related Film is generously endowed by Michaela and Leon Constantiner.

The author is Director of the Visual Center.

Library Catalog More User-Friendly

The Yad Vashem Library catalog on the Yad Vashem website has recently undergone a facelift, acquiring the same “new look” as Yad Vashem’s other online databases. In addition, the catalog has become more user-friendly, with important additional features. Now visitors to the online catalog may employ not only regular search fields such as language and year of publication, but may also choose terms from a special PDF document that contains nearly 9,000 subject headings used by the Library staff to classify books. The newly fashioned Library catalog homepage thus enables researchers and students of the Holocaust to utilize its resources more effectively.
Yad Vashem’s exhibition “Spots of Light: To Be a Woman in the Holocaust” opened on 23 June at the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center. Three hundred guests participated in the opening, among them Yad Vashem supporters (from left) Dave and Esther Mann and Betty Breslaw. Deputy Director of the Museums Division Yehudit Shendar (second from right) addressed the guests. Also pictured: S. Isaac Mekel, Director of Development, American Society for Yad Vashem (right).

During his most recent visit to Yad Vashem, Steve Finkelman toured the exhibition “With Me Here Are Six Million Accusers’ – Fifty Years since the Eichmann Trial.”

Sydell Miller (second from left) visited Yad Vashem together with her daughter and son-in-law Lauren and Steven Spilman and grandchildren.

The two rescuers of Mira Becker, the late Maria Kazuczyk and Marianna Kazuczyk, were posthumously honored as Righteous Among the Nations in a ceremony held honoring a number of Righteous in Warsaw on 22 August. Mira, originally from Bialystok, jumped off a train headed for Treblinka. Her parents, Motl and Elka, and younger sister Ida were murdered in Treblinka. Her brother Abraham was murdered together with other 5,000 boys in 1941, in Pterosha Forest outside of Bialystok. Mira made her way back to Bialystok, where she was hidden by the two sisters-in-law.

Left to right: Ewa Rudnik of the Embassy of Israel; Mira Becker née Kwasowicer; Dorota Urban, who accepted the medal on behalf of Maria Kazuczyk; Ambassador of Israel to Poland H.E. Mr. Zvi Rav-Ner; Regina Lewoc, who accepted the medal on behalf of Marianna Kazuczyk.

On 1 September, in the offices of the American Society for Yad Vashem, the heirs of the artist Felix Cytrin donated to the Yad Vashem Museum of Holocaust Art 43 original portraits of Jewish prisoners who had been recruited for “Operation Bernhard” – the Nazi plan to forge millions of Bank of England notes.

Left to right: American Society Director of Development S. Isaac Mekel, Yehudit Shendar, donor Marcia Friday, American Society Cultural Director Dr. Elizabeth Mundlak Zborowski, Marcia’s daughters Arielle Selya and Karinna Schmidt.

Yad Vashem mourns the passing of its dear friend and Builder William “Vladek” Mandell, one of the founders of the American Society for Yad Vashem. May his wife Paula and daughters Zippy Graubart and Hannah Loftus be comforted among the mourners of Zion.

Matthew Bronfman and his son Eli recently toured the Holocaust History Museum and took a behind-the-scenes tour of the Archives.

The extended Franco Family toured the Yad Vashem Campus and marked the bar mitzvah of Aaron and Daniel Franco in a moving ceremony in the Synagogue.

The Lapco family visited Yad Vashem on the occasion of the bar mitzvah of their son Salomon (right).

The Guenoun family visited Yad Vashem on occasion of the bar mitzvah of their son Jack (second from left).
During their recent visit to Yad Vashem, Ingeborg and Ira Rennert (left) were shown Holocaust-related art by Deputy Director of the Museums Division and Senior Art Curator Yehudit Shendar (standing). They were joined by Managing Director of the International Relations Division Shaya Ben Yehuda (center) and the Division’s Deputy Director Sari Granitza (second from right).

MEXICO

Ivonne and Samuel Geller (center), their sons and daughter-in-law visited Yad Vashem and were joined by Managing Director of the International Relations Division Shaya Ben Yehuda (left).

The Kravzov and Weisser families visited Yad Vashem on the occasion of the bar and bat mitzvah of their son and daughter Sharon and Alejandro (front).

Paulina Apeloig Altaras and Marcel Apeloig were joined by their families and friends for the unveiling of a plaque in memory of their father and in honor of her mother, and for the presentation of the translation to Spanish of The Black Book by Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, a collaborative effort by the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (JAC) to document the anti-Jewish crimes of the Holocaust and the participation of the Jews in the resistance movement.

CHRISTIAN DESK

A delegation of the country directors of Derek Prince Ministries (DPM) visited the Mount of Remembrance following their earlier donation to support seminars for Christian leaders at Yad Vashem. Left to right: Christine and Ross Paterson (China); Warren and Roseanna Smith (Asia Pacific); Alex and Faye Genovese (Australia); Neil Cornick, (UK); Director, Christian Friends of Yad Vashem Dr. Susanna Kokkonen; DPM International Director David Selby and Anna Selby, daughter of the late Derek Prince; Managing Director, International Relations Division Shaya Ben Yehuda

CANADA

Yad Vashem Builders Jay and Barbara Hennick joined with their family at the Canadian Society’s Holocaust Wall of Remembrance at Earl Bales Park, Toronto, for an unveiling ceremony of the names of loved ones who perished in the Shoah, as well as those who survived but have since passed away. Left to right: Barbara Hennick, Jory Hennick, Bradley Hennick, Irene Gray, Allison Hennick, Jay Hennick

Cousins Ben and Anna Zvi (left) reunited with their long-lost Israeli cousins Hava and Shraga Evron (right) at an event organized by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem in Toronto after discovering each other’s existence through Yad Vashem’s Shoah Victims’ Names Recovery Project.

A delegation from Markham, Ontario, led by the city’s mayor Frank Scarpitti and Regional Chairman and CEO of the Municipality of York Bill Fisch, visited Yad Vashem at the end of May. They toured the Holocaust History Museum and participated in a moving ceremony at the Hall of Remembrance.

During their visit to Israel, Rabbi Jonathan Miller from Birmingham, Alabama (to the right of the tree) and a group of Christian clergy explored the Holocaust History Museum and learned about the Righteous Among the Nations. They were accompanied by Director, Christian Friends of Yad Vashem Dr. Susanna Kokkonen.
DIASPORA AFFAIRS

■ Leonid Kuchma (second from left), former president of Ukraine and head of the Presidential Fund of Leonid Kuchma, visited the Mount of Remembrance with Yad Vashem Builder Victor Pinchuk (right), head of the Victor Pinchuk Foundation, and his son Roman Pinchuk (second from right). They were guided by Liza Davidovich (left).

■ Salomón Galsky (standing, third from right) was joined by his family for the unveiling of a plaque in memory of his parents Bella and Abraham Galsky z”l and on the occasion of the bar mitzvah of his grandson Claudio (kneeling, right).

■ Luna Sultan Aserraf (fifth from right) was joined by her nephews Leopoldo Lares (fifth from left) and Sadi Sultan (third from left), Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev and Director of the Latin America, Spain and Portugal Desk Perla Hazan for the unveiling of a plaque in memory of her father Sadia Sultan z”l and in honor of her mother Perla Aserraf Sultan.

VENEZUELA

■ The Waich family visited Yad Vashem on the occasion of the bar mitzvah of their son Isaac.

SWITZERLAND

■ The Swiss Society for Yad Vashem elected a new Board of Directors during its General Assembly in June. Joel Herzog from Geneva is the new president and Thierry Bollag from Zurich was elected vice-president. Pictured are Board Members (from left): Dr. Josef Bollag, Thierry Bollag, Denise Schmid, Joel Herzog, Yad Vashem’s Director for Switzerland and the German-speaking countries Arik Rav-On, André Bollag. Not pictured: Gabriel Taus, David Wollach, Herbert Herz.

Your Support Helps Make a Difference

All of the activities, projects and events which you have just read about are made possible thanks to the generous support of our donors. In these difficult times of financial uncertainty and a worrying rise in antisemitism around the world, Yad Vashem is doubling its efforts to commemorate the Holocaust, disseminate its universal implications and strengthen Jewish continuity. Yad Vashem is deeply grateful for your generosity in supporting its vital work and welcomes both new friends and established supporters as partners in our shared mission.

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International Institute for Holocaust Research:
New on the Shelf

David Bankier, *Expulsion and Extermination: Holocaust Testimonials from Provincial Lithuania*

NIS 174  NIS 128

On 22 June 1941, German troops entered Lithuania, beginning the end of the glorious heritage of Lithuanian Jewry. This book describes the annihilation of the Jews in the provincial townlets and villages, with selected excerpts from Leyb Koniuchovsky’s collection of postwar testimonies that describe the process of mass extermination in the various Lithuanian communities. The horror revealed reflects the disbelief that friends and neighbors could become enemies, plunderers and mass murderers.

Sabine Horn, *Search and Research: Lectures and Papers 17*

“...A Justification to the World and Israel?” – Holocaust Discourses in German TV: The Case of West Germany, with an Afterword on East Germany

NIS 36  NIS 28

The Auschwitz Trial was the first major West German hearing that dealt with crimes committed in concentration and extermination camps. The Majdanek Trial was the last of the major West German lawsuits that debated the crimes of National Socialism. Both trials are regarded as milestones in the public debate of the Holocaust within West Germany, with media coverage playing a crucial role. This latest article in the esteemed Search and Research series deals with a number of related questions, including how TV media presentation of Nazi crimes changed over time, and which images of perpetrators and victims endured and which were transformed.

Anna Podgajecki, *Anna: A Teenager on the Run*

NIS 110  NIS 78

Anna Podgajecki was born in Korzec, Poland. A beautiful girl, Anna seemed to have a gift for predicting future events, yet none of the Jews of Korzec listened to her warnings. Anna survived the war wandering from place to place, posing as a Russian-German translator in a tire factory, a housekeeper, and finally, a nurse at the Russian battlefront. In 1958, she and her husband returned to Poland, and in 1960 began a new life in Israel.

Frederick Raymes and Menachem Mayer, *Menachem & Fred: Thoughts and Memories of Two Brothers*

New updated edition (Are the Trees in Bloom Over There?)

NIS 74  NIS 58

Two young brothers born in Germany were deported with their family to France and held in a detention camp. With their parents sent off to various concentration camps, the brothers were shuffled between orphanages in France and Switzerland, and were eventually separated. After the war, Fred made his way to the United States, and Menachem came to Israel. The film based on this riveting book was awarded “Most Inspirational Movie of the Year” at the Berlin Cinema for Peace Film Festival in 2009.

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