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Inaugurating the New Museum (pp. 4-13)

The Anguish of Liberation and the Return to Life
Marking 60 Years Since the End of WWII
Special Issue for Remembrance Day 2005

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Yad Vashem
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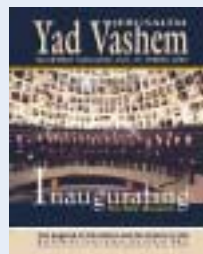
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Yad Vashem
Editors' Remarks

March 2005 may well be seen as a turning point in the history of Yad Vashem. The inauguration of the New Museum, and the exceptional attention the event attracted across the globe, has placed Holocaust remembrance back in the forefront of commemoration and education worldwide (see "Inauguration of the New Museum at Yad Vashem," pp. 4-13). Sixty years after the end of WWII, Europe is once again examining its past, looking at the present and preparing for the future, and Yad Vashem is ready and willing to provide the tools necessary for such an undertaking.

This year, as Europe celebrates the 60th anniversary of liberation, Holocaust Remembrance Day focuses on the liberation itself (see "The Anguish of Liberation and the Return to Life," pp. 2-3). For the survivors, VE Day was the beginning of an arduous road towards a new life, while dealing with the traumas of the old. Sixty years on, we salute their remarkable strength in rebuilding their lives—both in Israel and abroad—in their contributions towards the societies and countries in which they live as well as their efforts in Holocaust commemoration and education for the next generations (see "Hearing It from the Source," pp. 16-17).



Cover:
 World leaders at the memorial service in the new Hall of Names marking the inauguration of the New Museum at Yad Vashem

The Ang

by Dr. Yaacov Lozowick

“ The camp guard who came to open the gate said, ‘You are free and you can leave.’... No one moved, no one went out. We did not laugh, we were not happy, we were apathetic—and the Russians came. A general came in, he was Jewish. He told us he was delighted to find that there were still people alive in the camp. He started to cry; but we didn’t. He wept and we didn’t.”

Bela Braver, deported to Auschwitz, liberated from Lichtewerden, Czechoslovakia, by the Red Army

On VE Day there was dancing in the streets of New York; in Moscow salvos of canons were fired. There was no dancing in the camps, though, and not only because there were no streets. For those Jews who survived, the day of liberation was a difficult one.

First, it was physically difficult. By the end of the Nazi era, the Jews were at varying degrees of physical deterioration. On liberation day many just collapsed—they simply lay on the ground and stared at the sky.

Second, it was emotionally exhausting. The Jews had been living in terror for years, frozen in fear. Toward the end the tension increased, for as liberation approached the chances of survival lessened. Camp guards informed prisoners they would not be left alive. And if earlier fears had not been debilitating enough, those in hiding became more anxious as the battles around them raged.

Third, liberation day was the first day of existential crises. If up until then all efforts had been expended on the struggle to survive—until the evening, the morning, or even for one more minute—on liberation day life expectancies jumped from days or weeks to decades. The struggle to survive from one moment to the next had deflected attention from the world they had lost: their family and friends, their occupations and habits, their neighborhoods and their possessions. All of these had been taken from them long before liberation, but now they were forced to face the emptiness and try to build something new. While the victors danced in the streets, and the vanquished gathered up the broken pieces and began to look ahead,

Jewish of Liberation and the Return to Life:

Marking 60 Years Since the End of WWII



Bergen-Belsen, Germany, April 1945: Two survivors, after liberation

The Central
Theme for
Holocaust
Remembrance
Day 2005

the survivors prepared themselves for—what exactly?

Some of the soldiers who liberated the survivors were Jewish, which made for highly emotional meetings. Where possible, the liberators extended assistance, but in most cases the willpower that had enabled the survivors to stay alive until liberation was also what kept them going after it.

During the days and weeks following liberation there were instances in which survivors identified Germans who had tortured them, and killed them. They regarded this as a matter of justice. Still, hardly any wide scale systematic vengeance was wrought on the general or German population, a singular historic phenomenon that merits study.

Many survivors initially made their way back to what had once been their homes. But their houses had already been taken, and the streets were full of ghosts, so they left. They dispersed throughout the globe, but even those states anxious to receive immigrants preferred to take in non-Jews from the Displaced Persons camps—many of whom were Germans, including Nazi collaborators. About a third of the 300,000 Jewish refugees immigrated to the United States, Canada, Australia and countries of Latin America. The rest—calling themselves the *She'erit Hapletah* (the surviving remnant)—emigrated to Palestine, their arrival coinciding precisely with Israel's War of Independence. Thus upon arrival, Holocaust survivors did not find peace and tranquility; rather they immediately became

involved in the young country's struggle to defend and build itself. They succeeded in their endeavors, built new families and played a significant role in the development of Israeli society—in economics, security, education, industry, academics, science and technology, art and public affairs. They were also the first to seek to perpetuate the memory of the Holocaust.

The liberation story is, therefore, not the happy ending to a sad story, but rather a troubled story in and of itself. The successful conclusion to the struggle for physical survival gave way to the beginning of a longer struggle to cope with the emotional scars that would remain with them for many years to come.

The author is Director of the Archives Division



Inauguration of the New Museum at

by Leah Goldstein

On 15-16 March 2005, the new Holocaust History Museum and the new Museum of Holocaust Art at Yad Vashem were inaugurated in the presence of the President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Education Minister of Israel, the Secretary General of the United Nations, presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers and other dignitaries from 40 states around the world, members of the diplomatic corps, Holocaust survivors, Yad Vashem supporters and Righteous Among the Nations.

Marking the culmination of Yad Vashem's multiyear development plan, the new Museum is four times the size of the previous museum. It places a unique emphasis on the Jewish, individual experience, using authentic artifacts, testimonies, photographs and artwork, through state-of-the-art multimedia exhibitions and video art displays. Part of the new Museum Complex—which includes the Museum of Holocaust Art, Exhibitions Pavilion, Synagogue, Learning Center and Visual Center—the new Museum has generated unprecedented interest among world leaders and the international media.

Following are highlights from the inaugural events:



President Moshe Katsav cuts the ribbon, accompanied by Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Ayner Shalev.



Chief Rabbi Israel Meir Lau affixes the mezuzah to the entrance of the new Museum.



Present at the inaugural events with President of Israel H.E. Mr. Moshe Katsav and Mrs. Gila Katsav, Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom MK, Minister of Education, Culture and Sport Limor Livnat MK, Nobel Laureate Prof. Elie Wiesel, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council Prof. Szewach Weiss and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Ayner Shalev, were the following Heads of Delegations:

United Nations: Secretary-General; **Poland:** President; **Croatia:** President; **Serbia and Montenegro:** President; **Lithuania:** President; **Macedonia:** President; **Bosnia and Herzegovina:** President; **Switzerland:** President; **Albania:** President; **Slovakia:** President; **France:** Prime Minister; **Sweden:** Prime Minister; **Netherlands:** Prime Minister; **Belgium:** Prime Minister; **Denmark:** Prime Minister; **Romania:** Prime Minister; **United Kingdom:** Deputy Prime Minister; **Germany:** Foreign Minister; **Russian Federation:** Secretary of the Security Council; **Dominican Republic:** Vice-President; **Norway:** Foreign Minister; **Spain:** Foreign Minister; **Portugal:** Minister for Foreign Affairs and Portuguese Communities Abroad; **Czech Republic:** Defense Minister; **Greece:** Minister of Education; **Latvia:** Minister of Education; **Estonia:** Minister of Education and Research; **Ukraine:** Minister of Education and Science; **Finland:** Minister of Education and Science; **Slovenia:** Minister of Education and Sport; **Turkey:** Minister of Justice; **Australia:** Deputy Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; **Hungary:** Minister of Information and Communications; **Ireland:** Minister of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources; **The Holy See:** Cardinal; **Canada:** Minister of Justice; **Austria:** State Secretary in the Federal Chancellery; **Luxemburg:** Former Prime Minister and former President of the European Commission; **Bulgaria:** Advisor of the President; **United States:** Mayor of New York



Yad Vashem

The opening ceremony of the new Museum at Yad Vashem

“The new Museum at Yad Vashem describes the story of those who were killed, the story of the fate of the Jewish people... It is a vital signpost for all of humanity. A signpost that warns how small is the distance between hatred and murder, between racism and genocide. How a so-called ‘enlightened’ and advanced society could become primitive, and turn into a cruel machine, and how short is the path from the burning of synagogues and Jewish homes to the destruction of democracy.”



President Moshe Katsav

“From here, from this Museum, from Yad Vashem, carved in the hills of Jerusalem our capital city, we gaze yearningly towards our grandmothers and grandfathers, our mothers and fathers, our sisters and brothers, our daughters and our sons. At this historic gathering, as in all commemorations, we cry to you and we do not forget.”



**Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council
Prof. Szewach Weiss**

“The number of Holocaust survivors who are still with us is dwindling fast. Our children are growing up just as rapidly. They are beginning to ask their first questions about injustice. What will we tell them? Will we say, ‘That’s just the way the world is’? Or will we say instead, ‘We are striving to change things—to find a better way’? Let this museum stand as testimony that we are striving for a better way. Let Yad Vashem inspire us to keep striving, as long as the darkest dark stalks the face of the earth.”



UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

“The new Holocaust History Museum which we are inaugurating today comes to promise that neither land, time nor forgetfulness will cover the blood of the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust... In the heart of every person are different chambers. In the national Jewish heart is the chamber of remembrance, and it is found here, at Yad Vashem... Today there must go out from here, from Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, the words of humanity: a worldwide vow to preserve the honor of man, his image, his freedom and his basic rights, a universal vow to fight all forms of racism and xenophobia.”



Prime Minister Ariel Sharon



The Museum we are dedicating today is a monument to those who were murdered attempting to preserve their names, faces and identities for future generations... The wings of the Museum building that open to the Jerusalem scenery like hands reaching out in prayer symbolize our commitment to a future of life and hope, and of preserving the human spirit. This commitment needs to be shared by all of us, especially you, leaders of the world. Your presence here strengthens that commitment.”

Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev

“The new Museum will be a monument, name and mouth for six million victims; the little children, the helpless elderly, the women and men whose only ‘sin’ was to be Jewish. It will teach the horror of the Holocaust to the younger generations, so that the cries of those murdered will be remembered, and their meaning understood... and in another 20 or 50 years, when the survivors are no longer with us, their stories will continue to be told.”



**Minister of Education, Culture and Sport
Limor Livnat MK**

“And so we go through the new Museum. What shall we do—cry? No. We don’t try to tell the tale to make people weep... If we decided to tell the tale, it is because we wanted the world to be a better world... There is something more frightening [than a messenger who cannot deliver his message]—when the messenger has delivered the message and nothing has changed. The messenger has delivered the message. And what is our role? We must be the messengers’ messengers.”



Nobel Laureate Prof. Elie Wiesel





World leaders take a preview tour inside the new Holocaust History Museum.



Ayner Shalev shows the original Auschwitz Album to French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin, President Moshe Katsav and Mrs. Gila Katsav.



Heads of State view an exhibit on the anguish of liberation and the return to life.



Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos in the exhibit on emigration of Holocaust survivors to Eretz Yisrael



Ayner Shalev with Minister of Education, Culture and Sport Limor Livnat MK, Mrs. Gila Katsav, Kofi and Nane Annan and heads of state in the exhibit on the deportations of Jews from Nazi-occupied countries.



Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen (left) with Ayner Shalev and President Moshe Katsav by a boat used to save the Jews of Denmark during WWII



THE

Inauguration of the New Museum at Yad Vashem



Slovakian President Ivan Gasparovic and Hungarian Minister of Information and Communications Kalman Kovacs view the exhibit on Theresienstadt.



Ayner Shaley giving an explanation of the symbolically reconstructed Warsaw Ghetto's Leszno Street, recreated with original cobblestones and artifacts.



German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer views an exhibit on slave labor camp inmates.



Romanian Prime Minister Calin Popescu-Tariceanu views an exhibit on the Nazis' rise to power.



Remembering the Past, Shaping the Future

Special assembly of world leaders calls for safeguarding Holocaust remembrance and action against antisemitism

Following a memorial service on 16 March in the Museum’s new Hall of Names (see cover), a special assembly, “Remembering the Past, Shaping the Future,” featured remarks from the heads of some 40 delegations, Israeli leaders and a number of leading Israeli intellectuals. Together, they raised their voices to the world in a call for safeguarding the memory and meaning of the *Shoah* for future generations, and for a rise to action against renewed antisemitism and intolerance.

At the assembly, President of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski declared: “We Poles are especially concerned that the memory of our Jewish brethren not perish in the ashes of the Nazi death camps... Yad Vashem obliges all of us to put human rights in the forefront of the actions of states and nations. To respect human dignity, freedom of religion and the right of everyone to cultivate the traditions precious to them.”

“Yad Vashem is a place of deep shame for any German, because Germany is and will forever be inseparably linked to the *Shoah*, the ultimate crime against humanity,” said Foreign Minister and Vice Chancellor of Germany, Joschka Fischer. “All those murdered—the men women and children—and their individual stories are the focal point of the new Museum at Yad Vashem. I am deeply moved by the testimonies and artifacts that bear witness to the fates of the victims.” President of Croatia Stjepan Mesić

discussed how the Museum differs from “the standard understanding of a museum... Terrible and distressing, the Holocaust History Museum must be visited. Its exhibits must be seen, in order not to forget. Because if we are sure this will not be forgotten, we can hope it will never again be repeated... On this very spot, I would like to repeat that I will continue to fight for truth about the past, and stand against all attempts to suppress, conceal or fabricate history, whatever it may have been.”

“The obligation of memory is not just a word, or a duty to be fulfilled through official ceremonies alone,” said Prime Minister of France Jean-Pierre Raffarin. “Like everyone who visited the new Museum yesterday, I felt that the tragedy of the *Shoah* is not just history... The dead are speaking to us: the attention we pay them will affect an essential part of our future.” Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation Igor Ivanov sent greetings from President Vladimir Putin: “In our country we feel deep respect and gratitude for those who have devoted their lives to the preservation of the memory of the Holocaust... All of civilized mankind must know about the terrible tragedy of the Holocaust so that it will never happen again. Antisemitism, xenophobia, racial discrimination and chauvinism must be eradicated from our lives.”

For more speeches from the assembly, please visit the Yad Vashem website: www.yadvashem.org



Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom MK addressing the special assembly.



Minister for Diaspora and Jerusalem Affairs Natan Sharansky MK addressing the special assembly.

Inauguration

of the New Museum at Yad Vashem



On 16 March, President of Poland Aleksander Kwaśniewski met with members of the National Council of Students at the International School for Holocaust Studies. Participating in the event, which was hosted by the School and organized by the Ministry of Education's Society and Youth Administration Department, were the Minister of Education, Culture and Sport Limor Livnat MK, the Polish Minister of Education, the Israeli Ambassador to Poland, the Polish Ambassador to Israel, and others. The President spoke to the students—who had participated in trips to Poland with their schools—and answered their questions.



1

Bottom, left to right: Miriam, Raquel and Zofia Landau, Julius Berman, David and Malka Bashe Gorodzinsky, Jacqueline and Arie Becker, Maxi Mordechai Librati, Simone Veil, Joseph Wilf, Eli Zborowski, Lenny Wilf, Sheldon and Miriam Adelson, Avner Shalev
Middle, left to right: Umberto de Gasparis, Max and Gianna Glassman, Miguel Vaisman, Mark and Jane Wilf, Viatcheslav Moshe and Elena Kantor, Marcus and Adina Katz, Elizabeth Wilf, Gladys and Sam Halpern, Pauline and John Gandel, Lisa Thurin
Top, left to right: Zygi and Audrey Wilf, Raquel and Edmundo Safdić, Avraham Bigger, Baroness Ariane Langner De Rothschild, Dame Vivian Duffield, Allan Morgenthau, Daniella and Daniel Steinmetz, Irma and Norman Braman



2

Yad Vashem was honored by the presence of so many of its dedicated supporters and friends at the inaugural events:

3



4



1. Viatcheslav Moshe Kantor (Israel) with Kofi and Nane Annan

2. Irma and Norman Braman (USA) with President Moshe Katsav

3. Mark and Jane Wilf, Zygi and Audrey Wilf, Elizabeth and Joseph Wilf, and Lenny Wilf (USA)

4. Zofia Landau, Miguel Vaisman, Raquel Landau and Umberto de Gasparis (Venezuela) with President Moshe Katsav

5. Arie and Jacqueline Becker and their daughter (Mexico) with President Moshe Katsav

6. Gianna, Max and Jordanna Glassman (Canada)

7. Allan Morgenthau (Archie Sherman Charitable Trust, UK) with President Moshe Katsav and Mrs. Gila Katsav

8. David and Malka Bashe Gorodzinsky (Mexico) with President Moshe Katsav

9. Dame Vivien Duffield (Clore Israel Foundation) with President Moshe Katsav

10. French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin, Avner Shalev, President of the Foundation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah Simone Veil, Ann Marie Revcolevschi, President Moshe Katsav and Mrs. Gila Katsav, Joel Mergui, Elisabeth Gourevitch and Jeanine Hadad (France)

11. Maxi Mordechai Librati (France) with Miry Gross, Kofi and Nane Annan

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10

Inauguration of the New Museum at Yad Vas hem



Inauguration

of the New Museum of Holocaust Art

On 15 March, the new Museum of Holocaust Art was inaugurated in the presence of donors Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson (USA) and the President of Israel Moshe Katsav. Yad Vashem's collection of Holocaust art is the largest and most wide-ranging collection in the world, comprising some 10,000 works, most of them from the Holocaust period. The new Museum of Holocaust Art will allow this collection to be properly displayed, focusing on the works created during the *Shoah*. Different spaces are dedicated to exhibits according to subject, focusing on the human image as well as views of ghettos and camps, inside and outside. Adjacent to the exhibition hall is the world's first computerized archive and information center regarding *Shoah* art and artists.

The works displayed are not just testimonial; they express an awesome creative power. The artists who produced them knew that this was a once-in-a-lifetime chance to express all they wished to say in a few lines etched on paper.



Left to right: Mrs. Gila Katsav, Avner Shalev, President Moshe Katsav, Sheldon and Miriam Adelson



Baroness Ariane Langner De Rothschild and Avraham Bigger with President Moshe Katsav in the new Hall of Names, donated by the Caesarea Edmond Benjamin De Rothschild Foundation, Israel



On 17 March the Square of Remembrance, donated by Raquel and Edmundo Safdié (Brazil) was dedicated, in the presence of Vice Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Chief Rabbi of Israel Harishon Lezion Rabbi Shlomo Amar and Avner Shalev.



Dedication of the Heroes' Promenade, in the presence of donors John and Pauline Gandel, Avner Shalev and Minister for Diaspora and Jerusalem Affairs Natan Sharansky MK



Dedication of the Donors Wall in the Square of Hope



At the 16 March unveiling ceremony of the plaque honoring Yad Vashem's strategic partners in building the new Museum Complex. Left to right: Claims Conference President Dr. Israel Singer, "Yad Vashem 2001" Campaign Chair and Vice Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem Joseph Wilf, Minister of Tourism Avraham Hirschson MK, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem Eli Zborowski, Avner Shalev, Minister of Finance Binyamin Netanyahu MK, Chairman of the Claims Conference Executive Committee Moshe Sanbar, and Chairman of the Claims Conference Julius Berman

Inauguration of the New Museum at Yad Vashem

“ I should like someone to remember that there once lived a person named David Berger.”

David Berger, in his last letter, before being murdered by the Nazis in Vilna in 1941—quoted on the homepage of Yad Vashem’s Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names

“Dear David,

I do remember that you once lived and every day I try to be the person you would have liked me to be.

You would have probably made a better job of it than me but I have a good wife and a very special son and I love them as much as I am sure they love me.

I did not become famous or become a renowned academic or musician but many of us did and we have given our best to our world but more than that we have become good and decent human beings.

You would be proud of our Israel and you would have enjoyed the warm sun on your body and the food that we grow in our own land and the tall straight trees that are testimony to our endurance.

I wish I could have shown you a better life and I hope that you would at least have liked me and my friends.

I will not forget you David, and I will make sure no one ever will, till we meet again.”

Philip Morrison, Glasgow, Scotland (by e-mail to Yad Vashem, January 2005)

By the end of March this year, just four months after the Central Database of *Shoah* Victims’ Names—containing close to three million names of Holocaust victims—was launched on Yad Vashem’s website, over four million people had visited the site. An average of seven thousand new Pages of Testimony a month have been submitted—six times the monthly number received until then. The overwhelming interest this historic event has sparked throughout the world has exceeded all expectations. Across five continents, both national and international media have displayed a steady disclosure of human emotion, mass interest and personal accounts that has helped put Holocaust remembrance squarely in the forefront of worldwide discourse.

In the United Kingdom, Yad Vashem partnered with Tribe (The Young United Synagogue) on the innovative “Sixty Days for Sixty Years” educational project, marking 60 years since the end of the Holocaust. From 25 January to 25 March 2005 (60 days), people of all age groups and backgrounds studied various topics about Jewish identity in the modern age including the Holocaust, each in

the memory of a specific *Shoah* victim. Participants, such as Philip Morrison from Glasgow (quoted above), were encouraged to access the online Names Database to investigate the lives of the people they commemorated. They also helped collect names within their families and communities of those not yet memorialized on the Database.

Multitudes of people have contacted Yad Vashem, expressing their appreciation for the tremendous efforts involved in uploading the Database, and hundreds of visitors to the website have discovered information about new or lost family members through contacting those who submitted the Pages of Testimony over the past 50 years. One of the most moving stories was that of two sisters who were reunited after more than six decades after the granddaughter of one of the sisters conducted a search on the Database.

Klara Blaier, 81, and Hannah Katz, 78, were born to the Weiss family in a village near the town of Mukacevo (better known as Munkacs by the Jewish community that once

death marches, made *aliya* in 1948 and raised families just 45 miles apart. Both thought they were the only survivors from their families.

In January, Hannah Katz’s granddaughter Merav Zamir decided to check if the Page of Testimony she submitted in 1999 for her great grandmother Sheindl Weiss (on behalf of her grandmother) was on the online Database. To her surprise, she found that besides her own, there was another Page of Testimony for Sheindl Weiss submitted by her daughter Klara Blaier in 1993. As far as Merav knew, her grandmother had no surviving siblings. She immediately contacted Yad Vashem, who then assisted the families in making contact.

After 61 years, Klara and Hannah were finally reunited. In a newspaper interview, Merav said: “When I visited Auschwitz my life changed... my whole outlook was transformed. Now my life has changed again. I want to tell people never to give up—continue the search.”

The author is the Content Manager of the Yad Vashem Website

The online Names

Global Interest

flourished there) in what was then Czechoslovakia. After the war broke out, their parents sent them to different relatives in Hungary. They last saw each other in 1944, after the Nazis occupied Hungary. Both survived camps and



Hannah Katz (left) and Klara Blaier: sisters reunited after 61 years

Photo courtesy Rina castelnuovo

“Thank you for compiling the database of Holocaust victims' names.

I was able to confirm all that had been handed down from one generation to another by finding relatives listed here. This is an awesome project because no one should ever forget.”

Lee Ann Sontheimer Murphy (by e-mail to Yad Vashem)

“Often, when I think of the Holocaust, I conjure up images of emaciated people in striped prison uniforms... Your site shows people before they have spent months in a camp. It shows people who look like, well, just folks, which is the reality of the situation. Thanks for bringing that home.”

Yvonne (by e-mail to Yad Vashem)

Database

Exceeds All Expectations

“It is a wonderful thing you have done—not only keeping the memories alive, but also allowing those of us far away to look back into those memories that are quickly fading.”

Orie H. Niedzwiecki, Toronto, Canada
(by e-mail to Yad Vashem)

“I just want to take a moment to thank you for your outstanding work on making this information available on a website. To my knowledge we do not have any ancestors who were victimized in the Holocaust; however, I am delighted to be able to access so many stories of those who were. I share them with my children and help them to see what was done, and hopefully help them to become part of the solution to make sure that this NEVER happens again to anyone's family.”

Kim Inks, Lindon, UT (by e-mail to Yad Vashem)





Hearing It from the Source

by Orit Guttel

Chana Bar-Yesha came to Israel in the summer of 1946, a 14 year-old refugee liberated from Theresienstadt. Four years later she met her husband, also a Holocaust survivor. They quickly established their new home, making sure to visit Yad Vashem every 10th Tevet (the general day of mourning). “We were among the first to come to Yad Vashem and give testimony,” recalls Chana. “The urgent need to tell what happened burned within me. I felt I had to do everything I could so people would know what happened, to ensure it would never happen again.”

Yisrael Aviram had already begun to teach about Zionism and building the Land of Israel in the coal mines, where he labored with his father. “My father taught me *Torah, Mishnah* and *Gemarah*, and he spoke of the great importance of a state for the Jews,” he says. “When I arrived in Israel in 1946, the kibbutz members asked me,

‘Why didn’t you resist?’ I understood immediately that they didn’t know a thing about the force the Jews had to face—about the hope or the resistance that did happen in some places—not a thing.”

Encouragement from Yad Vashem

Chana and Israel are among the survivors who were able to talk about their wartime experiences after the end of the war. Others found it too difficult, condemning themselves to silence. But as time passed, many more began to open up and tell their stories. To help survivors express themselves as effectively as possible, the International School for Holocaust Studies conducts seminars teaching them how to give testimony, initiated by Holocaust survivor Hana Greenfield and supported by a grant from the German Foundation For Remembrance, Responsibility and Future.

“I returned to my house in Paris after the

Survivor Testimony in Holocaust Education

war, but the reality of our lives was very difficult,” explains survivor Ariella Flass. “As a twelve-year-old child who had spent four years during the war in an institution for abandoned children, I didn’t understand that I had ‘survived.’ All I knew was my father had deserted me, and hadn’t saved my mother.” Her prolonged inability to talk about what happened during the war vanished after a seminar she attended at the School six years ago.

“We try to help survivors emerge from behind the scenes—from the videotape, the books, the academic discussions—to take center stage and tell their story without any intermediary,” says Moshe Harel-Sternberg, a group and individual psychotherapist who facilitates the workshops.

Survivor Aliza Zeltzer participated in a seminar held in March: “When I arrived in Israel people didn’t believe there had also been a Holocaust in Libya,” she explained. “I came to Yad Vashem to learn how to tell the story so people will listen and understand.” Survivor Devora Weinstein, who also participated in the seminar, adds: “The workshops allow us to look at our stories from another angle.”

First-person testimony

For the past 12 years, Chana has accompanied delegations of students to Poland. She emphasizes the importance of giving first-person testimony: “In another few years, when the survivors are no longer around, students who met us will be able to say, ‘I heard Chana Bar-Yesha and other survivors tell us what happened to them in Auschwitz.’ It instills a deeper awareness of the Holocaust among the youth, and helps them fight Holocaust denial.”

Asher Oud survived the horrors of Auschwitz-Birkenau, arriving in Israel with a youth group. “That was the first time I began to think about the future. I didn’t talk about the Holocaust for over 50 years. Then, following a visit to Poland, I told my story for the first time. I decided to work for a more dignified memorial to the victims. In light of all the Holocaust denial, I came to the conclusion that anyone who could talk—must! The impact is very different; I see and hear its effect in the responses from the soldiers and students.”

First person testimony is also a means to pass on important educational concepts: “When I tell students that they made us undress completely, it is not just an illustration of what we went through,” says Yisrael. “I talk to them about the offense to human dignity, the insult and the humiliation, and how women especially may feel in such a situation.” Chana adds: “For a while in Auschwitz I refused to eat the grimy soup they gave us, which made my mother afraid they would separate us during a *selektion*. I was 12 years old, and I didn’t understand why I had to eat such a thing,” she explains. “With all the pain exposed to my audience, I add the grief I caused my mother, and talk to them about the importance of honoring your parents.”

Ariella describes the way she engages young Israeli soldiers: “I also had a uniform during the war,” she tells them. “But it was the uniform of an institution for abandoned children. You wear a uniform that represents something that belongs to you: the state.”

Continuing to tell

During his visit to Poland, Asher decided to erect a fitting monument to his murdered compatriots. “I felt that if God had protected me—if only to put up the monument—it was worth staying alive,” he explains. “But for the past 12 years I’ve also been accompanying delegations of youth and soldiers. That is my victory. Apparently I remained alive in order to tell my story to the next generation, and this is my main purpose in life.” Of everything that keeps him busy, Yad Vashem is his priority. “The trips to Poland are difficult for a man of my age, but I continue despite the physical challenge.”

Israel adds: “I tell my story out of the clear recognition that the youth and the future generations need to know what happened. This is my duty to my friends who are no longer here.”

Recent Highlights at the International School for Holocaust Studies

A variety of projects and seminars were held during the first few months of 2005, including the **Names Project**, which trains Israeli youth group representatives to run educational activities in schools making use of Pages of Testimony in the online Names Database; **seminars for Jewish leadership in CIS communities**, under the auspices of the Israel Fund for Education and Culture in Eastern Europe; and **preparatory days for the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor’s student delegation** set to depart for Poland at the end of March.

Study seminars for the IDF delegation to Poland began in February. There was also a seminar for the **Herzliya Municipality’s senior staff**, in the presence of the mayor, in which the city’s school principals and teachers participated.

Over 4,000 students from **birthright israel**—most of them from North America—participated in seminars from December to February, within the framework of various study groups attending training sessions at the School.

Counselor training courses were also held at the beginning of the year, including a course for youth counselors in Poland, and a course for multilingual youth counselors in anticipation of the “March of the Living.”

In March, a **course for survivors to give testimonies** was held, as well as a **seminar for Hungarians** organized in conjunction with the Hungarian Ministry of Culture on “Shaping the Memory,” and a **seminar for Russian-speaking educators**.

New Multimedia Programs on Ghetto Life

by Yiftach Meiri

“To sit in a theater, far from the gloomy prison atmosphere, to chat during the intermission in the entrance hall... This is a human need that cannot be suppressed.”

Lodz Ghetto Chronicle

An in-depth look at cultural life in the Lodz

ghetto raises many philosophical questions, particularly concerning the nature of the ghetto’s cultural activities: How did the Jews view the existence of a cultural life? Was there cooperation between religious and cultural activities? How did the extreme events experienced by the inhabitants affect language, and to what degree did language reflect what was happening?

“...As In Days Gone By”:

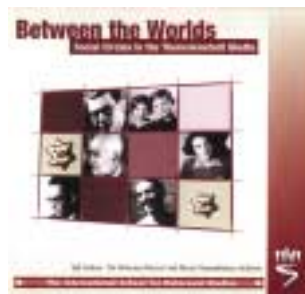
Struggling for Cultural and Spiritual Life in Ghetto Lodz is a new multimedia software program for high school pupils. The program is divided into sections dealing with topics such as: the unique language that developed in the ghetto; religious life; and children’s culture. The original source material includes

photographs, video testimonies and three-dimensional film clips.

Another new multimedia program focuses on the social relations that developed in the Theresienstadt ghetto. Since Jews expelled from different parts of Europe were sent to Theresienstadt, and as most families were split up within the ghetto, various social groups emerged, and relations between them were complex. *Between the Worlds: Social Circles in the Theresienstadt Ghetto* investigates how families, parents and couples coped with the inability to maintain normal family life in the ghetto environment. The program makes use of drawings from the ghetto, testimonies, journals, and other original sources.

The multimedia programs are made possible by the generous support of the Dan Family, Canada.

The writer works for the Curricular Development Department at the International School for Holocaust Studies





Jewish Brigade soldiers with German POWs on the Senio Front, Italy

Undisputed Heroes

by Katya Gusarov

“ I was born in the town of Shpikov, Podolia. My father—who died when I was five years old—was a watchmaker. In 1932, my family moved to Kiev. At the end of 11th grade, I was accepted into a special artillery-training academy, and from there I transferred to a school for junior officers. In May 1941, having reached the rank of lieutenant, I was sent to the border near the region of Przemysl. On 22 June, I first encountered the Nazi enemy. We defended our outpost, and continued to fight even when the German forces surrounded us. After all, we were never ordered to retreat,” says Leonid, with a furtive smile. “The order arrived only two weeks later. We set out land mines and left.”

Thus began the military odyssey of Leonid Bernstein, an ordinary Jew and undisputed hero of WWII. Leonid was among the hundreds of thousands of Jews who served in all the Allied armies against the Nazis. Their most

Leonid Bernstein: The Story of a Jewish Fighter

outstanding contribution was in the Red Army, where Jews served in all positions and at all levels of command. Over 100,000 Jews from the Red Army were captured by the Nazis; few survived. Many others—including those who managed to escape the Nazis in the late 1930s—served in the armies of the western Allies, especially in the United States and British Armed Forces. Some 30,000 Jews from *Eretz Yisrael* enlisted in the British Army, 5,000 of whom formed a separate unit known as the Jewish Brigade. The story of their heroism will be highlighted on 9 May at a wreath-laying



Leonid Bernstein: A Russian and Jewish hero

ceremony marking the 60th anniversary of the Allied Victory over Nazi Germany, at Yad Vashem’s Monument to the Jewish Soldiers

and Partisans, and at a state ceremony at the Armored Corps Memorial Complex at Latrun.

After a daring escape from the Germans, the injured Leonid eventually found sanctuary in the village of Ternovka, where he managed to obtain false documents under a Russian name. There he formed the first nucleus of the local underground organization, engaging mainly in sabotage and disseminating information from Soviet sources at the front. In early 1943 Bernstein and his group contacted the partisan *otriad* (detachment) led by Peotr Dubovoy. But before being accepted into the *otriad* he had to pass an “initiation test.” He blew up two trainloads of Germans and equipment making their way to the front, and subsequently became head of the *otriad*’s sabotage and espionage unit. Following an unsuccessful attempt to plant a land mine at the Shevchenko railway station, he was captured again. “At that moment,” Bernstein recalls, “I literally saw my life pass before my eyes.” And yet, against all odds he escaped and rejoined his comrades.

In May 1944, Bernstein parachuted into a POW camp near the town of Sanok. Many of the camp inmates joined Bernstein’s unit, increasing its ranks to nearly 400. In September the unit participated in the Slovakian revolt against the Germans, after which Bernstein managed to rejoin the Soviet army. After the war, Bernstein was awarded the Order of the Red Banner, and received the Order of the Patriotic War four times, as well as military decorations from Poland and Czechoslovakia. He was made an “honorary citizen” of four Polish cities and two cities in Czechoslovakia. Despite being nominated twice for Russia’s highest military decoration—the Order of Hero of the Soviet Union—Bernstein never received it. “No Jewish partisan,” he says, “even received any decoration higher than the Order of the Red Banner.”

Since 1993, Leonid Bernstein has been living in the northern region of Israel. Now a great-grandfather, he is still active in many social organizations, serving on the board of the Disabled War Veterans Organization, the Association of World War II Veterans, and the Association of Ukrainian Immigrants in Israel. He spends much of his time writing books aimed at passing on his military expertise to future generations. In his books Bernstein emphasizes the contribution of each individual fighter to the success of many espionage and sabotage operations, and recalls details of each one of his soldiers. Bernstein believes the secret of his success as a commander was his thorough preparation for each operation, and the personal attention he gave to each soldier. “These two things prevent unnecessary casualties and contributes to the fighters’ respect for the commander,” he says.

Although he was an undisputed hero who fought for the freedom of his homeland, it is clear that even he suffered from antisemitism, from sidelong glances to statements such as ‘Jews don’t know how to fight.’ Nevertheless, he emphasizes, “the fact that I am a Jew actually helped me to a certain extent: I knew I had to prove myself, to be better than the rest.”

The author works in the Righteous Among the Nations Department



Generation to Generation

Gathering of Holocaust survivors and their families on the occasion of the inauguration of the New Museum at Yad Vashem

Join thousands of participants in this historic gathering at Yad Vashem. For one remarkable and moving week, survivors and their families will share in a series of programs and events designed to make this gathering a truly memorable event. Participants will be among the first visitors to experience our new state-of-the-art Holocaust History Museum, which opened its doors in March.

Program:

Tuesday 3 May:

Official Welcome Reception (late afternoon in Jerusalem)

Wednesday 4 May:

Evening: official Holocaust Remembrance Day opening ceremony at Yad Vashem in the presence of Israel’s heads of state

Thursday 5 May – Holocaust Remembrance Day:

Participants are invited to attend ceremonies at Yad Vashem

Friday 6 May:

Optional tours of Jerusalem throughout the day

Sunday 8 May:

- Tour of the New Museum at Yad Vashem
- Discussions on: The Anguish of Liberation and the Return to Life
- Meetings between Holocaust Survivors
- Discussion on: “Images of Holocaust Survivors in the Creative Works of the Next Generations”

Monday 9 May:

State ceremony marking the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII and the victory over Nazi Germany, at the Armored Corps Memorial Complex at Latrun

For more information: www.yadvashem.org

by Dr. David Silberklang

Alan Elsner, *Guarded by Angels: How My Father and Uncle Survived Hitler and Cheated Stalin*

Yad Vashem, 2005, 256 pp., 55 NIS*

“ In the past twenty years, countless memoirs by survivors have appeared. This one stands out as one of the best, not only because of the amazing story it tells but also thanks to the vivid writing that grabs the reader’s interest and never lets go,” writes Professor David Cesarani in the foreword to Alan Elsner’s new book, *Guarded by Angels*. The book tells the dramatic story of Gene and Mark Elsner, and their cousin Henek, three young Jews forced to flee their home in Nowy Sacz (Sanz), in southern Poland in 1939, only to be arrested by Soviet authorities in Lwów and transported to gulags north of the Arctic Circle. Near death from starvation, they were released after 18 months and traversed thousands of miles across the Soviet Union, passing through Central Asia, before finding refuge in a Cossack village in the Caucasus. There they survived six months of Nazi occupation, during which Gene became a translator for the occupying Germans. From this vantage point he witnessed numerous atrocities and was able to contact and actively

aid the resistance. Gene and Mark were later drafted by a Polish brigade of the Red Army and participated in the Soviet advance through Poland and into Germany, where Gene was seriously wounded and assumed dead.

The book is written by Gene’s son, who went on to build a distinguished international journalistic career. It offers invaluable insight into life deep within the Soviet Union, as well as the Nazi occupation of the Caucasus. Gene and Mark were saved by their quick-

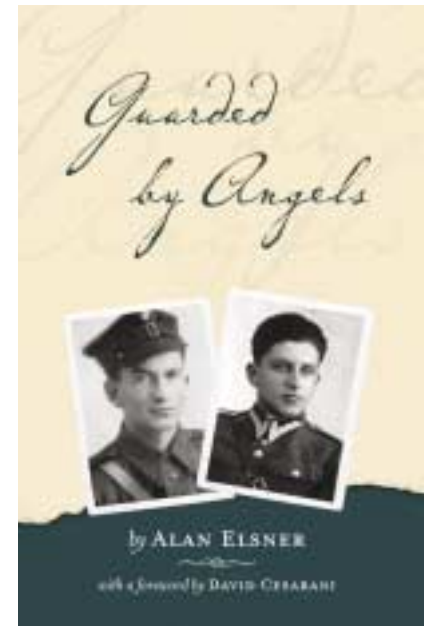
Transmitting Memory

wittedness and resourcefulness, which led to a series of hair-raising escapes. Despite efforts by local authorities to separate them, they succeeded in staying together. Their intense loyalty to each other contributed to their survival, but it also imperilled them repeatedly, one of the terrible ironies of that period.

Guarded by Angels is the second book in a series of memoirs being published jointly by Yad Vashem and the Holocaust Survivors’ Memoirs Project, created with a generous grant from Random House. The first book was *Days of Rain*, Enzo Tayar’s gripping diary-based memoir on Italy, published last November. With the available funding, it is hoped that a number of memoirs will be published annually over the next few years, with five books (nine memoirs) already scheduled for publication in 2005.

The goal of the series is to collect and preserve the autobiographical accounts of Holocaust survivors, making them available to a broad, English-speaking readership. Elsner’s book is a fine illustration of the essence of this mission, recording not only the amazing odyssey of Gene and Mark Elsner, but also chronicling, in Cesarani’s words, “the process by which memory is transmitted from generation to generation.”

The author is Editor-in-Chief of Yad Vashem Studies



Also New on the Shelf...



Wilhelm Filderman: *Memoirs & Diaries, Volume 1, 1900-1940*, Edited by Jean Ancel
Yad Vashem in association with Tel Aviv University, 2005, 600 pp., 111 NIS*

Personal memoirs and original documents illustrating the non-integration of the Jews of Romania in general, and Filderman in particular, as part of the story of the failure of Romanian democracy.

The publication of this book was made possible by grants from the Claims Conference, and the Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur.



Miriam Steiner-Aviezer: *The Soldier with the Golden Buttons* (new edition)
Yad Vashem, 2005, 148 pp., 63 NIS*

A child’s view of the Holocaust, this is the story of Jewish children wrenched from a carefree childhood to the overwhelming brutal savagery of war. A few days are enough to turn them into adults forced to contend with hunger and thirst, fear and death, and with the horror of being taken

away from their mothers. Only their inner world of childlike imagination, dreams and fairytales, can help them confront reality while maintaining their innocence.

Israel Gutman and Bella Gutterman (Editors): *Het Auschwitz Album: Reportage van een transport*

Yad Vashem in association with Uitgeverij Verbum, 2005, 250 pp., 206 NIS*

Israel Gutman and Bella Gutterman (Editors): *Das Auschwitz Album: Die Geschichte eines Transports*

Yad Vashem in association with Wallstein Verlag, 2005, 276 pp., 206 NIS*



The *Auschwitz Album* documents, in some 200 photos, the process of arrival, enlisting, *selektion*, confiscation of property and preparation for the physical liquidation of a Jewish transport from the

area of Carpatho-Ruthenia (a region annexed in 1939 to Hungary from Czechoslovakia), which arrived at the ramp of the extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau on May 1944. Yad Vashem and the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum present these special Dutch and German editions, which include one picture missing for years and additional information on the deportees’ identity and their tragic fate.

The German edition was made possible by a grant from the Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur.

*special price

Auschwitz Exhibition at the UN: Pictures “tell the story in a way that no words can”

On 24 January, an exhibition entitled “Auschwitz—the Depth of the Abyss” opened in the UN Headquarters, three days before the official 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps in Europe. The exhibit, which ran until 11 March, was curated by Yad Vashem, and sponsored by the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Some 100,000-150,000 people visited the exhibition, which comprised pictures from *The Auschwitz Album*—a visual record of the process of mass murder at Auschwitz-Birkenau—and sketches by Jewish artist Zinovii Tolkatchev, a soldier in the Red Army who was present at the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau on 27 January 1945.

In his remarks at the opening ceremony, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan noted the historic session on the Holocaust held earlier that day, and thanked Yad Vashem for helping “bring the images to us.” The pictures in the exhibit, he said “tell the story in a way that no words can,” and stressed the world’s obligation to “face up to what happened in the camps, and what led to their existence.”



Senior Art Curator Yehudit Shendar shows the Auschwitz Exhibition to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan

Events January – March 2005

18 January Founding conference of the **Public Council on Holocaust Survivor Contributions to the State of Israel**, in the presence of Supreme Court President Prof. Aharon Barak, with the participation of Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev, Deputy Chairman of the Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors Zeev Factor, Jewish Agency Treasurer Shai Hermesh, Haifa Mayor Yona Yahav, March of the Living President Avraham Hirschson MK, and Director of Military Intelligence Aharon Zeevi Farkash.

The project aims to locate and collect archival material and preserve the personal archives of Holocaust survivors, new immigrant organizations and institutions that dealt with the absorption of survivors in Israel. In addition, project organizers aim to raise public awareness of the survivors’ contribution to building the State of Israel; create the necessary infrastructure for scholars to research and document Holocaust survivor contributions in various fields; and initiate memorial activities, study days and seminars on the subject. The Council is comprised of public figures, Holocaust survivors, members of the next generations and others. Prof. Aharon Barak, project administration chair Moshe Zanbar, project academic advisor Prof. Hanna Yablonska, and Council head Aryeh Mintkowitz spoke at the founding conference, which was facilitated by



Project Administration Chairman Moshe Zanbar (left) and Supreme Court President Prof. Aharon Barak at the Founding Conference of the Public Council on Holocaust Survivor Contributions to the State of Israel

project director Zvi Gil. The event also included music from Andre Haidu’s “Heralding of the King,” performed by Roman Kachman (clarinet).

1 February Symposium marking **60 Years Since the Rescue Activities of Righteous Among the Nations Raoul Wallenberg**, in the presence of Minister for Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs Natan Sharansky, the Swedish Ambassador to Israel H.E. Mr. Robert Rydberg, and Avner Shalev. During the event, which took place in the Knesset Auditorium, a special session was held discussing the work of Wallenberg and the efforts to locate him, with the participation of Yosef (Tommy) Lapid MK, representatives of the Wallenberg family and researchers from Yad Vashem. In addition, a joint meeting on the subject was held, with the participation of the Committee for Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora headed by Colette Avital MK, and the Committee for Education and Culture headed by Meli Polishook-Bloch MK.

10 February Ceremony honoring **Righteous Among the Nations Giovanni Palatucci**, who rescued Jews while serving as an officer in the Italian police. The title and medal were granted by Yad Vashem Council Chairman Prof. Szewach Weiss to Italian Police Commissioner Giovanni De Gennaro, as Palatucci had no surviving family. The ceremony was held jointly with the Israel Police and the Italian Embassy in Israel, in the presence of Italian Minister of the Interior Giuseppe Pisanu, Internal Security Minister Gideon Ezra, Italian Police Commissioner Giovanni De Gennaro, the Israel Chief of Police, and survivor Elizabeth Quitt-Ferber.

24 February Study day commemorating the **60th anniversary of the liquidation of the Lodz Ghetto**, and marking the publication of the book *Lodz—The Last of the Polish Ghettos*, by Michal Unger.

Highlights of Yad Vashem's Activities in 2004

Holocaust Education

- 74,000 pupils from Israel and abroad and 30,000 Israeli soldiers participated in educational courses at the International School for Holocaust Studies and at the School's branch in Bet Wahlin.
- 29,000 Israeli students participated in the International School's *Nayedet* (Mobile Unit) programs.
- 1,660 Israeli educators attended 51 teacher-training seminars across the country, and 390 educators from abroad participated in 15 seminars at Yad Vashem.
- 4,000 students from teacher training colleges participated in 85 courses and seminars given by Yad Vashem. In addition, 9,400 teachers, students and guides visited the School's Pedagogic Center.
- Over 5,000 educators participated in training courses in 22 countries abroad, and 60 teachers completed 2 online courses. 5 seminars were held for survivors on how to give testimonies.
- 6 new educational units were published by the School.



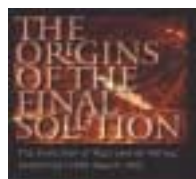
Events, Ceremonies and Public Relations

- 75 events and 250 memorial services were conducted by the Commemoration and Public Relations Division.
- The Division also conducted 648 guided tours of the Yad Vashem site. Some 800,000 visitors came to Yad Vashem in total.
- Approximately 1,560,000 visits to the Yad Vashem website were recorded before the uploading of the Central Database of *S Shoah* Victims' Names to the Internet on 22 November 2004. In the first month after the Names Database was uploaded, there were over 3 million visitors to the site.



Research and Publications

- 2 international conferences, 5 seminars, 12 research workshops and an annual lecture for a research chair were held by the International Institute for Holocaust Research.
- 7 senior researches were hosted by the Research Institute, assisted by research fellowship grants. In addition, 16 awards to masters and doctoral students, 1 doctoral research scholarship and 1 research award were granted by the Institute.
- 40 new books were published by Yad Vashem, including further volumes of both the *Lexicon of the Righteous Among the Nations* and *The Comprehensive History of the Holocaust*.



Christopher R. Browning

Documentation, Photographs, Testimonies, Names and Library Books

- 3,150,000 pages of Holocaust-era documentation were received by Yad Vashem. To date, Yad Vashem's Archive contains 65 million pages of documentation.

- 407,000 names from archival lists and documentation were added to the Central Database of *S Shoah* Victims' Names, which now has nearly 3 million names of Holocaust victims.
- 14,000 new Pages of Testimony were submitted to the Hall of Names before the uploading of the Names Database. The Hall of Names received 10,000 new Pages of Testimony in the first month afterwards. The Names Database now contains over 2 million Pages of Testimony (2/3 of the number of names in the Database).
- 1,843 photographs were added to the Photo Archives, and 1,600 photos to the Hall of Names. Yad Vashem currently houses over 269,300 photographs, including over 100,000 attached to Pages of Testimony.
- 529 new Holocaust survivor testimonies were recorded by the Oral History Section, Archives Division. The Archives currently house some 41,000 video, audio and written testimonies.
- 3,300 book titles were acquired by the Yad Vashem library. To date, the library holds 101,600 titles in 50 languages.
- 24,000 public inquiries were answered by the Reference and Information Services Department. In the first month after the Names Database was uploaded to the Internet, the department received some 14,000 inquiries.



Artworks and Artifacts

- 406 artifacts and 97 works of art were added Yad Vashem's Museums Division. The artifacts collection now holds over 23,000 items, and the art collection includes over 10,000 pieces.



Righteous Among the Nations

- 540 individuals were recognized as Righteous Among the Nations. To date, 20,757 individuals have been recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.



RECENT VISITS TO YAD VASHEM



US Secretary of State **Dr. Condoleezza Rice** visited Yad Vashem on 6 February, accompanied by Israel's Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom.



President of the Federal Republic of Germany **Prof. Dr. Horst Köhler** toured Yad Vashem on 17 January accompanied by President of Israel Moshe Katsav. (Pictured: President Köhler with his wife Frau Eva Luise Köhler in the Valley of the Communities)



During his tour of Yad Vashem on 16 January, accompanied by Director of the Library Dr. Robert Rozett, **Foreign Minister of Japan Nobutaka Machimura** visited the tree of Japanese Righteous Among the Nations **Sempo Sugihara**.



Canadian Foreign Minister Pierre Pettigrew visited Yad Vashem on 7 February, including the International School for Holocaust Studies and the Historical Museum (pictured).



On 5 January, **Hungarian Minister of National Heritage István Hiller** toured Yad Vashem's Historical Museum.



Foreign Minister of Argentina Dr. Rafael Antonio Bielsa toured the Historical Museum during his visit to Yad Vashem on 10 January.

German Righteous Visit Yad Vashem

by **Dr. Mordecai Paldiel**

In Israel on a private visit, 80-year-old Karin Friedrich and 89-year-old Heinz Drossel toured Yad Vashem on 28 February with Director of the Righteous Among the Nations Department **Dr. Mordecai Paldiel**.

Born in 1925, Karin Friedrich assisted her mother Ruth Andreas-Friedrich in providing false credentials and food ration cards to Jews fleeing from the Nazis in Berlin. The action of these two women is richly illustrated in the diary kept by Ruth, which was published in 1947, later translated to English under the title



Berlin Underground. Ruth was honored as a Righteous Among the Nations in 2002; Karin received the honor last year.

While home on leave in early 1945, Heinz Drossel, a lieutenant in the German army, learned that some Jews who were living underground had been betrayed and needed another hiding place. He immediately offered his apartment in Berlin for this purpose, and helped move their personal belongings. After the war, Heinz married a Jewish woman whom he had also hidden during the war years. Heinz Drossel was honored as a Righteous Among the Nations in 1999.

The author is Director of the Righteous Among the Nations Department

Yad Vashem mourns the loss of a great friend and supporter **Alfred Paul Ernst Freiherr von Oppenheim** of Köln, Germany. His father, Righteous Among the Nations Friedrich Carl Freiherr von Oppenheim, used his privileged status to assist Jews in distress throughout the war. In 1997 the family endowed the Baron Friedrich Carl von Oppenheim Chair for the Study of Racism, Antisemitism and the Holocaust at the International Institute for Holocaust Research. Speaking on behalf of his brother and sister at the endowment ceremony, Alfred Freiherr von Oppenheim said: "The distinction bestowed on our father is also an obligation for us. We feel we should, in our way, act in his spirit." Yad Vashem remembers Alfred Freiherr von Oppenheim as a dear and generous friend and joins his wife Jeane and his three children in mourning his passing.



Torchlighters

2005



Mordechai (Motke) Zeidel



Born in 1925, in Swenciany, near Vilna (then Poland). From 1941, Mordechai worked as a slave laborer until his escape to the Vilna ghetto. After the ghetto was liquidated, he was caught by the

Gestapo and taken to Ponary, where he worked, in shackles, in the pits containing the victims' corpses. There he also witnessed the mass murder of friends and family from Vilna and surrounding areas. Following a well-organized escape, he joined the partisans, taking part in the liberation of Vilna. Mordechai arrived undetected in Israel in 1945, and fought in the War of Independence. He has 3 children and 6 grandchildren.

Chaya Avraham



Born in 1926 in Vascauti, Bukovina. Chaya was deported with her family in 1942 to Mogilev and then to the death camp at Peciora. She escaped with her sister, together enduring a long

journey of survival before reuniting with their family. After their father's death, they were taken to an orphanage in Bucharest, from where they emigrated to Israel with a religious youth group. Chaya has 3 children and 6 grandchildren.

Dr. Robert M. Finaly



Born in 1941 in Grenoble, France. In March 1944, his parents were deported to Auschwitz, and Robert and his younger brother Gad (Gerald) were placed in the city's Catholic children's

home. The manager of the institution cared for them, but refused to return them to their family after the war, instead baptizing them to Christianity. After a five-year legal battle by the boys' aunts—during which the boys were hidden in various Catholic institutions in Italy and Spain—they were returned to their families, and emigrated to Israel to live with their aunt. Today, Robert has 2 sons and a grandson.

Sofia Englesman



Born in 1926, in Rotterdam, Holland. In 1943, the population of the hospital she worked in as a nurse was evacuated to Westerbork. Working as a slave laborer, she survived serious illness in Sobibor, Lublin, Trawniki, Katowice, Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen and Raguhn. Liberated from Theresienstadt on the brink of death with typhus, Sofia was reunited with surviving family members, and emigrated to Israel in 1949. She has 4 sons, 21 grandchildren and 2 great-granddaughters.

Yerakhmiyel Felzenshteyn



Born in 1923, in Kharkov, Ukraine. Recruited to the Red Army in 1941, Yerakhmiyel was wounded in Eltigen, in the Crimean Peninsula, a bullet splitting his jaw and tongue. For his role in the assault, he was awarded the title of "Hero of the Soviet Union." After his recuperation, he rejoined the war, fighting in the long battle for Sevastopol, where he was seriously wounded in his leg. In 1974, Yerakhmiyel emigrated to Israel with his family. He has 2 children and 5 grandchildren.

Malka Rosental



Born in 1934, in Stanislawow, Poland. After her younger brother's murder, she and her mother escaped. They and her father hid in a barn, but when her mother was murdered before her eyes, Malka and her father ran away. After months of wandering in the forest, she was taken in and hidden by the Kot family. Although later reunited with her father, Malka decided to emigrate to Israel with her friends. Malka has 2 daughters and 6 grandchildren.

Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day 2005

Program of Events at Yad Vashem

Eve of Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day: Wednesday 4 May

20:00 Opening ceremony marking Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day, in the presence of Israel's President, Prime Minister and Speaker of the Knesset—

Warsaw Ghetto Square

Admission by personal invitation only

22:00 Symposium on "Repercussions of Identity: Personal and Collective Memory" with the participation of author Malka Adler, Dr. Eli Ben Gal, Orna Ben Dor, Rabbi Dr. Binyamin Lau, Professor Maoz Azaryahu, Shlomo Artzi and Avner Shalev, moderated by Emanuel Halperin—**Auditorium**

Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day: Thursday 5 May

8:30 – 15:00 Meetings with survivors, multimedia workshops, special tours, and creative activities—**International School for Holocaust Studies** (Tel: 02 644-3631/441/630)

10:00 Siren

10:02 Wreath-laying ceremony with the participation of Israel's President, Speaker of the Knesset, President of the Supreme Court, Chairman of the Jewish Agency, Chief of General Staff, Chief of Police, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, Mayor of Jerusalem, public figures, representatives of survivor organizations, school children and delegations from throughout the country—**Warsaw Ghetto Square**

10:30 – 12:30 "Unto Every Person There is a Name" Recitation of Holocaust victims' names by members of the public—**Hall of Remembrance**

11:00 "Unto Every Person There is a Name" Recitation of Holocaust victims' names in the presence of the Speaker of the Knesset, heads of state and public figures—**Knesset**

13:00 Main memorial ceremony—**Hall of Remembrance**

14:00 "Letter from Warsaw" Concert in cooperation with the Israel Opera—**Auditorium**

16:00 Memorial ceremony for former members of the Jewish Resistance in France—**Auditorium**

17:30 Ceremony for youth movements in conjunction with the Ministry of Education's Information Center, Youth and Social Administration, and Youth Movement Council—**Valley of the Communities**

For details on special concerts for Holocaust Remembrance Day and marking 60 years since the end of WWII, tel: 02 644 3575, or go to: www.yadvashem.org