

# Yad Vashem Jerusalem

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**International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2016**

(pp. 2-7)

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Photography: **Yossi Ben-David, Sarit Bruno, Isaac Harari, Martin Sykes-Haas**

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■ On the cover: *Josef Kowner (1895–1967), Self-portrait, Lodz ghetto, 1941. Watercolor on paper. Yad Vashem Art Collection. Gift of Leon and Carmela Kowner, Haifa*

■ On 27 January 2016, International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, US President Barack Obama attended a unique ceremony honoring Righteous Among the Nations at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, DC. The event, jointly hosted by the Israeli Embassy, Yad Vashem and the American Society for Yad Vashem, marked the first time that a ceremony presenting medals and certificates of honor to American Righteous Among the Nations took place in the United States.

The Righteous Among the Nations, Americans Roddie Edmonds and Lois Gunden and Polish citizens Walery and Maryla Zbijewski, were all posthumously recognized by Yad Vashem for risking their lives to rescue Jews during the Holocaust (see box). The medals and certificates were accepted on their behalf by their next of kin.

Ahead of the event, Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev noted that “the thousands of men and women recognized over the past six decades as Righteous Among the Nations acted in a manner that went against the active evil or passive silence that dominated their surroundings. They fought for the universal values that help our common civilization endure and prosper. Often acting alone and in secret, the strength of the Righteous Among the Nations was deeply embedded in their morality and value system. These attributes form the

## The Rescue Stories

■ Master Sergeant **Roddie Edmonds** of Knoxville, Tennessee, participated in the landing of the American forces in Europe and was taken prisoner by the Germans. In January 1945, the Germans ordered all Jewish inmates in the Stalag IXA POW camp to report the following morning. Understanding the imminent danger in which this would place his Jewish fellow prisoners, Master Sergeant Edmonds ordered all the POWs – Jews and non-Jews alike – to report together. When the German officer in charge saw all the camp’s inmates standing in front of their barracks, he said: “They cannot all be Jews.” To this Edmonds retorted: “We are all Jews.” Edmonds did not waver, even when the German took out his pistol and threatened to shoot him. “According to the Geneva Convention,” said Edmonds, “we

# President Obama Attends Righteous Among the Nations Ceremony



■ US President Barack Obama addresses the audience at Israel's Embassy in Washington, DC



■ Left to right: Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, Israeli Ambassador to the US H.E. Mr. Ron Dermer, Rhoda Dermer, Mary Jean Gunden, Pastor Chris Edmonds, Leonard Wilf, Ginette Drucker Kalish, Elizabeth Wilk, Prof. Wojtek Zbijewski

common thread that binds members of this select, diverse group of people from many nations. The choices and actions of these individuals set an eternal example for humankind as they stood against the barbaric evil of the Nazis and their collaborators."

"The four lives we honor tonight make a claim on our conscience, as well as our moral imagination," said President Obama at the event. "We hear their stories, and we are forced to ask ourselves, under the same circumstances, how would we act?" Decrying rising antisemitism around the world, the President insisted: "When any

Jew anywhere is targeted just for being Jewish, we all have to respond as Roddie Edmonds did – 'We are all Jews.'" In a video greeting played at the event, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said: "We are forever indebted to [these Righteous] because of the Jewish children and Jewish soldiers who were saved due to their bravery."

Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council and himself a Holocaust survivor who was rescued by Righteous Among the Nations, recalled the terrifying six years he spent as a young child during the Holocaust, totally disconnected from the outside world. "But in this dark tunnel,

there were some stars – the Righteous Among the Nations – to whom many Jews owed their lives. As far as we are unable to forget the horror, we are also commanded to remember the people who risked their lives to save us."

Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem Leonard Wilf called the Righteous "true examples of courage and heroism for us and our children... As the son of two Holocaust survivors, this event... gives me a strong sense of pride... despite the years that have passed, these stories carry timeless lessons for us all gathered here tonight – and indeed for all humanity."

have to give only our name, rank and serial number. If you shoot me, you will have to shoot all of us, and after the war you will be tried for war crimes." The German officer finally gave up and left the scene, and the Jewish POWs were saved from certain death. Paul Stern, one of the Jewish POWs saved by Edmonds recalled: "Although seventy years have passed I can still hear the words he said to the German camp commander." According to Edmonds' diary, these events took place on 27 January 1945.



■ In 1941 **Lois Gunden**, a teacher of French from Goshen, Indiana, volunteered to work for the Mennonite Central Committee in southern France. She established a children's home in Canet Plage, which became a safe haven for a

number of children, including Jewish children whom she helped smuggle out of the nearby Rivesaltes internment camp. Gunden pleaded with the parents to separate from their children and give them to her in order to save them from deportation. Ginette Drucker Kalish, one of the children saved by Gunden, told Yad Vashem: "At the time I was 12 years old and certainly scared, but Lois Gunden was kind and passionately determined to help me and these other Jewish children." Gunden fearlessly protected the children when the French police arrived at the home, and ran the children's center even after the US entered the war and she became an enemy alien. She continued her work until January 1943, when she was detained by the Germans, only to be released in 1944 in a prisoner exchange.



■ On 22 July 1942, the Germans began mass deportations from the Warsaw ghetto. By 21 September, Yom Kippur, some 260,000 inhabitants of the ghetto had been deported to the Treblinka extermination camp, where they were murdered. Janina Ferster and her daughter Elzbieta (today Elizabeth Wilk) managed to flee the ghetto and go into hiding. After staying for two months at the home of acquaintances, Tadeusz and Eugenia Kucharski, who were also later recognized as Righteous Among the Nations, Janina brought her daughter to the home of **Walery and Maryla Zbijewski**. Despite the enormous danger – the Germans publicly announced that helping Jews would be punished by death – the Zbijewskis cared for Elzbieta and protected her until her mother was able to collect her.



## New Exhibition

# “But My Soul is Free”

## 100 Holocaust-Era Artworks from Yad Vashem Displayed in Berlin



Photo courtesy DPA

■ Chancellor Angela Merkel with survivor artist Nelly Toll at the exhibition opening.

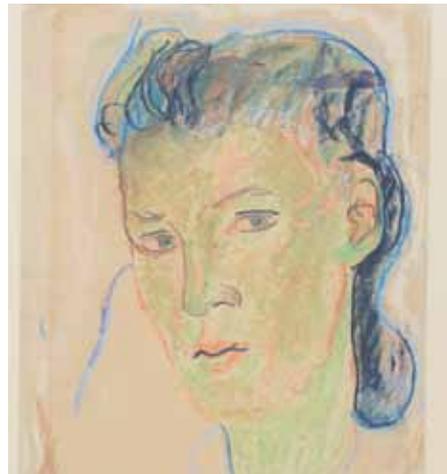
■ On 25 January 2016, the week of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, German Chancellor Angela Merkel inaugurated a new exhibition of artworks from the Yad Vashem Art Collection at the German Historical Museum in Berlin. Jointly curated by Yad Vashem and the Bonn-based Foundation for Art and Culture, “Art from the Holocaust: 100 Works from the Yad Vashem Collection” is the first-ever art exhibition of its size and stature that Yad Vashem has sent abroad. The exhibition will be on display until 3 April 2016.

“Through art we can feel the power and the suffering of human beings,” said Chancellor Merkel. “The paintings are a warning for us, each one in its own way: What happened is not to be forgotten, the memory of the victims has to be kept and we have to do everything within our power so that it won’t happen again.”

Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev called the creations selected for this exhibition “rare human testimony... They cry out with the greatest sensitivity; at once naïve, trusting and prayerful, while also realistic and insightful. They provide a unique expression to the spirit of humankind, as it confronted unexplained human immorality. Such a confrontation through creative expression awakens us to reflection and soul-searching... the visitors to this exhibition will be exposed to creative sparks of humanity, and will come away with those sparks to illuminate their way.”

Also present at the opening were Prof. Dr. Monika Grütters, German Federal Minister for

Culture and Media; Kai Diekmann, Publisher of BILD Group and Board Member of the Foundation for Art and Culture, who initiated the exhibition; Prof. Dr. Alexander Koch, President of the German Historical Museum; Vivian Uria, Director of Yad Vashem’s Museums Division; Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg, Director of Yad Vashem’s Art Department, Museums Division and Exhibition Curator; Prof. Dr. Walter Smerling, Chairman of the Foundation for Art and Culture and Exhibition Curator; and Prof. Dr. Jürgen Rüttgers, Chairman of the Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Germany. In addition, Holocaust survivors, including Nelly Toll, the only



■ Charlotte Salomon (1917-1943), *Self-portrait, Villefranche-sur-Mer, 1939-1941. Crayon on paper. Yad Vashem Art Collection. Gift of Otilie Gobel Bourne, Washington, USA*

## Prime Minister Netanyahu Visits Exhibition in Berlin



Photo courtesy Bundesregierung/Steffen Kugler

■ Left to right: Prime Minister Netanyahu Chancellor Merkel, Publisher of BILD Group Kai Diekmann.

■ Accompanied by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, on 16 February Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife Sara visited the exhibition of Yad Vashem artworks currently on display at the German Historical Museum in Berlin. The Prime Minister called the display “a remarkably provocative and moving exhibition, where we see the despair, the hope and the great spirit of these people in the heart of hell.”

The new exhibition has attracted record-breaking numbers of visitors. In its first two weeks alone, close to 12,000 people waited patiently in long lines to see the exhibition. Consequently, the Museum extended its opening hours to accommodate the growing interest in this unique collection of Holocaust-era artworks.

artist of the 50 represented in the exhibition still alive today, as well as descendants of the artists and members of their families came from different countries for the event.

The exhibition, the result of concerted efforts by Yad Vashem’s Museums Division, displays 100 highlights from its Art Collection – the largest of its kind in the world, with almost 10,000 artworks – accompanied by explanations about the works, the circumstances under which they were created and the story of their survival. Additionally, the biographies of the artists are

"The paintings are a warning for us, each one in its own way: What happened is not to be forgotten, the memory of the victims has to be kept and we have to do everything within our power so that it won't happen again."

German Chancellor Angela Merkel

Leah Goldstein

Photo courtesy Bundesregierung/Guido Bergmann



■ Left to right: Director of Yad Vashem's German-Speaking Countries and German Swiss Desk Arik Rav-On; Daimler AG Representative Eckart von Klaeden; Publisher of BILD Group Kai Diekmann; Director of Yad Vashem's Art Department, Museums Division Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg; German Chancellor Angela Merkel; Chairman of the Foundation for Art and Culture Prof. Dr. Walter Smerling; Director of Yad Vashem's Museums Division Vivian Uria; Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev; Israeli Ambassador to Germany H.E. Mr. Yakov Hadas-Handelsman; German Federal Minister for Culture and Media Prof. Dr. Monika Grütters; President of the German Historical Museum Prof. Dr. Alexander Koch; Chairman of the Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Germany Prof. Dr. Jürgen Rüttgers; Deutsche Bank AG Representative Jürgen Fitschen.

displayed in English, Hebrew and German, and a comprehensive exhibition catalogue in these languages presents the contents of the exhibition, as well as a series of essays.

"The works were all created between 1939 and 1945, as events were unfolding and the artists experienced them first hand," explains curator Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg in the exhibition catalogue. "The earliest artworks in the exhibition date to 1939 and were created by German-Jewish artists in reaction to the *Kristallnacht* pogrom and the experience of being a refugee. It is important to note that artworks created amidst the events, in real time, differ in essence from those made even very shortly thereafter. A thin, yet fundamental, line separates them: that of freedom."

Approximately half of all the artists represented in the exhibition were murdered during the Holocaust. Nevertheless, in many cases the works by artists who were murdered did survive, be it through their dogged efforts to hide works in a safe place or as a result of organized underground activities. Jacob Lipschitz, for example, hid his works in urns, burying them in the cemetery during the liquidation of the Kovno ghetto. In the

Theresienstadt ghetto, the Hechalutz movement established an underground archive designed specifically to safeguard the artworks secretly created there. Unfortunately, however, in most cases the existence of the works created during the Holocaust was not revealed. Most of the pieces, like their creators, did not survive; they were looted, destroyed or lost forever.

Some of the creations displayed express a tremendous struggle with the surrounding, horrific reality – themes of banishment, deportation, the ghettos and the camps are clearly identifiable – while others indicate a desperate flight into the realm of imagination, with depictions of landscapes, skylines, homes and religious faith. Portraits also feature prominently – an attempt by artists to memorialize their brethren and draw their own portraits as they would like to be remembered by future generations – not as victims, but as human beings.

Four poems, written in the midst of the events by Jewish poets, accompany the main sections of the exhibition, echoing through the human voice the messages present in the drawings and paintings. "Beyond the variety of approaches, the different styles and the multiplicity of themes



■ Jacob Lipschitz (1903-1945), *Beaten (My Brother Gedalyahu)*, Kovno ghetto, 1941-1944. Watercolor on paper. Yad Vashem Art Collection, Jerusalem

evoked, all the artworks testify to the power of the human spirit that refused to surrender," says Moreh-Rosenberg. Margarethe Schmahl-Wolf's poem written in Theresienstadt two days before the author died epitomizes this message carried by each artist creating during the Holocaust: "But my soul is free."

"*Art from the Holocaust: 100 Works from the Yad Vashem Collection*" was created by Yad Vashem in partnership with the Bonn-based Foundation for Art and Culture (Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur e.V. Bonn) and the German Historical Museum in Berlin, and at the initiative of the German national daily BILD media partner and the Foundation for Art and Culture. The exhibition was generously supported by Daimler AG and the Deutsche Bank AG.

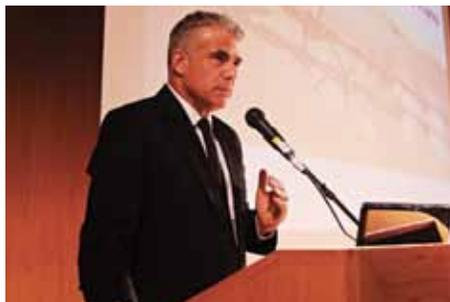
# International Holocaust Remembrance Day Worldwide

■ In addition to the two major events held in Berlin and Washington, DC (see pp. 2-5), Yad Vashem honored the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust with a series of high-profile events, both in Israel and abroad:

■ Yad Vashem's Director General Dorit Novak and Chief Historian Prof. Dina Porat participated in a special Israeli Government cabinet session on the observance of International Holocaust Remembrance Day worldwide. At the initiative of Knesset Speaker Yuli-Yoel Edelstein (pictured), a Yad Vashem traveling exhibition, "The Anguish of Liberation as Reflected in Art, 1945-1947," was displayed at the Knesset, as well as a selection of posters submitted for the annual "Designing Memory" competition for Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day.



■ The annual ceremony commemorating the deportation of Italian Jews during the *Shoah* took place in Yad Vashem's Hall of Remembrance and the Auditorium. The "Generation to Generation-Bearers of the Holocaust and Heroism Legacy" organization held a special event, with the participation of MK Yair Lapid (pictured).



## New Interactive Learning Center Opens in Moscow



■ At the opening, left to right: Director of the Study Seminars Department, International School for Holocaust Studies Masha Pollak-Rozenberg; Jewish Museum Director General and President of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia Alexander Boroda; Genesis Philanthropy Group CEO Ilia Salita

■ On 27 January, an interactive learning center opened at the Jewish Museum in Moscow, in cooperation with Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies and supported by the Genesis Philanthropy Group. "The War and the Holocaust: Questions about the Past and the Future" presents ten of the central questions asked in the aftermath of the *Shoah* – such as "How did people turn into murderers during WWII?" and "What happened to the concepts of good and

evil after the war?" – posed at similar centers at Yad Vashem, in Sydney, Australia and in Block 27 at Auschwitz-Birkenau. In addition, nine further questions relevant to Russia today are included, such as "How can we explain the policy of Holocaust denial in the Soviet period?" and "Does antisemitism exist in modern-day Russia?" Answering all of these questions are Russian experts in the fields of literature, journalism and philosophy, as well as religious leaders.

■ The film *A Nazi Legacy: What Our Fathers Did* was screened at seven Cinemateques across Israel. Directed by David Evans, the film won the 2015 Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman's Award for Artistic Achievement in Holocaust-related film. Scriptwriter and protagonist of the film Philippe Sands (pictured, with Yad Vashem Visual Center Director Liat Benhabib) came from London with his mother, a Holocaust survivor, to participate in some of the discussions held immediately after the screenings.



■ Around the world, the day was observed by academic lectures, educational activities and official memorial events across Israel and the European, American and African continents, led by Yad Vashem staff and supporters, including Yad Vashem Chief Historian Prof. Dina Porat (pictured, front row, center, in South Africa). In addition, a range of Yad Vashem traveling exhibitions went on display worldwide.



## Remembering Online

■ As in previous years, Yad Vashem provided a range of ways for people around the world to learn more about and commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day. In addition to a mini-site containing relevant resources to mark the day and about the liberation of Auschwitz, Yad Vashem launched its annual Facebook event: **The IRemember Wall**. By joining the wall, the user's Facebook profile was randomly linked to the



"This is a great way of keeping the Holocaust victims relevant. They should forever be linked with the living, lest we forget"

Daniel Winner

name of a Holocaust victim from Yad Vashem's Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names and then posted to the wall together with the photo and name of the Holocaust victim. A record-breaking 4,000 people from around the world participated in this unique commemorative project, including Allison Weir, who wrote: "I do this every year, on Remembrance Day I think about that person, how old they were, where they lived, if they were married or not, if they had children or were still a child themselves. As heartbreaking as it is I feel

close to them on that day and light a candle. It's a wonderful way for me to get involved, to be able to do this – and publicly too."

Additionally, over 3,000 people "liked" a unique and moving series featuring portraits of Auschwitz survivors that Yad Vashem launched on **Instagram**. Educational resources, online exhibitions and materials and a range of social media were also all readily available to help thousands of people around the world commemorate the day in a meaningful way.

"We must remember the victims, not just numbers and figures but actual human beings, with a name and a face and a family and a story"

Debbie Eneedeefe

■ Jane Jacobs-Kimmelman, Head of the International Relations Section at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies, attended an **NGO briefing at the United Nations in New York** in order to present Yad Vashem's approach to Holocaust education.



■ Prof. Dan Michman, Head of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research and Incumbent of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies, delivered a **lecture on the Righteous Among the Nations at a memorial service organized by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office**, in cooperation with the Israeli Embassy in London.



■ Dr. Robert Rozett, Director of the Yad Vashem Libraries, presented the **keynote lecture on antisemitism at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Brussels**.



# Education

## News from the Virtual School

### Over 20,000 participate in MOOC on the Holocaust

Dr. Na'ama Shik

■ *"It would be very easy to be carried on a tide of emotion when studying the Shoah... But it is important to get the facts right, not least so as not to give scope to those who would seek to deny those terrible events of seventy years ago. My thanks also go to my fellow students. The horrific things I have learned this week have been made a little easier to bear because of the sense of sharing them within a supportive community. I have participated in a fair number of FutureLearn courses, but have never before interacted to the same degree as on this one."*

launched in November 2015 by Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies in cooperation with its International Institute for Holocaust Research and Tel Aviv University on the British "FutureLearn" platform. The majority of participants hail from the UK, the US and Canada, and include students, public

**"This course should be required in all schools in all countries and in all religions."**

Retired US clergyman  
Andrew Gentry

officials, educators, nurses, librarians and social workers.

The course comprises six lessons, each divided into some 20 units on a range of Holocaust-related topics. Each video presentation is accompanied by a wealth of educational and archival material, reading lists, student assignments and more. Beyond the impressive number of participants, the course's success can be measured by their enthusiastic responses – to date over 35,000 comments have been recorded on the site, including praise for the course organizers as well as discussions regarding course content and requests for additional study units. Participants even point their colleagues towards further learning materials on Yad Vashem's comprehensive website.

"By reading the words of people who lived in the camps, the horror becomes a little bit 'real' to me," wrote Alison Martin. "It's pretty amazing that anybody was mentally and physically strong enough to survive." Retired clergyman Andrew Gentry (USA) stated simply: "This course should be required in all schools in all countries and in all religions."

To mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January 2016, the MOOC was also recently launched on the US-based Coursera learning platform. The "on-demand" platform will allow participants

**"The horrific things I have learned this week have been made a little easier to bear because of the sense of sharing them within a supportive community."**

Former British civil servant  
Les Pedrick

to choose when to join and to develop their own pace of learning. Yad Vashem believes this will encourage an even greater number of interested learners worldwide to benefit from this first-class online course.

*The author is Director of the Educational Technology Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

The International School for Holocaust Studies



So wrote former British civil servant "with a thirst for knowledge" Les Pedrick, one of the more than 20,000 people currently participating in the new MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) entitled: "The Holocaust: An Introduction,"

## Educational Materials for International Holocaust Remembrance Day

■ On 27 January 1945, Soviet forces liberated the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp, discovering the largest Nazi killing center in Europe. This date was adopted by the UN as an annual international day of commemoration to honor the victims of the Holocaust. To mark this important day, the International School for Holocaust Studies created a site comprising a range of educational materials – lesson plans, ceremonies, learning environments and

testimonies – on topics relating to Auschwitz and the Holocaust. In light of the international nature of this date, materials appear in a number of languages, including English, French, Spanish, German, Romanian, Russian, Italian and Polish. The site also features details on the new Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) "The Holocaust: An Introduction," launched on Coursera on 24 January 2016 (see above).



## Malta Joins Efforts in Holocaust Commemoration

■ With the Republic of Malta legislating 27 January as its national day for commemorating the Holocaust, in recent years Yad Vashem has been increasing its cooperation with Malta.

In December 2015, Yiftach Ashkenazy of the International School for Holocaust Studies traveled to Malta to conduct educational activities and workshops. This was the first time that a Yad Vashem expert visited Malta, and discussions were held regarding coordinating a first-ever seminar for Maltese educators at Yad Vashem in the near future.

In the course of his visit, Ashkenazy learned more about the Maltese national curriculum and acquainted himself with local practices and observances on Holocaust Remembrance Day. During his stay, he also met with representatives of the Maltese educational authorities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Valletta.

In January 2016, Italian Ambassador to Malta H.E. Mr. Giovanni Umberto De Vito and his Israeli-born wife Hadar Halevy visited Yad Vashem and met with Richelle Budd Caplan, Director of the International School's European Department. During the meeting, Ambassador De Vito informed Budd Caplan of his initiative to conduct educational programming in Malta in honor of International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

In view of this positive turn of events, Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs generously supported a second visit by Ashkenazy to Malta on 27 January 2016. The educational program and remembrance ceremony took place at Verdala Palace, the official summer residence of Maltese President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca (pictured with Ashkenazy), in close cooperation with the President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society. In addition to dignitaries and Maltese pupils, the

audience included a contingent of Jewish pupils from a school in Rome.

"On this day we honor the loss of the victims and the resilience of the survivors, with renewed recognition of the value and dignity of each person," said President Preca. "Let us take this time to consider the responsibility placed on our shoulders."



## Remembering Together: Joint Seminar for Israeli and German Youth

■ In November 2015, some 200 young people from various youth groups and organizations in Israel and Germany took part in a unique seminar marking 50 years of German-Israeli

for German-Israeli Youth Exchanges, led by Christine Mähler, and involved building bridges over the abyss of the past towards a resilient future of friendship.



■ Holocaust survivor Asher Aud with representatives of German and Israeli youth exchange organizations

diplomatic relations and 60 years of German-Israeli youth exchanges. The seminar was a key part of the congress of the Israel Youth Exchange Authority, led by Ariella Gill, and its German partner ConAct—Coordination Center



■ The joint seminar included a moving tour of the Holocaust History Museum.

The seminar focused on the question of the Holocaust in relation to identity, individual and collective memory, and the nature of a continuous dialogue between Israeli and German societies. These topics were examined through differing historical perspectives, personal outlooks and the

## Michal Biderman and Merav Janou

participants' contemporary views of remembrance. Mixed groups of Israelis and Germans toured the Holocaust History Museum, an anchor for reflection on the topic, and heard first-hand testimony from Holocaust survivors. The seminar also included a session at the Learning Center and a concluding workshop on the significance of the Holocaust in 21<sup>st</sup>-century Israel and Germany.

The seminar came to a close with two ceremonies: an official ceremony attended by Bettina Bundszus-Cecere, Director General of the Department for Children and Youth in the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, and Dr. Eyal Kaminka, Lily Safra Chair of Holocaust Education and Director of the Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies; and a ceremony in honor of the Holocaust survivors, at which Israeli and German musicians gave their interpretation of the complex emotions on both sides, and the Jewish National Fund distributed certificates for trees planted in memory of the survivors' families.

*Michal Biderman and Merav Janou work in the Study Seminars Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

## NRW Police Officers Expand Knowledge and Cooperation

■ In December 2015, a group of nine police officers from North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) – Germany's most populous state – took part in a special seminar at Yad Vashem. During the seminar, they toured Yad Vashem's extensive campus, familiarized themselves with its pedagogical methods and broadened their knowledge of the history of the Holocaust. Yad Vashem and the NRW Interior Ministry also signed a joint protocol to strengthen their

cooperation in the future. The protocol outlines goals for joint ventures, such as creating educational materials for police officers and organizing study trips for students of the NRW Police Executive Service Program.

■ Director of the International School's European Department Richelle Budd Caplan (left) with Doris Tinnermann, Head of Police Training and Continuing Education at the NRW Interior Ministry



## Graduate Spotlight

Every year, the International School for Holocaust Studies holds hundreds of educational activities, in a dozen languages, for over 300,000 students and educators in Israel and around the world. Featured here is one of the School's graduates, and what she has achieved since:



## Anita Lanszki Hungary

James Joseph McIntosh

■ In 2014, Anita Lanszki, an assistant lecturer at the Hungarian Dance Academy and teacher at the ELTE University in Budapest, attended a pedagogical seminar at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies. Lanszki has since become a leading member of the ever-growing group of Hungarian graduates of the International School. "I encountered a whole new approach to history at Yad Vashem," said Lanszki. "The Holocaust is not only a chapter in a book. It was a concrete process with real people. It happened with men, women and children like us. They were witnesses, victims, perpetrators, collaborators, rescuers and killers."

### The pupils were asked to create digital stories based on three essential components: research, original testimony and their own connection to the topic

On an annual basis, the Hungarian Section of the International School's European Department proposes project topics for its graduate network. When Section Head Dr. Chava Baruch suggested making digital stories (short films) for the 2015 project, they contacted Lanszki, and asked her to take a leading role. Lanszki, who is currently studying towards a PhD in digital education,

agreed to lend her expertise, joining Baruch and local partner Szilvia Pető-Dittel in a project that attracted more than 40 Hungarian Yad Vashem graduates.

After writing instructions on the technical aspects of creating digital stories, Lanszki

organized a study day for the participating graduates at the Holocaust Documentation Center (HDC) in Budapest. The graduates' pupils were asked to create digital stories based on three essential components: research in libraries and archives as well as of personal artifacts; original testimony from Holocaust survivors; and the pupils' own connection to the topic. While the graduates offered guidance and ensured historical accuracy, the pupils had to find an appropriate balance between two voices: that of the survivors, recounting their stories; and that of the pupils themselves, describing the personal impact of their discoveries in the course of their research.

Thirteen such digital stories competed for first place at a follow-up study day at the HDC in October 2015. Using Yad Vashem's methodology, educational philosophy and age-appropriate



■ Yad Vashem graduate Anita Lanszki



■ Mária Árvai, who appears in a personal digital story made by her granddaughter Dorottya Kocsis

approach as benchmarks, Lanszki, Baruch and Pető-Dittel screened and rated the stories for historical accuracy and the required balance between the survivors and the pupils. Over 100 graduates attended the screening, and

media coverage exceeded the organizers' expectations.

The winning entry was submitted by Dorottya Kocsis, who was mentored by Yad Vashem graduate Nora Kunos. Kocsis' story recounts the wartime experiences of her grandmother, Mária Árvai, who worked in the home of the Zimmermanns, a Jewish family that was eventually deported to Auschwitz. Balancing the story of the victims with Dorottya's emotional journey through research and interviews, and adding authentic photographs from the time and place of the events, the film concluded with a dedicatory message in memory of the Zimmermann family as well as Mária. "If they link faces, everyday stories and objects to the events, the learners can get closer to understanding this historical tragedy," said Lanszki.

*The author works in the European Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

## Education Agreement with Albania

■ The Prime Minister of Albania, H. E. Mr. Edi Rama, visited Yad Vashem on 21 December. During their tour of the Holocaust History Museum, Prime Minister Rama and his wife Linda took a special interest in the section devoted to the Righteous Among the Nations – non-Jews who rescued Jews during the Holocaust. Yad Vashem's online exhibition, "BESA: A Code of Honor," tells the unique story of how Muslim Albanians helped rescue hundreds of Jews during the Holocaust.

The Prime Minister was also present at the signing of an historic agreement between

the Albanian Ministry of Education and Sport and Yad Vashem. This memorandum outlines several projects in the field of teacher training in Holocaust education, including a future seminar for Albanian educators at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies that will be accredited by the Ministry.

Signing the memorandum was Albanian Ambassador to Israel H.E. Mr. Bardhyl Canaj (left) and Dr. Eyal Kaminka, Lily Safra Chair of Holocaust Education and Director of the International School for Holocaust Studies (right). Also present was Richelle Budd Caplan,



Director of the European Department at the International School.

## Joint Seminar with UNESCO for Latin American Educators

Jane Jacobs Kimmelman

■ In October 2015, an intensive seminar took place for senior educational policy-makers from Latin America. Nine participants hailing from Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala attended, as well as M. Karel Fracapane, who oversees Holocaust programming at UNESCO in Paris.

“Latin America is an increasingly important region to us,” explained Dr. Eyal Kaminka, Lily Safra Chair of Holocaust Education and Director of Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies. “Some of the countries – Argentina, for example – are well known to us, and our Spanish- and Portuguese-Speaking Team has made great progress there in the field of Holocaust teaching. Others are brand-new partners. We appreciate that the Holocaust does not always seem relevant to regions so far away from where it all happened, and so when such countries express an interest in

developing curricula, especially countries where there is a very small Jewish population and yet perceptible antisemitism, we make every effort to answer their needs.”

“Teaching about the Holocaust,” conducted entirely in Spanish and with simultaneous translation, was arranged under the auspices of the UNESCO Latin American Network for Education about the History of the Holocaust and other Genocides. The five-day seminar explored Holocaust education in depth, and investigated various methods of teaching and topics of interest relevant to each country. Each participant was then assigned a Spanish-speaking mentor from Yad Vashem to conduct follow-up sessions in curriculum and educational program development. “We were encouraged by the participants’ eagerness to learn,” concluded Dr. Kaminka. “We look forward to ongoing cooperation, and to furnishing them with



whatever tools they need to teach the Holocaust in an effective and accurate manner in their home countries.”

*The seminar took place with the generous support of the Asper Foundation and the Lily Safra Chair for Holocaust Education.*

*The author is Head of the International Relations Section, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

## Guatemala to Include Holocaust Education in National Curriculum

■ A Letter of Intent recently signed by Yad Vashem, the Guatemalan Ministry of Education and the Jewish Community of Guatemala will soon lead to a new educational online platform on Holocaust education for Guatemalan teachers. The platform will be part of the Guatemalan Ministry of Education

curriculum, and will include educational and pedagogical materials on the Holocaust. The agreement also includes teacher training programs in Guatemala and Israel.

“This important agreement allows us to impact directly the curriculum at the national level in Spanish-speaking countries,” says

Eliana Rapp Badihi, Head of the Spanish- and Portuguese-Speaking Team in the European Department, International School for Holocaust Studies. “Costa Rica and El Salvador, among others, have already expressed an interest in developing a similar model in their own countries.”

## Chinese Educators Learn About the Human Spirit during the Shoah

Stephanie McMahon-Kaye

■ “What impressed me most deeply was the character of the Jewish people during the terrible situation of the Shoah. The professors and teachers told us how they helped each other in the ghettos and camps; how they kept composing and listening and playing music; and how they used art to resist the cruelty of the Nazis.”

Qian Zhen, Shandong University

In mid-October 2015, some 30 MA and PhD students, university department heads and professors from China attended the sixth annual Seminar for Chinese Educators at Yad Vashem. The 16-day seminar was comprised of academic lectures, including the history of antisemitism,



prewar and Holocaust literature and the Righteous Among the Nations, as well as pedagogical modeling of lessons on the Holocaust, with an emphasis on the spiritual resistance of the Jewish victims through artistic creation.

In addition to their time at Yad Vashem, the participants – many of whom had never visited Israel before – went on tours across the country and met Holocaust survivors, whose stories left a strong and lasting impression upon them. At the seminar’s conclusion, Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak led an in-depth discussion of the challenges of Holocaust education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*The Seminar for Chinese Educators was made possible through the generous support of the Adelson Family Foundation.*

*The author is Head of the Section for Seminars in English in the Jewish World and International Seminars Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

## “Echoes and Reflections” Professional Development Seminar

Sheryl Ochayon

■ In December 2015, Yad Vashem facilitated a ten-day advanced seminar for trainers of “Echoes and Reflections,” a program that aims to prepare secondary school educators in the United States to effectively engage students in Holocaust education through a comprehensive multimedia program. Combining the resources and expertise of three world leaders in education – the Anti-Defamation League, the USC Shoah Foundation and Yad Vashem – thousands of educators throughout the US have been trained in the use of the “Echoes and Reflections” program over the past ten years.

The program trainers attending the seminar had previously participated in other professional



development activities in the US. At Yad Vashem, they were given a broader and deeper understanding of the Holocaust, as well as tools to deal with the educational aspects of teaching the Holocaust. Throughout the seminar, participants met with researchers and educators from Yad Vashem’s International Institute for Holocaust Research and

International School for Holocaust Studies, as well as Holocaust survivors who shared their experiences.

“This seminar imparts essential training that will substantially contribute to Holocaust education in the US,” concluded Shani Lourie, Head of the Pedagogy Section at the International School. “This will ultimately result in a better understanding of the Holocaust, and its meanings and relevance today for both educators and students.”

*The seminar was generously supported by Dana and Yossie Hollander, and by the Seed the Dream Foundation.*

*The author is “Echoes and Reflections” Program Director, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

## “Masa” Participants Focus on the Holocaust of Soviet Jewry

Nika Gelfand



■ *“During the tour of the Valley of the Communities, I realized how Jewish cultures varied around Europe, and how people behaved differently during the Holocaust. The visit to the Art Museum allowed me to view the*

*tragedy through the feelings of individuals who experienced the Holocaust. The Learning Center... awakened in me difficult questions in the wake of the Holocaust.”*

So wrote “Masa” participant Dmitry Rechitsky after a recent visit to Yad Vashem. “Masa” aims to familiarize young Jews, including Russian-speakers, with life in Israel through study, internships and volunteer work. Recognizing that awareness of the Holocaust is a significant component of both Jewish and Israeli identity, the program coordinators emphasized a topic with which the participants and Israeli society alike were less familiar – the Holocaust of Soviet Jewry.

As most of the participants had already

visited Yad Vashem on “Birthright” and other programs, their specialized tour of the campus focused specifically on Jewish life in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union before the Holocaust, as well as the history of the Holocaust in the territories of the FSU.

One of the highlights of the visit was a meeting with a Holocaust survivor from the FSU, which inspired empathy among the participants and helped them relate more closely to the Shoah as an important part of their own history.

*The educational program for “Masa” participants at Yad Vashem took place with the generous support of the Genesis Philanthropy Group.*

*The author is the Genesis Program Coordinator in the Study Seminars Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.*

## Seminars for Educators Now Accredited by Austrian Government

■ On 1 November 2015, Yad Vashem signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education and Women’s Affairs. The signing marked 15 years of partnership between the Ministry and the International School for Holocaust Studies. More than 600 Austrian educators have studied at Yad Vashem’s International School to date.

“Visiting Yad Vashem, the place of the eternal remembrance of six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, has left a profound impression and deeply touched me,” Federal Minister Gabriele Heinisch-Hosek wrote in the Yad Vashem Guest Book. “It is our moral obligation to work towards

a society of mutual understanding, tolerance and non-discrimination.”

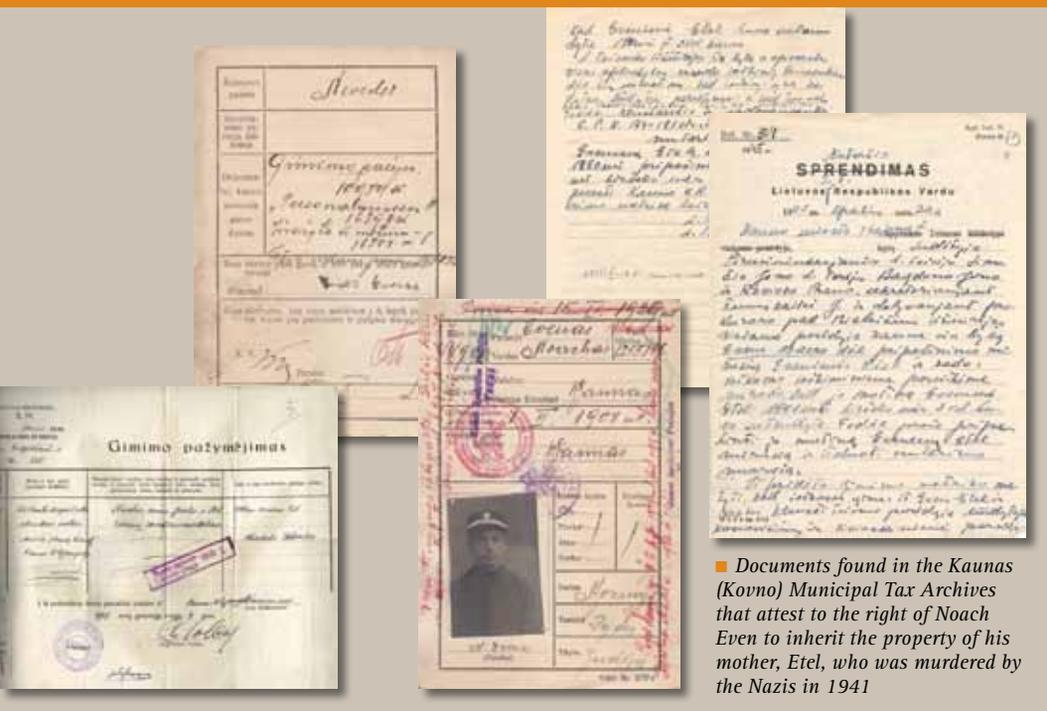
In addition to reaffirming joint efforts to bolster Austrian teachers’ knowledge of the Holocaust, the MOU extends official recognition to Yad Vashem’s programming in Israel. “Ministerial accreditation towards our graduates’ continuing education requirements is an encouraging sign of the government’s support,” said Richelle Budd Caplan, Director of the International School’s European Department. Three other European ministries of education – in Italy, Latvia and Romania – have also begun accrediting Yad Vashem seminars for educators from their countries.



■ *Austrian Federal Minister for Education and Women’s Affairs Gabriele Heinisch-Hosek and Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak sign a Memorandum of Understanding*

# Towards an Open Exchange of Information

Masha Yonin



■ Documents found in the Kaunas (Kovno) Municipal Tax Archives that attest to the right of Noach Even to inherit the property of his mother, Etel, who was murdered by the Nazis in 1941

■ While much of the information Yad Vashem has gathered about Holocaust victims relies on personal testimonies or deportation, ghetto or camp records, sometimes discoveries are made about an individual's fate in a more circuitous manner. For example, the Municipal Tax Archives in Kaunas (Kovno) – Lithuania's second largest city and before WWII a dynamic hub of Jewish life and culture – recently found archival documents that provide evidence about the Even family: father Jodel, mother Etel and their son Noach, who lived at 17 Jurbarko St. Tax receipts from the 1920s and '30s illustrate that the family was hardworking and enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle, but at the beginning of the 1940s there is a sudden lack of documentation. Then, on 30 October 1945, Kaunas City's First Region People's Court adopted an order concerning Noach Even's right to inherit his mother's property. One month later, Noach Even applied to the Kaunas Notarial Office with a request to recognize him as the legal and only heir of Etel Even. Amongst other data, an inheritance certificate provides a description of Etel's property, and Noach Even's birth certificate states that he was born on

Researchers discussed the issue of locating and utilizing Holocaust-related documentation housed in archives across the FSU in order to enrich knowledge of events before, during and after the Shoah

1 February 1908 in Kaunas-Vilijampol. Auxiliary documents preserved in this file also include Etel's death certificate, with remarks that she was "executed" (shot to death) on 25 June 1941 aged 61 – right after the German invasion of the city.

In October 2015, directors of state archives and researchers from across the FSU, as well as researchers from the US, Germany, Belgium, Poland and Israel gathered at Yad Vashem to discuss the issue of locating and utilizing Holocaust-related documentation housed in

archives across the FSU in order to enrich knowledge of events before, during and after the Shoah. Guests at the conference included directors of national, regional and city archives from Belarus, Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia, as well as key members of their staff. During the conference proceedings, the participants were given tours of the Yad Vashem campus and a behind-the-scenes visit to its vast Archives, in order to learn about its accessibility, preservation and digitization activities.

"This is the first time that directors of the key archives in the FSU have met face-to-face with those investigating the Holocaust in Eastern Europe, and discussed the importance of locating documentation from that era, as well as ways to make it accessible to other researchers and the general public," said Yad Vashem Archives Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation Dr. Haim Gertner. "For the duration of the conference, a pleasant and



■ Dr. Haim Gertner addresses conference participants

professional atmosphere prevailed, allowing for intensive and open cooperation. During the conference, we discovered information about new and unknown collections, and discussed options of widening the unique and ongoing experience of Yad Vashem to allow access to all of the documentation in innovative ways – thus encouraging credible research and meaningful commemoration."

*The conference took place with the generous support of Genesis Philanthropy Group.*

*The author is Director of the Archival Acquisition Department, Archives Division.*

# Yad Vashem Online



■ The first page of the album made for Erika Hoffmann, who was discovered in hiding in Holland and sent to Sobibor, where she was murdered



■ Lydia Suzana (Zsuzsa) Hönig, (b. 1932), wearing an outfit she wore when performing in Novi Sad in the 1930s: a tap-dancing routine in the style of Shirley Temple

Dedication to Lydia by her friend Mira Moses, 23 February 1941: "Memento: When you hear the bell ring/ And you hear that beautiful sound/ At that moment, remember me"



■ Norbert Kurzmänn (Natan Rom) was born in 1929 in Katowice, Poland, and immigrated to Eretz Israel in 1943 together with the "Tehran Children." Yad Vashem Photo Archive

Dedication in Norbert Kurzmänn's album. On the left, a drawing of a mouse smoking, holding a sign with the Hebrew words: "To Natan." On the right, an inscription: "Memento for Norbert from [?] B"



■ "Here, too, you are enveloped in love and friendship. Remain loyal to your people, even when times are hard..."

These words were written in an album made for Jiri Bader by his friends on the occasion of his bar mitzvah, which he marked (albeit a year late) in the Terezin (Theresienstadt) ghetto. The

album was illustrated by caricaturist Max Placek, a relative of Jiri's, who came from Jiri's home town of Kyjov, Czechoslovakia.

The album, bearing descriptions and drawings of Jiri's childhood and incarceration in Terezin, is one of eight such handiworks featured in a new online exhibition, "Don't Forget Me: Children's Personal Albums from

the Holocaust." Beyond the images of the albums' pages and dedications within – from friends, family members and acquaintances met during the war while in hiding, fleeing or in captivity – the exhibition tells the story of each individual child and his or her family, as well as, where possible, the fate of those who wrote them messages of hope and love. The albums

# “Don’t Forget Me”

## Children’s Personal Albums from the Holocaust

Dana Porath

■ Jiri Bader and his sister Vera (who donated Jiri’s album to Yad Vashem), Kyjov, Czechoslovakia, 1938-9



■ Vera (second row, with a ribbon in her hair) and Jiri Bader (center, behind the girl in the light jacket) with fellow pupils and teachers at the Jewish school in Kyjov, Czechoslovakia



■ Page from Jiri Bader’s bar mitzvah album describing life in the Terezin ghetto

demonstrate that despite cruel and relentless persecution, and often under living conditions that defy the imagination, children remain children: composing words of encouragement to their friends and embellishing them with joyful illustrations; and writing of everlasting friendship, even though in many cases their lives were brutally cut short.

Jiri’s album was donated to Yad Vashem by his sister, Vera Weberova, who survived the Holocaust. Their mother Grete also survived, but Jiri and his father were deported and murdered in Auschwitz some six months after he received the album.

**The albums demonstrate that despite cruel and relentless persecution, and often under living conditions that defy the imagination, children remain children**

Other albums were given to Yad Vashem for safekeeping by the owners themselves, decades after their creation. Natan Rom (né Norbert Kurzmann, b. 1929, Katowice, Poland), immigrated to *Eretz Israel* in 1943 with a group that became known as the “Tehran Children.” The album, donated to Yad Vashem by Natan and his sister Ziva, contains dedications to Natan written by children who made the journey with him. “Man is like a boat on the stormy ocean,” wrote one friend. “He knows from which port he has departed, but he doesn’t know which port he is destined for. An everlasting memento.”

Another album highlighted in the exhibition was created for Erika Hoffmann, who was born in Vienna and immigrated to the Netherlands with her family in 1939. In 1942, Erika went into hiding at the home of Corrie (Cornelia) Stolker in Doorn, Holland. Jaap Spruyt, grandson of Righteous Among the Nations Sandor Stolker (Corrie’s brother) and his wife Maria, donated the album to Yad Vashem in 2014 after discovering it amongst his late mother’s belongings. The album bore heartwarming dedications, including from Corrie herself: “If life sometimes brings hardship and sadness, trust in God with all your heart.” Erika and her mother, grandmother and aunts were discovered and deported to Sobibor in May 1943, where they were murdered. The fate of her father remains unknown.

*The author is the Director of the Internet Department, Communications Division.*

### NEW ONLINE:

■ The video-based exhibition “The Death March to Volary,” currently online in English and Hebrew, was recently launched in Spanish. Using the testimonies of the survivors and liberators, the exhibition describes how some 1,000 female Jewish prisoners were forced on an excruciating 800 km-march from Silesia (western Poland) that ended over 100 days later in the town of Volary, Czechoslovakia.

■ Three new communities have joined the online series “Here Their Stories Will be Told: The Valley of the Communities at Yad Vashem.” The chronicles of Nadwórna, Győr and Liepāja have been added to the stories of other Jewish communities across Europe featured on the mini-site, which encourages visitors to explore the history and discover the rich tapestry of Jewish life that existed in a particular community before WWII, as



well as its fate during the Holocaust. Each community was unique; each was a complete world, flourishing with creativity and culture, religion and tradition, social life and politics. In most cases, very little of that world remained at the war’s end.

*The Online Communities Project is supported by the Company for the Location and Restitution of Holocaust Victims’ Assets.*

# The Holocaust in Romania



## Revisiting Research and Public Discourse

Dr. Alexander Avram

■ **“Romanian public opinion about Romania’s role in the Second World War and in the Holocaust is still shaped by superficial knowledge and conscious suppression.”**

So declared Dr. Simon Geissbühler, a Swiss diplomat, independent researcher and author of *Bloody July: Romania and the Holocaust in Summer 1941*, during a symposium held at Yad Vashem to review recent developments in the research of the Holocaust in Romania. Holocaust survivors from Romania, historians and members of the general public attended the symposium, which was organized by Yad Vashem’s International Institute for Holocaust Research and held in the presence of Gabriel Sopanda, Deputy Head of Mission at the Romanian Embassy in Israel.

Avraham Iwanir, member of the Yad Vashem Council, the Directorate of the World Organization of Bukovina Jews, the Association of Survivors from Transnistria and AMIR, opened the symposium by stressing the importance of deepening the understanding of specific aspects of the Holocaust in Romania, such as pogroms, mass killings and deportations, especially in Romanian society today. Prof. Dan Michman, Head of the International Institute and Incumbent of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies, presented a detailed overview of recent research efforts and their contribution to furthering and expanding knowledge not only of the facts, but also of the mechanisms of the anti-Jewish persecution.

Dr. Geissbühler discussed the less-addressed topic of the mass murder of Jews by Romanian troops, gendarmes and local civilians during the months of July and August 1941 in the territory of Bessarabia and Bukovina. He also pointed to the lack of public awareness among Romanians today about what happened in their country during the Holocaust, despite the fact that in 2006 the topic was introduced into school curricula and a national day of commemoration is marked annually on 9 October. Researcher Dr. Sarah Rosen gave an insightful comparative lecture on the Jewish leadership in the various ghettos of the Mogilev District in Transnistria, distinguishing between ghettos with a collective leadership that were more adequately organized, and ghettos where every action or decision depended on the personality of one strong



■ Dr. Simon Geissbühler addresses researchers at the Yad Vashem symposium on the Holocaust in Romania

leader. A video testimony was also screened of survivor Elka Abramowitz née Reines from Noua Sulita in Bessarabia, who was deported in the summer of 1941 and spent three years in the Kosharyntsi ghetto in Transnistria, where she lost most of her family members. Abramowitz was liberated in 1944 and immigrated to Israel in 1948.

**Between 280,000 and 380,000 Jews were murdered or died during WWII as a result of the deliberate policies of Romanian civilian and military authorities**

Prof. Tuvia Friling (Ben Gurion University of the Negev) presented an inside view of the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania. Established by former Romanian President Ion Iliescu in October 2003, the Commission was created to research and create a report on the history of the Holocaust in Romania and make specific



■ Leaders of the Jewish community, beaten and humiliated, being guarded by Romanian soldiers outside police headquarters, 28-29 June 1941, Iasi, Romania.

recommendations for educating the public on the issue. The Commission, led by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel together with the late Romanian historian Dr. Jean Ancel, released its report in late 2004. The Romanian government recognized the report’s findings, and acknowledged the deliberate participation in the Holocaust by the wartime regime led by Ion Antonescu. The report assessed that between 280,000 and 380,000 Jews were murdered or died during WWII as a result of the deliberate policies of Romanian civilian and military authorities.

“This innovative symposium shed new light on the research of the Holocaust in Romania – a chapter in history that remains largely unknown to most members of the public,” said Director of the International Institute for Holocaust Research Dr. Iael Nidam-Orvieto. “I believe that what we learned will enable us to deepen our understanding of the unique circumstances and factors that influenced the fate of Romanian Jewry, including the relationship between Jewish and non-Jewish residents in Romania before and during WWII.”

*“The Holocaust in Romania: Revisiting Research and Public Discourse” took place with the generous support of the Gutwirth Family Fund.*

*The author, Director of the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem, chaired the symposium.*

# Personal Perspectives on the Holocaust

Dr. David Silberklang

■ **What constitutes personal writing during and after the Holocaust, and what can it tell us about the event?** Can personal writing be used as a historical source? Such questions have occupied scholars since the beginning of Holocaust research more than 70 years ago, and they are central to the research articles in the current issue of *Yad Vashem Studies* (43:2). These articles approach the use of personal wartime and postwar accounts from multiple perspectives, yet share a conviction that the Holocaust cannot be understood without such accounts. At the same time, they also highlight some of the problems in using personal accounts as a research source and suggest new methodological approaches.

Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe's comparative analysis of Jewish and Ukrainian memory of Ukrainians' roles in the murder of the Jews reveals polar opposite yet remarkably consistent memory among both groups. Jewish survivors remember widespread Ukrainian hostility towards them and active participation in murder, whereas Ukrainian memory has viewed Ukrainian nationalists only as freedom fighters and heroes. Rossoliński-Liebe provides many vivid examples of these radically opposing memories. For example, whereas Moty Stromer's diary described Ukrainian policemen who "bathed in Jewish blood," and survivor Kurt Lewin recalled

a Ukrainian "patriot" beating Jews over the head with a metal-tipped cane and a block of wood, Ukrainian OUN member and UPA partisan Halyna Kokhans'ka remembered

that period as "the most beautiful time of my life." She wrote of Jews only occasionally, exclusively as objects of Ukrainian rescue efforts, not mentioning murder of Jews by Ukrainians.

Eliyana Adler analyzes how Polish Jews who fled to the USSR early in the war related to themselves afterward – as Holocaust survivors or not. She identifies three distinct groups among these Jews: those who see themselves as Holocaust survivors; those who do not; and others who are unsure. It is clear to all three groups that they share much with survivors who remained under German occupation throughout, including uprootedness, postwar experiences



of loss, searching for family, rebuilding lives outside Poland, and commemorating their lost communities. Adler argues for reconsidering how we read and understand survivor testimonies and how we define survivors.

Monika Rice examines two supposed Holocaust diaries by Polish Jewish physicians and their separate postwar paths – leaving Poland, or rebuilding life there. Close examination of these diaries reveals that although they were written by Holocaust survivors, they are in fact neither diaries nor memoirs. One is fiction, and the other creates a conglomeration of characters and experiences based on a true story. Nevertheless, both embody routes taken by Polish Jewish survivors after the war, and Rice demonstrates that such writing reflects survivors' Holocaust experiences and memory.

The new sources and methodologies reflected in these articles in *Yad Vashem Studies* break new ground in Holocaust research and suggest a return to and reconsidering of personal Holocaust accounts.

*The publication of this volume was made possible through the generous support of the Samson Charity Foundation.*

*The author is Editor-in-Chief of Yad Vashem Studies and Senior Historian, International Institute for Holocaust Research.*

## Fellow's Corner: Prof. Dr. Gerald Steinacher

■ **From September to December 2015, Prof. Dr. Gerald Steinacher of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (USA) participated in the post-doctorate fellowship program at Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research.** While in Jerusalem, he progressed with his current research into one of the world's oldest and most prominent aid organizations – the Swiss-based International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) – and gave the annual Danek Gertner Research Scholarship lecture entitled: "The Red Cross and the Holocaust: Most Shameful Moment or Mission Impossible?"

When the war ended, Switzerland and its humanitarian flagship found themselves in "a deep crisis," explains Steinacher. Under fire for its failure to speak out against the Holocaust during the war or extend substantial assistance to Jews trapped in Nazi camps across Europe, the ICRC

attempted to salvage its reputation and remain relevant in the postwar world. At the same time, neutral Sweden emerged from the war with its reputation mostly intact, eager to challenge the leadership of the Swiss in world humanitarian initiatives. Steinacher's research also reveals that Sweden's humanitarian efforts in the last years of the war had long-lasting consequences for the memory of the *Shoah* and fashioned the image of Sweden as a rescuer nation.

Prior to his appointment as Associate Professor of History and the Hymen Rosenberg Professor of Judaic Studies at Nebraska-Lincoln, Steinacher served as a Research Fellow in the Center for European Studies at Harvard University. "My stay at Yad Vashem was very productive, and I benefited greatly from its rich archival holdings," he says. "I learned more about the ICRC's work for refugees during and after the Arab-Israeli war of 1948.

I also discovered much more about its responses to Nazi policies in the early 1930s. This is particularly true for the Nazification of the German Red Cross. I also greatly enjoyed addressing students of Haifa University's Masters Program in Holocaust Studies as part of a workshop organized by Yad Vashem. The students asked insightful questions and to my surprise, there was even a student from Nebraska in the audience. It is a small world indeed."



■ Prof. Dr. Steinacher "benefitted greatly from Yad Vashem's rich archival holdings"



## “My Mission: To Film and to Record”

Leah Goldstein

■ “Just before his execution in 1941, the famous Jewish historian Simon Dubnow told his fellow inmates in the Riga ghetto ‘*Yidn, shraybt un farshraybt* (Jews, write and record).’ My life’s mission has been ‘Film and Record.’”

So explained acclaimed British documentary filmmaker Rex Bloomstein at a fascinating lecture on 4 November 2015 in Yad Vashem’s Visual Center, as he took the audience through a journey of his epic career spanning over three decades. Beginning his profession with the BBC, Bloomstein has to date created over 150 films, TV documentaries and series, including the trilogy *The Longest Hatred* (1989), charting the unique history of antisemitism and its manifestation in modern society; *Auschwitz and the Allies* (1982), investigating how much



■ Veteran British filmmaker Rex Bloomstein in Yad Vashem’s Visual Center

### The presentation took the audience through Bloomstein's changing perspectives and styles of Holocaust film-making over the years

the Allies knew of the greatest death camp in history; and *KZ* – an award-winning film described as ‘the first post-modern Holocaust documentary,’ and nominee for the first Yad Vashem Chairman’s Award for a Holocaust-related film ten years ago.

Bloomstein was visiting Yad Vashem, undertaking painstaking research for his upcoming film about the Second World War. Calling Yad Vashem “an institute of immense importance,” Bloomstein emphasized the “vital role” played by the Visual Center – the world’s largest repository of Holocaust-related

films in all genres. “Film plays a crucial role in examining, exploring and confronting the Holocaust,” Bloomstein stated. “Over 5,500 films have been made about the event since the Eichmann Trial in the early 1960s, and the explosion of interest in the Holocaust continues to the present day.”

During his stay, Bloomstein “took advantage of the level of scholarship at Yad Vashem, conversing with a number of experts in their fields, such as Liat [Benhabib, Director of the Visual Center] and Efrat [Komisar, Head of the Footage Section in the Archives Division], who have dedicated their lives to furthering our knowledge of the *Shoah*.”

The presentation, part of an enrichment program for Yad Vashem guides, took the audience through Bloomstein’s changing perspectives and styles of Holocaust filmmaking over the years. From the “traditional elements” of interviews, music, footage and images, such as in *The Longest Hatred* and *Auschwitz and*

*the Allies*, in the 1990s Bloomstein endeavored to “pare down his technique” when he and the late Robert Wistrich created “Lessons of the Holocaust” – a 60-minute video as part of an educational pack for UK secondary schools – as well as in *Liberation*, a documentary he produced to mark 50 years since the end of WWII. *Liberation* features one particular interview with a former American GI, who was extremely distressed as he recounted his first impressions on entering the Ordruf concentration camp. “I was not interested in manipulating feelings with music and images,” Bloomstein explained. “I continued to try to remove as many barriers as possible between the viewer and the event.”

Indeed, it is the belief in this vital component of witness testimonies that had led Bloomstein at the beginning of the previous decade to film *Gathering*, a seemingly haphazard and dizzying recording of the first world assembly of Holocaust survivors in Jerusalem and the media frenzy that surrounded it. “These were witnesses to a universe almost beyond belief and understanding,” said Bloomstein. “They needed no narration to tell their story. I let them speak for themselves.”

In 2005, Bloomstein released *KZ*, a feature-length film exploring the legacy of Austria’s Mauthausen concentration camp and its impact on visitors and residents today. Guides take tourists through the appalling history of the camp, while mere kilometers away the locals enjoy a few pints at the local beer garden. Noticeably absent are any survivor testimonies. “This film is about the interface between then and now,” explained Bloomstein. “It is set in the landscape of the concentration camp but it is a film about today, and the task we face of continuing to find new ways to inform the next generation about what happened when the survivors will not be around to tell their story.”

### New Chairman of Bulgarian Archives Visits Yad Vashem

■ In September 2015, Dr. Mihail Gruev, the new Chairman of the Bulgarian Archives State Agency, visited Yad Vashem, further cementing cooperative activities between the two institutions.

In early 2013, the Bulgarian Archives State Agency signed an agreement with Yad Vashem, which involved mapping out district archives in Bulgaria and scanning documents pertaining to Bulgaria’s Jewish communities and their fate during WWII. Two years later, Yad Vashem received the first group of scans prepared by the Plovdiv District Archive;

during his recent visit, Dr. Gruev brought the Archive’s second and larger portion of photographic documentation.

Dr. Gruev’s visit also aimed at expanding the scope of the existing agreement to work with additional collections in the Bulgarian Historical Archive, located in the capital, Sofia.

Dr. Gruev toured the Yad Vashem Archives and Holocaust History Museum and met with key Yad Vashem staff, including Director of the International Institute for Holocaust Research Dr. Iael Nidam-Orvieto. At this meeting, also attended by Bulgarian Ambassador to Israel

H. E. Dr. Dimitar Mihaylov, new ways to research the Holocaust history of Bulgarian Jewry and expand cooperation were discussed, including exhibitions and joint documentary publications.

“The visit is an inseparable part of the joint efforts between Yad Vashem and the Bulgarian Archives State Agency,” said Dr. Haim Gertner, Director of the Yad Vashem Archives Division and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation. “We hope that it will serve as the basis for continuing our fruitful and meaningful work on the history of Bulgarian Jewry during the Holocaust.”

# The Visual Center Film Library: 10 Years, 10,000 Titles

Liat Benhabib

■ In November 2015, the Visual Center of Yad Vashem marked its tenth anniversary. When the Center first opened, there were only 1,000 films available for viewing. By the end of 2015, the Visual Center had become a portal for almost 8,000 films, and its Online Film Database included 10,000 titles. The Visual Center acquires Holocaust-related films of all genres in many languages, concerning Jewish life between the two world wars, the Holocaust period, postwar antisemitism, genocide and other related topics. Among the many films recently acquired are Israeli feature films, award-winning documentaries, television programs, short films and amateur movies distributed worldwide.

*Regina: The Story of the World's First Woman Rabbi*, directed by Diana Groó, is a documentary consisting entirely of archival footage and photographs from the 1920s-'30s. Magnus Gertten's film *Every Face Has a Name* tells the stories of Jewish and other refugees who found safe haven in Sweden after WWII, in the context of the present-

day migrant crisis. Gertten uses newsreels filmed just after the war as his film's narrative structure.

Two recently made feature films were inspired by true stories: *Kapo in Jerusalem*, directed by Uri Barabash, is based on the tragic events of the life of Eliezer Gruenbaum, and focuses on moral dilemmas faced by prisoners in Auschwitz. Kai Christiansen's *A Blind Hero: The Love of Otto Weidt* (German: *Ein Blinder Held: Die Liebe des Otto Weidt*), based on the testimony of Inge Deutschkron, recounts how the resourceful German owner of a broom factory dared to save Jews while falling in love with one of them.

More and more filmmakers have been using animation to bring stories from the Holocaust period to the screen. Recently, 40 short animated films made during a course in Visual Media Studies at the Holon Institute of Technology (HIT) were deposited at the Visual Center. The films, created in cooperation with Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies, were based on

Holocaust-era personal items collected during Yad Vashem's "Gathering the Fragments" campaign, and relate the stories of Holocaust victims and survivors using a variety of animation techniques. *Blinky & Me*, directed by Tomasz Magierski, is a documentary film that incorporates animation to tell the story of Yoram Gross, Holocaust survivor and Israeli animation pioneer, who passed away in September 2015.

*Death and the Maiden*, a student film by Yael Lotem, is an attempt to gain a more profound understanding of the life and work of the renowned artist Charlotte Salomon, who was murdered during the Holocaust. Another film of the same genre is Dror Amsalem's *Bubbe Meises* (Hebrew: *Sipurei Savta, Old Wives' Tales*), a tribute to his grandmother who survived the Nazi occupation of Tunisia.

*Generation War* (German: *Unsere Mütter, Unsere Väter*), by German director Philipp Kadelbach, is one of the most talked-about television series in Europe. The action takes place in wartime Berlin, where five young people pledge to meet at the end of the war. Many critics claim that *Generation War* is an attempt to exonerate the Germans of culpability for their wartime atrocities.

The evolution of Holocaust cinema reveals innovative attempts at making the subject more relevant for today's young filmgoers around the globe, as the generation of survivors and eyewitnesses dwindles. Only time will reveal the significance of these changes for Holocaust remembrance.

The author is the Director of the Visual Center.



■ Yad Vashem's Visual Center

## Christian Friends of Yad Vashem: A Decade of Partnership

■ This year marks ten years since the establishment of the Christian Friends of Yad Vashem Desk.

In the wake of the 2001 World Conference Against Racism ("Durban 1"), which triggered a new wave of incitement against the State of Israel and marked a watershed in the rise of modern antisemitism, the idea of creating a Desk of Christian Friends seemed almost impossible. At that time, the Managing Director of Yad Vashem's International Relations Division Shaya Ben Yehuda had the privilege of meeting Rev. Malcolm Hedding, Executive Director of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ). A great friend of the State of Israel, Rev. Hedding grew up in South Africa but left due to the apartheid regime. His friendship towards Yad Vashem drew Ben Yehuda towards the idea of forming a partnership between Yad Vashem and the ICEJ, which in turn led to the establishment of the Christian Desk.

"As one who grew up with the idea that we are

a nation alone, abandoned during the Holocaust, the privilege of this encounter with these Christian supporters was a healing experience," says Ben Yehuda. "This feeling was amplified as I got to know Dr. Jürgen Böhler, who replaced Rev. Hedding as Executive Director of the ICEJ, a friend who came from the very country from which my family had been forced to flee for their lives."

After intense deliberations, Yad Vashem partnered with the ICEJ to establish the Christian Desk, in order to help Yad Vashem reach out to the Christians around the globe, enlist friends and supporters to Yad Vashem, and ensure the commemoration of the Holocaust throughout the Christian world.

For over seven years, the Christian Desk has been headed by Finnish native Dr. Susanna Kokkonen. Dr. Kokkonen, whose doctorate at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem focused on the Holocaust, came to lead the Desk from the European Parliament and the Finnish Embassy in



■ Left to right: Dr. Juergen Buehler, Rev. Malcolm Hedding, Dr. Susannah Kokkonen, Shaya Ben Yehuda

Tel Aviv. Dr. Kokkonen has helped the activities of the Desk expand significantly: In 2016, three seminars for Christian leaders will be held at the International School for Holocaust Studies.

"Whenever I meet Christian missions and leaders, I tell them that Yad Vashem symbolizes how long-standing hatred can be overcome in order to build bridges of understanding and partnership," concludes Ben Yehuda. "This is the challenge shared by humanity across the globe."

### International Book Prize Awarded to Prof. Johann Chapoutot

■ The 2015 Yad Vashem International Book Prize for Holocaust Research in memory of Abraham Meir Schwarzbaum, Holocaust survivor, and his family members who were murdered in the Holocaust was recently awarded to Prof. Johann Chapoutot, Full Professor of Contemporary History at the Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris III, for his book, *La loi du sang: Penser et agir en nazi* (The Law of Blood: Thinking and Acting the Nazi Way) – published by NRF Gallimard in Paris last year.

In her opening remarks, Yad Vashem Chief Historian Prof. Dina Porat paid tribute to Holocaust survivor Abraham Meir Schwarzbaum. Prof. Dan Michman, Head of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research and Incumbent of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies, delivered the judges' considerations. Among the comments, he noted: "Within the vast literature describing and analyzing the criminal deeds of the Third Reich and the ideologies that motivated the perpetrators, few studies have attempted to

decipher the underlying behavioral codes and norms of National Socialism. Prof. Chapoutot is able to clarify the central place of the anti-Jewish campaign – the *Shoah* – in Nazism, emphasizing that it is in fact impossible to fully grasp Nazism without it. His study is a fine product of a younger group of scholars of Nazism and the *Shoah* working in France, and it will hopefully promote awareness and inspire more research."

Prof. Chapoutot gave the main address, entitled: "The Jews and 'Nature' in the National-Socialist *Weltanschauung*." Describing the historic tradition of antisemitism in Europe inherited by the Nazi regime, Prof. Chapoutot explained that ideology is "not a mere accumulation of empty or absurd slogans. It is... a way to view the past, project into future and organize the present." The ideology of "nature" adopted by the Nazis was translated into policy, and led to the need to destroy anything considered against or dangerous to nature – i.e., the Jewish people. "Actions were possible because ideas gave meaning to them," said Prof. Chapoutot.



■ Left to right Prof. Dan Michman, International Book Prize winner Prof. Johann Chapoutot, Sabina Schwarzbaum, Prof. Dina Porat

Together with Israeli-American musician Yirmi Kaplan, vocalist Sabina performed two musical interludes during the ceremony.

In addition to the winner of the book prize, there were also two honorable mentions: *Victims and Survivors of Nazi Human Experiments* by Prof. Paul Weindling; and *Der Rote Hiob: Das Leben des Werner Scholem* (The Red Job: The Life of Werner Scholem) by Prof. Miriam Zadoff.

### Focusing on the USSR during the Holocaust

#### Dr. Arkadi Zeltser

■ In October 2015, the International Institute for Holocaust Research's Center for Research on the History of Soviet Jews during the Holocaust organized an international workshop on regional characteristics of the Holocaust in the Soviet Union. Eight researchers from Germany, the United States, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova and Israel took part in the workshop.

One of the issues debated by the participants was whether to address the Holocaust in the USSR within the borders of all its territories, including those annexed from Poland, Romania and the Baltics from 1939-1940. Prof. Christoph Dieckmann of the Fritz-Bauer-Institute, Frankfurt am Main opined that reflecting on the entirety of the Soviet territories was futile due to the unique influence of local conditions, and therefore it would be preferable to concentrate on the larger regions. Other participants also noted the unique conditions that prevailed in various regions – Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine – and in the larger regions of these republics, such as in the parts of Ukraine under

German and Romanian control. They considered this issue by comparing the functions of the various *Judenräte* in far-off areas by means of wartime testimonies and diaries; the ghettos in Lithuania, Belarus and Transnistria; and the labor camps in Belarus and Russia. Both victims and perpetrators were at the center of the discussions.

On 10 January 2016, the Center coordinated an international conference entitled: "More Soviet or More Jewish? Jewish Identities in the USSR during World War II." Researchers from the US, Canada, Russia and Israel participated in the conference, during which they debated the topic on the basis of letters and diaries written in the Red Army and on the Soviet home front. They also addressed how these issues of identity during wartime and the Holocaust were expressed in folklore while under German occupation, as well as in Soviet literature.

*The International Workshop and Conference were made possible through the generous support of the Genesis Philanthropy Group.*

*The author is the Director of the Center for Research on the History of Soviet Jews during the Holocaust, International Institute for Holocaust Research.*

### Haifa University Students Go Behind-the-Scenes at Yad Vashem

■ In November 2015, a four-day workshop was held in Yad Vashem for the students of the Weiss-Livnat International MA in Holocaust Studies at Haifa University, in cooperation with Yad Vashem and the Ghetto Fighters' House. This year's workshop emphasized the behind-the-scenes work of Yad Vashem's various departments. In the Archives and Libraries, the students were told about the goals and new technologies that enable scholars and the general public to



access its vast collections and thus deepen their individual research efforts. At the International School for Holocaust Studies they learned about educational dilemmas and programs in teaching the Holocaust; and in the Museum Complex they

heard the personal stories behind some of the artifacts on display. The participants also attended scholarly lectures presented by Dr. Amedeo Osti-Guerrazzi and Prof. Gerald Steinacher, two research fellows at the International Institute, as well as a special Researchers' Forum that hosted Prof. Gerhard Weinberg, Emeritus Professor at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, who spoke on Pope Pius XII and WWII, and the Annual Lecture of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies (see below).

## John Najmann Memorial Lecture on Forced Labor Camps in Bulgaria

■ On 26 November 2015, Dr. Angel Chorapchiev of the Yad Vashem Archives Division presented the annual memorial lecture of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies. The topic of the lecture was "Forced Labor and Survival: Jewish Labor Camps in Bulgaria during WWII."

In the first part of his lecture, Dr. Chorapchiev sketched a general outline of the legislative framework in which Bulgarian Jews were taken into forced labor. He emphasized anti-Jewish



legislation after 1940, which required all Jewish males aged 20-40 (and later up to 46) to work in separate labor battalions. Starting in March 1941, these battalions were sent to perform manual labor in some of the harshest locations where the Bulgarian authorities sought to promote road and railway construction.

In an overview of the four years that the Jewish labor camps existed, Dr. Chorapchiev compared the conditions in which the laborers were held. In the first few months of 1941, the Jewish laborers served as soldiers in the Bulgarian Army's labor battalions, but were removed from the military setting after a German protest. As antisemitic legislation intensified in Bulgaria in the summer of 1942, conditions also soured for the Jewish laborers. The situation deteriorated even further in 1943, the hardest year for Bulgarian Jewry as a whole, when the Jews of Thrace and Macedonia were deported

to Treblinka, and the Jews of the capital, Sofia, were expelled to towns around Bulgaria.

The second part of the lecture dealt with the important but less-studied topic of the place of the labor battalions, including the Jewish ones, in Bulgaria's strategic plans during the wartime years. It emphasized the authorities' wish to improve their existing infrastructures and develop new ones, both for the wartime needs of the German and Bulgarian armies, and also for the Bulgarian state's needs in annexing the regions of Thrace and Macedonia. The process of linking Bulgaria's infrastructure to that in Yugoslav territory and northern Greece was supremely important from an economic standpoint as well. Wartime Bulgarian cabinets focused great efforts on building infrastructure throughout the country, particularly on completing the new railway in the Struma River Valley in southwest Bulgaria, along the border with Greece.

Dr. Chorapchiev concluded by re-emphasizing the importance of the Jewish labor battalions to the Bulgarian war plans, which brought great suffering to the entire Jewish community and led most of the survivors to immigrate to Israel after the war.

*The John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies was endowed by his wife and children in memory of Isaak John Najmann, who believed that every generation should know and remember.*

## International Conference in Honor of Prof. Dan Michman

### Prof. Dina Porat

■ In December 2015, a conference took place at Bar-Ilan University, in cooperation with Yad Vashem, in honor of Prof. Dan Michman, Head of the International Institute for Holocaust Research of Yad Vashem and Incumbent of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies, on the occasion of his retirement from teaching at Bar-Ilan.

Prof. Alon Confino came especially from the University of Virginia to deliver the opening address of the conference, entitled: "Thoughts on Modern Interpretations of the Holocaust." Prof. Confino commented in his lecture on Prof. Michman's contribution to the study of the Holocaust in various fields and the many aspects of understanding the Holocaust. Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev expressed admiration for Prof. Michman's accomplishments in diverse areas, and especially for his innovations in researching the ghettos and the relationship between the Holocaust and genocide.

Other speakers tackled a variety of topics, such as the historiography of modern Jewish

history in general and the Holocaust in particular, Zionism in view of the Holocaust, and Holocaust commemoration in Israel. Prof. Michman's students featured prominently among the speakers, along with representatives of the younger generation of researchers from overseas.

Prof. Michman concluded the conference with a lecture in which he presented his view of the development of the "Final Solution" and the unique nature of the Holocaust.

*The author is Chief Historian of Yad Vashem.*

## Zeev Mankowitz Memorial Symposium

■ On 12 November 2015, the International Institute for Holocaust Research held an international symposium entitled: "1945: What Now? Questions that Arose in the Aftermath of the Holocaust." The symposium honored the memory of the late Dr. Zeev Mankowitz, former director of the Diana Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Holocaust, and marked the publication of three studies recently released by the center: *Europe in the Eyes of Survivors of the Holocaust*, *Israel in the Eyes of Survivors of the Holocaust* and *Testimony and Time: Holocaust Survivors Remember*.

The symposium began with a moving address by Murry Zborowski, who spoke about the Diana Zborowski Center and his parents, Eli and Diana, z"l. Prof. Dalia Ofer (Hebrew University, Jerusalem) and Bella Mankowitz, Dr. Mankowitz's widow, spoke in memory of Dr. Mankowitz. Prof. David Weinberg (Wayne State University, Michigan) delivered the opening lecture on the situation of European Jewry after the Holocaust, commenting on the special challenges and opportunities that developed after liberation. The second session was dedicated to important lectures about each of the three books: Prof. Aviva Halamish, Prof. Dan Michman, Head of the International Institute for Holocaust Research and Incumbent of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies, and Dr. Alan Rosen reviewed the books, their innovation, and their contribution to research-based discourse in Israel and overseas, and even raised questions for continuing research.

The final session, moderated by the International Institute's Senior Historian Dr. David Silberklang, was dedicated to a discussion that focused on the special challenges faced by the authors and editors when finalizing each of the books presented, the work process and the topics awaiting further research in their fields.

*The symposium took place with the generous support of the Gutwirth Family Foundation.*

## Events at Yad Vashem: October 2015-January 2016

Avital Vider

### Israel's President Receives Unique Memoirs

■ In early January, Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev presented Israel's President Reuven Rivlin with the book *Letters Never Sent* (in Hebrew and English), which comprises a series of unique and moving letters written by Holocaust survivor Mirjam Bolle in Amsterdam, Westerbork and Bergen-Belsen. The letters were intended for Mirjam's beloved fiancé and future husband Leo Bolle, who was living in *Eretz Israel*, and they present a unique, personal source that sheds light on the workings of the *Joodsche Raad* (Jewish Council) in Amsterdam, an institution that was, and remains, steeped in controversy. Mirjam was able to hide the letters, bringing them with her when she finally immigrated to Israel.

Mirjam, a 98-year-old resident of Jerusalem, was delighted by her visit to the President's Residence: "When I wrote the letters, I could never have imagined that 70 years later I would be invited by the President of Israel to present them to him as a book published by Yad Vashem."



■ Left to right: Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev, Israel's President Reuven Rivlin and Holocaust survivor Mirjam Bolle, with the book of letters Bolle wrote while under Nazi occupation

"The descriptions in the book are both astonishing and heartrending," remarked President Rivlin. "They take us back to that period in history and give us the most human of proportions. I am delighted to receive the book – Holocaust commemoration and works like these are extremely important to us all." Turning to Mirjam, the President said: "The President's Residence is intended first and foremost for encounters with people like you – that is its primary mission. My respect and estimation for you is enormous, and I am extremely proud to welcome you here."

To order *Letters Never Sent*, Tel: 972-2-6443511; [publications.marketing@yadvashem.org.il](mailto:publications.marketing@yadvashem.org.il)

### Public Event Marking *Kristallnacht*

■ On the evening of 9 November 2015, the public was invited to attend an event commemorating the *Kristallnacht* pogrom in November 1938. This event drew a large crowd and featured a lecture by educator Yossi Gilad on Holocaust remembrance in Germany, as well as a screening of the film *Labyrinth of Lies*,



attended by Visual Center Director Liat Benhabib.

Earlier that day, the annual memorial and seminar commemorating the pogrom was attended by Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak, Chairwoman of the Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel Colette Avital, members of the Association of Israelis of Central European Origin and its chairman Reuven Merhav, Holocaust survivors and other guests.

Some 250 Holocaust survivors and members of their families attended the seminar, which featured gripping personal testimony from Zvi Aviram. Other speakers included playwright and author Naava Semel; former Yad Vashem Museums Division Deputy Director and Senior Art Curator Yehudit Shendar; and representatives of the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace.

### Remembering Righteous Among the Nations Prof. Władysław Bartoszewski

■ *"I couldn't remain indifferent as I felt personally uncomfortable with what was happening... No one forced me; quite the contrary. No one would have come complaining to me had I done nothing... But it wasn't about who would say something. It was about what I would say to myself. I had personal pride; I myself was responsible for my actions and I paid no heed to what anyone said about me. So I decided to help, and in a short while I was placed in an aid network that already existed."*

Prof. Władysław Bartoszewski

Righteous Among the Nations Prof. Władysław Bartoszewski passed away in April 2015. While only a teenager, he risked his life to save Jews as a member of the resistance movement Zegota (the Council for Aid to Jews). After the war, he held numerous high-ranking positions in public service, including Polish Ambassador to Austria, delegate to the Polish

Senate and Foreign Minister of Poland. In 2012, he was awarded honorary Israeli citizenship.

On 11 November 2015, Yad Vashem hosted an event in memory of Prof. Bartoszewski. The event was attended by Polish Ambassador to Israel H.E. Mr. Jacek Chodorowicz, Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev, Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum Director Dr. Piotr Cywiński, Director of Yad Vashem's Department for the Righteous Among the Nations Irena Steinfeldt, Holocaust survivors, teachers and representatives from Polish museums.



### Tenth of Tevet Marked by Open Symposium

■ On 21 December 2015, Yad Vashem held a special evening symposium in honor of the Tenth of Tevet. This Hebrew date has become the general day for mourning those whose exact dates of passing are unknown – which includes numerous Holocaust victims. Israeli journalist Sivan Rahav Meir and educator Rabbi Dr. Benny Lau participated in a panel

dealing with the culture of memory in Israel. The symposium, moderated by Senior Assistant to the Chairman of the Directorate Yossi Gevir, was attended by hundreds of people. It is hoped that this first-of-its-kind evening will become a tradition for years to come.

*The author assists production in the Events Department, Commemoration and Community Relations Division.*

## Prof. David Cesarani (1956-2015): “A Scholar of Tremendous Depth and Breadth”

■ **Yad Vashem mourns the recent and untimely passing of Prof. David Cesarani of Royal Holloway in London.** Author of *Eichmann: His Life and His Crimes* (Vintage, 2005), Prof. Cesarani possessed an encyclopedic knowledge of the Holocaust and endeavored to bring balance back to the history of the Holocaust, seeking to show first and foremost that the Jews were not one-dimensional victims but human beings, and as such had many strengths as well as foibles, and displayed a great range of behaviors.

Prof. Cesarani was a frequent guest of Yad Vashem at international research conferences and symposia, and was a fellow of the International Institute for Holocaust Research as the Baron Friedrich Carl von Oppenheim Chair for the Study



■ Prof. David Cesarani at Yad Vashem, 1998

of Racism, Antisemitism and the Holocaust. He was involved in establishing the Holocaust exhibit at London's Imperial War Museum and was awarded an OBE by Queen Elizabeth II for his work in

advancing Holocaust commemoration in Britain. Most recently, during the British chairmanship of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), he lent the organization his prestige, experience and vast knowledge.

“David was a scholar of tremendous depth and breadth, great brilliance and remarkable eloquence,” recalled Yad Vashem Libraries Director Dr. Robert Rozett, a colleague and close personal friend of Prof. Cesarani. “He had learned one of the most important tasks of any historian: to deflate myths and replace them with well-grounded historical narrative and analysis.”

In early 2016, Prof. Cesarani's last book was published: *Final Solution: The Fate of the Jews, 1933-1949* (Macmillan).

## “History Meets Innovation”: Yad Vashem-HP Hackathon

■ **In October 2015, Yad Vashem and HP Enterprise-Israel held a groundbreaking “Hackathon” – a competition for HP computer programmers to present Yad Vashem's vast collection of more than 125,000 written, audio and video testimonies in new and compelling ways for future generations.**

“Yad Vashem is relentless in its pursuit of innovation in the service of memory,” explained Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev before the event. “For decades, we have looked for ways to make our immense archives and collections, which we have amassed over the years, more easily accessible to a global audience. We have already digitized our entire Names Database consisting of some 4.6 million names of individual Holocaust victims, as well as much of our photo collection of some 450,000 photographs. It is our hope that together with our own experience and knowledge in the field, the ideas and solutions presented at the Hackathon will bring the voices and stories of each individual survivor to the masses.”

Out of some 200 applicants, 17 teams were chosen to present their ideas to the esteemed panel of judges, which included Yad Vashem's CIO Michael Lieber, Archives Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation Dr. Haim Gertner and Communications Division Director Iris Rosenberg, as well as the Director General of HP Israel David Lander, Director of HP Labs Dr. Ruth Bergman and Raffi Margaliot, Senior Vice President and General Manager, ADM, HP Software. The teams analyzed thousands of hours of audio and video content, as well as texts and images to identify ways of presenting the information in a modern, accessible, social media-friendly manner. While all of the ideas presented were innovative and pioneering, the panel was clear in its choice of winner: “Testimonials Become Searchable,” presented by



■ Israeli Education Minister Naftali Bennett speaks at the closing event of the HP-Yad Vashem Hackathon

Omer Barkol. Second place went to “Testimonies to the ADHD Generation,” presented by Amitay Korn, and third place to “Testimonies in Context: An Interactive Timeline over a Dynamic Map,” presented by Uri Kalish.

At the Hackathon's closing event at Yad Vashem, Israel's Education Minister Naftali Bennett spoke of the Holocaust as an “unprecedented event,” which needs to be remembered for future generations. Discussing how the Exodus from Egypt, a seminal episode in Jewish history, has been seared into Jewish consciousness, the Minister underlined that this memory has been engendered by three main elements: an interactive dialogue with the younger generations; an experiential Seder; and a communal experience, one which is shared with family and friends. All of these elements can be integrated into *Shoah* remembrance with the use of technology, and thus keep the Holocaust relevant for millennia to come. “There is no more important goal for the Jewish people and the whole of humanity,” he said, “than to remember the *Shoah*.”

Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak spoke of the importance of the process, and

not only the results. “Some 15 million people visited the Yad Vashem website last year,” she pointed out. “We must engage with the younger generations to harness the language of technology in order to continue to piece together the stories of the *Shoah* and make them accessible to everyone.”

Dr. Bergman, daughter of two Holocaust survivors, was particularly moved by the event. She recalled participating in a tour of the Holocaust History Museum some 18 months ago, after which she realized that HP could assist Yad Vashem in “reproducing that life-changing experience in the digital world.” Praising all of the candidates, she expressed her wish that the partnership continue in the future, using all of the original ideas presented to the audience. “This is the beginning of something much greater,” she said.

“HP Enterprise wouldn't be who we are without partnerships,” concluded David Lander. “But the partnership with Yad Vashem is something very special. This is my proudest moment – and I look forward to continuing to work together.”

From October 2015–January 2016, Yad Vashem conducted some 280 guided tours for close to 3,800 official visitors from Israel and abroad. These guests included heads of state and local government, NGO officials and mayors, museum directors and members of the business community. Following is a small selection of our honored guests over these four months:

■ **President Shri Pranab Mukherjee of India** was accompanied by Israel's President Reuven Rivlin (left) and Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak (right) as he toured the Holocaust History Museum on 13 October. "I am deeply moved by the story of great human suffering and tragedy depicted in this memorial," he wrote in the Yad Vashem Guest Book. "I offer a silent prayer in memory of all the men, women and children commemorated here."



■ **Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras** toured Yad Vashem on 25 November. At the conclusion of his visit, the Prime Minister called the Holocaust "the blackest mark on modern history for all of humanity... Human suffering anywhere concerns us all, everywhere."



■ **Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė** visited Yad Vashem on 19 October.



■ **President of Honduras Juan Orlando Hernandez** and his wife Ana García toured the Holocaust History Museum on 29 October.



■ **Chief Executive of Hong Kong C. Y. Leung** and his wife Regina laid a wreath in the Hall of Remembrance during his visit to Yad Vashem on 13 October.



■ **President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko** and his wife Maryna toured Yad Vashem on 22 December. At the conclusion of his visit, President Poroshenko said: "I think it is absolutely necessary not only for the leaders of states... but for every person on Earth to visit Yad Vashem."



■ **Romanian Foreign Minister Bogdan Aurescu** (left) was guided through the Holocaust History Museum by Director of the Hall of Names Dr. Alexander Avram on 19 October.



## New Benefactors Eric and Sheila Samson

■ In recognition of their generous support of Yad Vashem's Holocaust History Museum, **Eric and Sheila Samson** recently joined the honored circle of Yad Vashem Benefactors. Born and raised in Cape Town, Eric Samson turned a small steel-trading family business into a world leader. Macsteel is the largest distributor of steel in Africa, and operates in 31 countries across the globe. Deeply committed to his Jewish heritage, Eric's philanthropic work has impacted virtually every Jewish communal organization in South Africa, ensuring their



continuity and sustainability, and spreads across the globe to efforts in Israel and the US. He has significantly supported countless causes and communities throughout the world, and

profoundly changed the lives and destinies of numerous individuals.

Sheila Samson has been a true partner in her husband's charitable efforts, always at his side for the past five decades of dedicated support to both Jewish and non-Jewish causes. Residing in Israel since 2009, the couple have received numerous accolades for their significant charitable work. Eric and Sheila are devoted to their three children, Jeffrey, Dorothy and Franki, and their families all share the same commitment to philanthropy, the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

■ “We must always remember the souls of the people who were lost in the Holocaust,” remarked **Georgian President Giorgi Margvelashvili** at the conclusion of his visit on 19 October. “We must also pray to God that He protect us from this type of thing happening again.”



■ During his tour of Yad Vashem on 10 December, **Prime Minister of Macedonia Nikola Gruevski** was given a behind-the-scenes tour of the Archives. The Prime Minister was moved as he leafed through a registration book that listed details of Jewish residents of Bitola (Monastir), including their photos and signatures (or thumb prints), before they were deported to Treblinka, where they were murdered.



■ **Vice President and Foreign Minister of Panama Isabel Saint Malo de Alvarado** was guided through the Holocaust History Museum on 26 October. The Museum contains over 100 clips of survivor testimonies.



■ **New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio** visited Israel as part of the 30<sup>th</sup> International Mayors Conference. After touring the temporary exhibition “Stars Without a Heaven: Children in the Holocaust,” he wrote in the Yad Vashem Guest Book: “We must always remember and ensure that ‘Never Again’ is an idea we live by.”



■ **Vice Premier of the People’s Republic of China Wang Yang** toured the Holocaust History Museum on 11 November.



■ At the conclusion of his visit on 10 November, **Mayor of London Boris Johnson** said: “It is very important that we remember what happened and that we understand that truth, because I am afraid it still has lessons for humanity today.”



## Stanley and Bea Tollman

■ **Stanley Tollman is the Founder and Chairman of The Travel Corporation, an international travel group with over 25 award-winning brands.** Born in South Africa in 1930, he began his career within the family’s hotel business in Johannesburg. In 1952 Stanley met Bea, and in 1954, as newlyweds of modest beginnings, they began opening a number of hotels across South Africa. In 1975, Stanley, Bea and their four children immigrated to the UK where, due to their entrepreneurial vision, passion and drive, their business became very successful.



Never losing sight of the importance of supporting the community around them, when

disasters strike, when charities need support and when the Tollmans see valuable community building being carried out, they embrace the opportunity to provide a helping hand. Already supporters of Holocaust education in South Africa, Stanley and Bea are warmly welcomed into Yad Vashem’s esteemed circle of Benefactors. In addition to their support of the Yad Vashem Holocaust History Museum, the Tollmans have endowed a plaque to memorialize the Holocaust victims from Ritova, Lithuania, the hometown of Stanley’s father, Solomon Tollman.

# Friends Worldwide

## USA

■ The **American Society for Yad Vashem** hosted some 500 guests at its Annual Tribute Dinner in New York on 15 November 2015. Chaired by Board Member **Mark Moskowitz**, the theme of the Dinner was “Commemorating 70 Years since Liberation,” highlighting the return to life after the Holocaust and paying tribute to



■ Clockwise, from top left: **Mark Moskowitz**, **Wolf Blitzer** and **Leonard Wilf**; **Mary Jean Eisenhower**; **Rabbi Jacob J. Schacter**; **Rose and Philip Friedman**; **Milton Steinberg** (center), **Hannah Jocelyn** (second from left) and **Dr. Lu Steinberg** (third from right)

the victims and survivors of the *Shoah*. Dinner Honorees were Yad Vashem Benefactors **Rose and Philip Friedman** and the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, with **Hannah Jocelyn** and **Dr. Lu Steinberg** accepting the award on behalf of the Foundation. The night’s featured speakers were CNN’s lead political anchor **Wolf Blitzer** and



**Rabbi Jacob J. Schacter**, who remembered his father, **Rabbi Herschel Schacter**, as the first US Army chaplain to reach a concentration camp at the liberation of Buchenwald. **President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s** granddaughter, **Mary Jean Eisenhower**, was the closing speaker.



■ In October 2015, the American Society’s Young Leadership Associates (YLA) held a Shabbat dinner at synagogue Kehilath Jeshurun in New York City, chaired by **Rachel Orbach** (left). **Martin Greenfield** (right), the celebrated master tailor, told his story of survival to 170 young professionals.



■ Yad Vashem Donors **Larry** (left) and **Millie Magid** (front right) and a group of members of the Sid Jacobson Jewish Community Center in Long Island, New York visited Yad Vashem on 30 October. They toured the Holocaust History Museum, the temporary exhibition “Stars Without a Heaven: Children in the Holocaust,” and the Yad Vashem Synagogue, which was

established through the generosity of **Marilyn and Barry Rubenstein** and family.



■ Yad Vashem Trustees **Amy and Robert Book** gathered with family and friends for a ceremony at Yad Vashem to dedicate the Northern Garden of the International Seminars Wing, International School for Holocaust Studies, in honor of their son **Douglas Bradley Book** and in memory of Yad Vashem Pillar **Sam Halpern z”l**.



■ **Wayne Zuckerman** (right), Yad Vashem Guardian and son of Schindler Holocaust survivor **Abe Zuckerman z”l**, visited Yad Vashem with his wife **Debbie** (second from right) and children.



■ Active philanthropist and humanitarian **Dr. Arlene Bearman** (left) recently toured the Holocaust History Museum, the Hall of Remembrance and the Children’s Memorial.



■ During his visit to Yad Vashem on 19 October, Holocaust survivor and Yad Vashem Benefactor **Sam Boymel** unveiled a plaque in recognition of the Panorama he donated at the International School of Holocaust Studies. He also visited the Memorial Cave and viewed the name of his rescuer, **Petro Tokarsky**, which is engraved in the Garden of the Righteous Among the Nations.



■ On 31 December, Yad Vashem Builders **Lewis** (left) and **Barbara Shrensky** (second from right) visited Yad Vashem together with their family to mark their grandson **Jacob's** bar mitzvah. Their visit included a viewing of one of the paintings by Holocaust victim **Charlotte Salomon**, which they donated to the Yad Vashem Museum of Holocaust Art.



■ During his visit to Yad Vashem on 11 October, Yad Vashem Builder **Benjamin Warren** and **Lilly Lazarus** toured the Holocaust History Museum, the temporary exhibition "Stars Without a Heaven: Children in the Holocaust" and the Children's Memorial.



■ On 10 August, **Mark** (center) and **Judy Zborowski** (second from left) and family toured the Holocaust History Museum and the temporary exhibition "Stars Without a Heaven: Children in the Holocaust." They also viewed the Builders Wall in the Square of Hope.



■ On 3 December, Yad Vashem donor **David Barish** (second from right) toured the Holocaust History Museum with his friends **Bernard** and **Lisa Sensale**.



■ On 12 December, **Carol** and **Ed Kaplan**, together with their son and daughter-in-law **Martin** and **Amy Kaplan** and their grandchildren, marked their granddaughter **Sydney's** bat mitzvah at the Yad Vashem Synagogue.



■ **Stacy** and **Todd Gorelick** marked their son **Charlie's** bar mitzvah at Yad Vashem on 25 December, together with three generations of their family.



## CANADA

■ Yad Vashem Benefactors **Ed** and **Fran Sonshine** (left) and their daughter **Dr. Jodi Tanentzap** (right) unveiled the Ed and Fran Sonshine Children's Memorial Wall at the refurbished **Canadian Society for Yad Vashem** Holocaust Memorial Site at Earl Bales Park in Toronto on 4 October. Commemorating the 1.5 million Jewish children who were murdered in the Holocaust, the monument contains the names of child victims born on each of the 365 days of the year, as well as Canadian children who have participated in Yad Vashem's "Twinning" program.



■ **Joe Gottdenker** (right), a Holocaust survivor and Yad Vashem Visionary, unveiled the Joseph Gottdenker Family Gate of Remembrance, Reflection and Recommitment at the Holocaust Memorial Site. With him were his granddaughter **Lily**, daughter **Deborah** and cousin **Julian Zuckerbrot**.



■ Yad Vashem Guardians **Dora** and **Harry Kichler** (right), **Ellen** and **Allen Smoskowitz** (center) and their granddaughter unveiled the Spirit of Bravery Square at the Holocaust Memorial Site in the presence of then-Minister of Finance **Joe Oliver** and Canadian Society National Chair **Fran Sonshine** (left).



# Friends Worldwide

■ Holocaust survivor and Yad Vashem Builder **Dr. Thomas Hecht** delivered the keynote address at the Canadian Society Yizkor Ceremony on 4 October at Earl Bales Park in Toronto. He spoke about his experiences during the *Shoah*, including being saved by **Aristides de Sousa Mendes**, Portugal's wartime Consul in Bordeaux, who was recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.



## AUSTRALIA

■ During his visit to Yad Vashem on 9 November, **Bernard Herbert** (center), accompanied by family and friends, unveiled a plaque in memory of his late brother **Joseph** and his parents at the Renewal Panorama overlooking the Jerusalem hills.



■ On 5 January, **Harold and Rebecca Finger**, accompanied by their daughter **Yael Katz** and granddaughters **Ava** and **Poppy Katz**, celebrated Ava's bat mitzvah with a memorable tour of Yad Vashem's Holocaust History Museum, a memorial ceremony in the Hall of Remembrance, and a "twinning" ceremony in Yad Vashem's Synagogue.



■ During her visit to Yad Vashem on 14 January, **Helsie Brustman OAM** (left) met with International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda**, toured the International School for Holocaust Studies, visited the Museum of Holocaust Art, and took a behind-the-scenes-tour of the Artifacts Collection with Director of the Artifacts Department in the Museums Division **Michael Tal**.



■ On 1 October, **Steven and Miriam Bauer** toured the Holocaust History Museum and Children's Memorial, accompanied by some of their children and grandchildren. They also visited the Australian Wall in the Memorial Cave.



■ On 6 October, **Shmuli Herszberg** (right) visited the Holocaust History Museum along with his son **Ezra** and niece **Chaya Herszberg**.



■ **Dr. Gary Weiss** (right) and **Dr. Christine Steinmetz** (center) visited the Holocaust History Museum and the Australian Wall in the Memorial Cave on 24 December.



■ On 3 January, **Michael Perlman** (center), his wife, daughter and twin grandchildren visited Yad Vashem's Holocaust History Museum, accompanied by Director of the International Relations Division's English Language Desk **Searle Brajtman**.



■ **Vivienne Fried** (right) made several visits to Yad Vashem in January, during which she toured the Holocaust History Museum and Children's Memorial; viewed the Museum of Holocaust Art accompanied by Art Department Director, Museums Division **Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg**; and received a special behind-the-scenes presentation of Holocaust-era artifacts by **Michael Tal**. She also toured the Archives with Archives Division Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation **Dr. Haim Gertner** (left), and met with Director of the Information and Reference Services Department **Lital Beer** and Archives researcher **Sima Velkovitch**.



## FRANCE

■ The **French Committee for Yad Vashem** held its annual Gala Dinner on 15 December 2015. The dinner was delayed following the Paris terror attacks the previous month, but new French Committee President **Pierre-François Veil** responded with greater commitment to the memory of the *Shoah*. The evening's keynote speakers were **Serge** and **Beate Klarsfeld**. Also present were Israel's Ambassador to France **H.E. Ms. Aliza Bin Nun**; former French Prime Minister **Edith Cresson**; **Anne Gravion**, wife of current French Prime Minister **Emmanuel Valls**; former French Minister **Nicole Guedj**; several mayors of the "Cities and Villages Network to Honor the Righteous," including its President **Thierry Vinçon** and Honorary President **Eliane Wauquiez-Motte**; **Catherine Vieu-Charier**, representing Mayor of Paris **Anne Hidalgo**; French Railways President **Guillaume Pepy** and his Deputy **Bernard Emsellem**; Chief Rabbi of France **Haim Korsia**; and CRIF President **Roger Cukierman**.



Left to right: French friends of Yad Vashem **Roger Cukierman**, **Anna Prasquier**, **Daniele Biderman**, **Jackie Schaffer**, **Marcel Katz** and **François Gugenheim**; French Committee Honorary President **Paul Schaffer**; Director of the French, Swiss and Benelux Desk in Yad Vashem's International Relations Division **Miry Gross**



Left to right: **Pierre-François Veil**, **Miry Gross**, **Yad Vashem Director General Dorit Novak**

## UK

■ On 4 November 2015, **Sir Mick Davis** (left) and his wife **Lady Barbara Davis** (center) toured the temporary exhibition "Stars Without a Heaven: Children in the Holocaust" and were given a behind-the-scenes tour of the Archives Division. Director of the Artifacts Department in the Museums Division **Michael Tal** (right) also showed them several items from the Artifacts Collection. They were accompanied by International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (back row) and Director of the Division's English Language Desk **Searle Brajzman** (second from right).



## GERMANY

■ During their Annual General Meeting on 28 October, the **Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Germany** parted from Society Chair **Hildegard Müller** (right). Yad Vashem Director General **Dorit Novak** (left) and Director of Yad Vashem's German-Speaking Countries and German Swiss Desk **Arik Rav-On** led the speeches of farewell and thanks for Ms. Müller's eight years of service. Former Prime Minister of North Rhine-Westphalia **Prof. Dr. Jürgen Rüttgers** was elected as the new Chairman of the Society, with **Baron Christopher Oppenheim**, **Harry Habermann**, **Steffen Kampeter** and **Peter Zauerbaum** joining the Board.



■ On 23 November, newly elected chairman of the German Society **Prof. Dr. Jürgen Rüttgers** (right) visited Yad Vashem. During his visit, he toured the Archives with Archives Division Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation **Dr. Haim Gertner** (left), and visited the Artifacts Collection Department, the

International School for Holocaust Studies and the temporary exhibition "Stars Without a Heaven: Children in the Holocaust." Dr. Rüttgers also met with Yad Vashem Chairman **Avner Shalev**, Director General **Dorit Novak** and International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda**.



■ A ceremony in honor of Righteous Among the Nations **Hans Feyerabend** was held at the Grand Hall of the Municipality of Berlin on 25 November. The event was attended by 200 guests, including members of the Pious family – the descendants of Hans Feyerabend – survivors, Mayor of Berlin **Michael Müller**, Berlin government senators, Israel's Ambassador to Germany **H.E. Mr. Yakov Hadas-Handelsman** (right), members of the Bundestag, scholars and members of the media. The event was organized by **Sandra Witte** of the Israeli Embassy in Germany, and Yad Vashem's German Desk Director **Arik Rav-On**.



## ISRAEL

■ On 11 October, **Dr. Michael Hayden** (center) and his wife **Sandy** (right) visited the Holocaust History Museum and Children's Memorial, followed by a special behind-the-scenes presentation in the Archives by Archives Division Director and Fred Hillman Chair for Holocaust Documentation **Dr. Haim Gertner** (left).



# Friends Worldwide

## LIECHTENSTEIN

■ A special ceremony marking International Holocaust Remembrance Day was held in Vaduz, Liechtenstein on 27 January. Over 100 guests attended, including Liechtenstein's Foreign Minister **Dr. Aurelia Frick** (center), Speaker of the Parliament **Dr. Albert Frick**, MPs, journalists and members of the **Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Liechtenstein**. The event's keynote speaker, Yad Vashem Benefactor **Prof. Jan-Philipp Reemtsma** (second from left), stressed: "If you want to understand the world in which you live, if you want to understand humanity... you should visit Yad Vashem."



## SWITZERLAND

■ A memorial event marking the anniversary of the *Kristallnacht* pogrom took place in Zurich on 8 November in the presence of President of Switzerland **Simonetta Sommaruga** (right) and 350 guests. The event was organized in cooperation with the Jewish community, the **Swiss Friends of Yad Vashem** and other organizations. The event was opened by President of the Jewish Community **Dr. André Bollag** (center) and the guest of honor and keynote speaker was President Sommaruga. Other speakers included representatives of the Canton of Zurich, the Zurich municipality, the Jewish community's rabbi, and Swiss Friends Chairman **Joel Herzog**. IDF Chief Cantor **Lt. Col. Shai Abramson** moved the guests with a powerful musical performance.



## AUSTRIA

■ On the last day of Hanukkah, 13 December 2015, **Marcel and Fela Zloczower** (center) visited the Yad Vashem Synagogue to see the Torah scroll donated by the Zloczower family to Yad Vashem. This small scroll was written in one of the Jewish communities in the Habsburg Empire at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to be used by traveling Jewish merchants. The Torah scroll is now displayed alongside other Torah scrolls in the Synagogue Ark.



## SWEDEN

■ The Micael Bindefeld Foundation in Sweden places a special focus on the Holocaust and its memory. Foundation Director **Micael Bindefeld** (right) visited Yad Vashem for a guided tour of the Museum of Holocaust Art, as well as a behind-the-scenes tour of the Yad Vashem Archives with International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda**.



## RUSSIA

■ During their recent visit to Yad Vashem, members of the Russian Jewish Congress **Yuri Dombrovsky** and **Gennady Fridman** and their families were shown the original Schindler's List by Yad Vashem Archive expert **Sima Velkovich**.



## VENEZUELA

■ The Gelman family recently visited Yad Vashem, unveiling a plaque in honor of the grandparents of **Joseph Gelman**, survivors of the Holocaust, in the Memorial Cave.



■ The Sultan family joined the Gelman family during their visit to Yad Vashem.



## MEXICO

■ **Yanine and Leonardo Simpser** (third and fourth from left) were joined by their extended family and International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda** on the occasion of the bar mitzvah of **Gabriel Simpser** (second row, fourth from left).



■ President of the Mexican Jewish Community Organization **Salomón Achar** (third from right) visited Yad Vashem together with his wife and friends. They were joined by Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan** (left).



■ Members of the Goldberg family were joined by **Perla Hazan** and **Moises Hazan** during their visit to Yad Vashem in October 2015.



■ **Fanny and Moises Sevilla** (third from right and second from left) were joined by **Shaya Ben Yehuda** and **Perla Hazan** during their visit to Yad Vashem.



## COSTA RICA

■ **Vivian and Philip Unger** were joined by friends and Director of the Latin-America, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan** during the unveiling of a

plaque in the Memorial Cave in honor of Mr. Unger's parents.



## CHRISTIAN DESK in partnership with ICEJ

■ In November 2015, Yad Vashem hosted a group of Christian leaders and pastors from the US for a Leadership Seminar at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies. The seminar was organized in cooperation with the **Christian Friends of Yad Vashem** and supported by the Museum of the Bible, Washington DC.



■ International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) USA Branch recently made a commitment of annual support to Yad Vashem's International Christian Leadership Seminar as well as other projects at Yad Vashem. To honor the support, Yad Vashem presented ICEJ USA National Director **Susan Michael** a symbolic key to Yad Vashem. From left: Director of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem **Dr. Susanna Kokkonen**, Susan Michael, International Relations Division Managing Director **Shaya Ben Yehuda**, ICEJ Board Member **Rev. Malcolm Hedding**, ICEJ USA Deputy Director **Darryl Hedding**



## 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, when there is 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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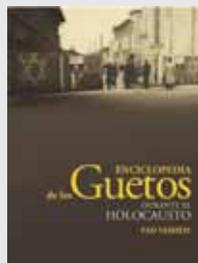
# The International Institute for Holocaust Research: Publications

## *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust*

**Spanish edition**

**Editor-in-Chief: Guy Miron; Co-editor: Shlomit Shulhani**

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■ This pioneering project gathered data from various sources dealing with the more than 1,100 ghettos that existed in WWII throughout (mainly) Eastern Europe. The entries include the location, name and geographical coordinates of each ghetto, as well as informational sections on life before WWII and during the Soviet and German occupations; the ghetto setup, institutions and internal life; the murder, terror and killing operations of the ghetto inhabitants; underground and resistance movements; and the number of survivors at liberation.

## *The Holocaust in the Crimea and the North Caucasus*

**Kiril Feferman**

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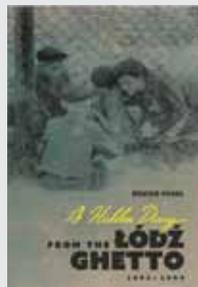


■ This unique study presents a comprehensive account of the Jews in the Crimea and the North Caucasus in the Holocaust years. The book covers the life and destruction of the Jewish population, and describes the relations between Jews and non-Jews before and during the war; the evacuation of the Jews; the German occupation and the destruction of the Jewish population; the fate of non-Ashkenazi Jews; Jewish responses; and reactions of local populations.

## *A Hidden Diary from the Łódź Ghetto, 1942–1944*

**Heniek Fogel | Editor: Helene Sinnreich**

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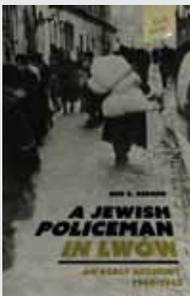


■ The diary of Heniek (Hersz) Fogel was written in the Łódź ghetto during the Holocaust. Through those difficult days, Fogel recorded some of the most horrifying parts of the ghetto experience – his father's death, the deportation of his brother, and the overwhelming hunger and other tribulations of his family and friends. After miraculously surviving Auschwitz and other concentration camps, Fogel returned to Łódź, where he retrieved the diary.

## *A Jewish Policeman in Lwów: An Early Account, 1941-1943*

**Ben Z. Redner**

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■ Ben Z. Redner was born in Lwów, Eastern Galicia. His position as a Jewish policeman offered him some privileges, but also put him on the frontline of the Germans' demands. In this rare firsthand account of life in the Lwów ghetto, Redner paints a detailed picture of the roundups, the search for food, the crowded housing and securing a job, which was crucial in order to receive *Ausweise* (ID cards) that provided certain rations and immunity from murderous *Aktionen*.

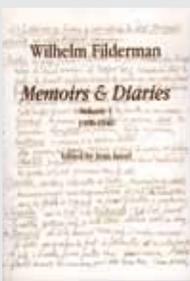
## *Wilhelm Filderman*

### *Memoirs and Diaries, Volume 1: 1900-1940*

**Editor: Jean Ancel**

**In association with Tel Aviv University**

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■ In the aftermath of WWI, Wilhelm Filderman, the leader of the Jews of Romania in the interwar period, supervised the process of obtaining equal rights for Jews. This volume of Filderman's memoirs and diaries covers the years 1900–1940, and deals with the fate of the last Eastern European Jewish community to be emancipated: its organizations; its struggle for civil rights amid antisemitism; “Greater Romania” between the two world wars; the Iron Guard; the first pogroms in June 1940; and more.

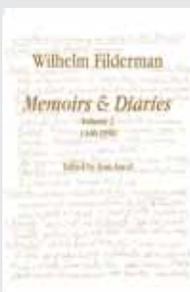
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### *Memoirs and Diaries, Volume 2: 1940-1952*

**Editor: Jean Ancel | Revised and annotated by Leon Volovici and Miriam Caloianu**

**In association with Tel Aviv University**

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■ This volume of former Romanian Jewish community leader Wilhelm Filderman's memoirs and diaries covers the years 1940–1952, and deals with life under General Antonescu's Legionnaire regime and the Iron Guard; Filderman's ongoing correspondence and meetings with leading members of the government; articles in the Romanian press about Filderman; the evacuation of Bessarabia and Bukovina; assistance to Jewish authors and artists; Filderman's deportation to Transnistria and his own internment in the Moghilev camp; his efforts to help Jews emigrate from Romania; and his endeavors to track down his two sons.

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