Over 200 attendees at the American Society for Yad Vashem Annual Spring Luncheon gathered in the Pegasus Suites of the Rainbow Room on the sunny afternoon of May 21st to honor two distinguished members of the survivors’ community, Stella Skura and Anna Erlich. After greeting the audience, the Chairman of the Luncheon, Marilyn Rubenstein said:

“Today, we celebrate our accomplishments and reaffirm our commitment to Yad Vashem by acknowledging the survivors who triumphed over tremendous adversity, rebuilding their lives. We also prove wrong those who would deny the atrocities of the Holocaust ever happened. We all derive inspiration from our Chairman and founder, Eli Zborowski.”

In his speech, the Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem, Eli Zborowski, said:

“The American Society for Yad Vashem’s achievements are evident throughout the Yad Vashem landscape in Jerusalem. They include more than thirty major projects which have rendered Yad Vashem as the Global Guardian of Holocaust Remembrance. For this, I owe a personal debt of gratitude to my late wife, Elizabeth Zborowski, who served as a sounding board for ideas and who worked along with our staff in making this afternoon a success.

“In 1997, we inaugurated our Young Leadership Associates. They have since grown from a handful of young adults to a membership which numbers in excess of 700. Under the able guidance of Caroline Massel, their activities have significant impact on the Cause of Remembrance. Anna has been a devoted member of the Society since its inception in 1981. She has demonstrated her steadfast resolve by her attendance at and support of all our events. On behalf of the American Society for Yad Vashem, I am pleased to extend a hearty mazel-tov to Anna on being honored this afternoon.

“Friendships among survivors are different than most conventional friendships. Friendships among survivors are different than most conventional friendships. Friendships among survivors are different than most conventional friendships.”

“The theme of this year’s luncheon is ‘Women, Resistance and Renewal.’ The theme is a fitting tribute to two women, Stella Skura and Anna Erlich, who have dedicated their lives to remembering the Shoah and passing on to their children and community that it is not a mere commemorative act, but a sacred legacy.

“I am honored to introduce our esteemed and dedicated founder and Chairman, Eli Zborowski. Eli continues to be the driving force behind the American Society for Yad Vashem. For close to 30 years he has worked tirelessly in the name of Remembrance. Those who wish to deny that the atrocities of the Holocaust ever happened will have people everywhere who will be fortified with the knowledge to prove them wrong. We who are committed to this cause now, including the third generation, are following his lead. Constantly mindful that the world never forgets, Eli, along with Yad Vashem, works to make sure that the world is armed to prove wrong those who would deny the Holocaust.

“Today, we celebrate our accomplishments and reaffirm our commitment to Yad Vashem by acknowledging the survivors who triumphed over tremendous adversity, rebuilding their lives. We also salute the contributions of our Young Leadership to the noble cause of Remembrance. We all derive inspiration from our Chairman and founder, Eli Zborowski.”

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USA — U.S. President Barack Obama has paid tribute to the memory of the 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust. The president called on people worldwide to ensure that nothing like it ever happens again.

In a Holocaust Days of Remembrance ceremony at the U.S. Capitol, President Obama warned of the dangers of silence when atrocities are being committed. And he said he bearing witness to such horrors is only the first step.

"To commit ourselves to resisting injustice and intolerance and indifference, in whatever forms they may take, whether confronting those who tell lies about history or doing everything we can to prevent and end atrocities like those that took place in Rwanda, those taking place in Darfur," Mr. Obama said.

President Barack Obama shakes hands with Kadishah Morris Rosen, a Holocaust survivor, at the end of the National Commemoration of the Days of Remembrance on Capitol Hill.

Mr. Obama did not name names, but said that some people still deny that the Holocaust took place.

"There are those who insist the Holocaust never happened, who perpetuate every form of irreparable racism and anti-Semitism, homophobia, xenophobia, sexism, and more — hatred that degrades its victim and diminishes us all," Mr. Obama said.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has often denied the Holocaust. At the Capitol Hill ceremony, Nobel laureate and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel condemned the Iranian president's remarks.

"Iran’s state is not a Jewish disease, and its cure is incumbent upon those who perpetrate it," Mr. Wiesel said.

"We have learned that our spiritual heritages is dependent on physical security. A people which lost a third of its members, a third of its children to the

At the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in hour commemoration began after sunset when the Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, as well as scores of ambassadors and dignitaries from around the world.

In his speech, Peres said that the appearance of the Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at the Geneva Durban review conference hours earlier was "a deplorable disgrace.

"The conference opening today in Geneva constitutes an acceptance of racism, rather than the fight against it, and its main speaker is Ahmadinejad, who calls for the annihilation of Israel and denies the Holocaust," Peres said.

"Criticism of the Jewish state is also tinged with chilling anti-Semitism. Among those who collaborated with the Nazis, and those who stood by and let the Holocaust happen, there are those who criticize the one state that rose to grant refuge to Holocaust survivors. The one state that will prevent another Holocaust."

Anti-Semitism is not a Jewish disease, and its cure is incumbent upon those who perpetrate it," the president said.

"We have learned that our spiritual heritages is dependent on physical security. A people which lost a third of its members, a third of its children to the

Holocaust, does not forget, and must not be caught off-guard," Peres said.

Netanyahu, speaking after Peres, also mentioned the Geneva conference, lamenting that "those who are chose to participate in the display of hate.

The prime minister directed a question at Swiss President Hans-Rudolf Merz, who met with Ahmadinejad in Geneva on Sunday. "I turn to you, the Swiss president, and ask you: How can you meet someone who denies the Holocaust and wishes for a new Holocaust to occur?"

Netanyahu praised his "important countries" that chose to distance themselves from the conference, mentioning the United States, Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Australia and New Zealand.

"We will not let the Holocaust deniers perpetrate another holocaust on the Jewish people," he said. "This is the highest responsibility of the State of Israel and of myself as prime minister.

"Israel is the shield and the hope of the Jewish people. Here we create for the

It was an emotional day for participants in the March of the Living in Poland commemorating the 6 million Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

After arriving at Birkenau, some marchers placed small wooden slabs with messages of mourning on them between the train tracks that brought Jews to their death. One read "I love and miss you Papa Adam," while another read "In living memories of families Gombro and Markovitz, who were brutally killed by the Nazis.

"I am back because for me this is a pilgrimage. I come back to pay tribute, first to the ones I lost, and then to the hundreds of thousands who died here and were murdered here," said Noah Klieger, an 83-year-old Jew from Poland, who survived the camp along with his mother and father.

"I feel it's my duty to come because I was saved and many others were not," he said.

The march ended in a ceremony with the Kaddish at the monument to the camp's victims between the red-brick ruins of Birkenau's crematoria.

Younger marchers said it was important to "teach these horror the survivors went through.

"I'm here right now in memory of the people who perished, in honor of the people (survivors) who are coming back," said Nathan Koorie, 18. "They had not only the strength to endure what they went through but they've come back now and they are teaching us to be a testament to their strength and will to survive."
A former Nazi concentration camp guard who served at death camps in Poland, France, and Germany, has been deported from the United States.

The US Justice Department said it deported Josias Kumpf, 83, who worked as an assistant warden at the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp in Germany and at the Trawniki Labor Camp in Poland.

Kumpf, who was born in Serbia, emigrated from Austria to America in 1956, acquired US citizenship in 1964, and settled in Racine, Wis.

US officials said he took part in heinous acts during the Second World War that contributed to the death of thousands of civilians. Prisoners under his watch at slave labor sites in Nazi-occupied France were forced to build launching platforms for German missile attacks on Britain.

While a guard at Trawniki, he participated in a November 3, 1943, mass shooting in which 8,000 Jewish men, women, and children were murdered in a single day.

Kumpf helped guard the prisoners – including approximately 400 children – who were shot and killed in pits at Trawniki. According to Kumpf, his assignment had him “shooting to kill any survivors.”

Josias Kumpf, by his own admission, stood guard with orders to shoot any survivor who attempted to escape an SS massacre that left thousands of living prisoners who attempted to escape.

According to Kumpf, his assignment had him “shooting to kill any survivors.”

The Justice Department’s Office of Special Investigations – the US office tasked with locating and prosecuting or repatriating Nazi war criminals hiding out in the United States – has won cases against 170 individuals since it began operations in 1979, the office said.

Among boys of German background, 7 percent in former East German states showed signs of anti-Semitic xenophobia, as opposed to 3 percent in western states. The institute’s director, Christian Pfeiffer, suggested it might be due to the decades of anti-Israel propaganda promoted in the former Communist East Germany.

In all questions related to far-right ideologues such as anti-Semitism, “boys are far above the girls,” Pfeiffer noted, adding that, in general, the survey also found that girls who joined far-right groups usually were following a boyfriend.

A portrait of Venetian nobleman Alvise Vendramin is attributed to the school of Vendramin, and placed in a bottle was discovered in a concrete wall in a school that prisoners had used to escape in the Holocaust.

The note’s authenticity has been verified by the Auschwitz museum official.

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A发货 concertina, this is the most enigmatic document to come out of Auschwitz.

The note was written by inmate number 283641. The prisoner’s identity is unknown to this day.

The note’s authenticity has been verified by Irena Steinfeldt, director of the Righteous Among the Nations department at Yad Vashem, said the museum was not familiar with the stories of Fossa and Cassenito. She urged the Jewish families to come forward so people who saved them could be recognized.

In this respect, “we need to tell these stories, and we need to hear these stories,” Steinfeld said.

There are many people who have approached us and haven’t spoken, why wouldn’t I be happy if the families contacted Yad Vashem and told us,” she said.

Other stories of Jews being saved in the same area were recorded, she said, usually involving Jews who fled from Rome to nearby villages. In one town, Tagliacozzo Alto, a priest named Don Gaetano Tantalo took in the Orvieto family in the spring of 1944, even preparing a traditional Passover meal for them, she said. He was recognized by Yad Vashem in 1978.

The survey’s authors estimate that there were close to 1,000 manifestations of all types of anti-Semitism throughout the year. Many of the German incidents used Holocaust motifs instead of classic Jewish stereotyping.

The report made clear that individuals who participated in crimes against humanity do not find sanctuary in this country,” she said.

The survey’s authors estimate that there were close to 1,000 manifestations of all types of anti-Semitism throughout the year. Many of the German incidents used Holocaust motifs instead of classic Jewish stereotyping.

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**REVIEWED BY DR. DIANE CYPKIN**

Radio and the Jews: The Untold Story of How Radio Influenced America’s Image of Jews, 1920s-1950s by David S. Siegel and Susan Siegel is a unique book. Moreover, it should be of special interest to readers of M&R. Why? It makes one think about the power of a communication medium—in this case the radio—to affect the listener. And it can’t help but make us wonder if America’s action, or rather inaction, vis-à-vis the Jews of Europe during World War II was affected by the radio programs Americans had or were then listening to. This program was about a Jewish immigrant family, all immigrants could relate to it, and it did.

In its 1936-through-1945 run, the family, now middle class, was soon living in Connecticut. Molly replaced her Yiddish accent with charming malapropisms. For example, there’s the irony she makes of her son Sammy’s violin teacher as to how Sammy’s progress is going. “How is the blossoming of my offspring?” Meanwhile, storylines included conversations voicing concerns about what Jews were experiencing in Eastern Europe. When the actor playing her son, Alfred, was drafted, “It’s a daisy story,” she told the audience, “with a segment that publicized his anti-Semitism spread by the Jews.” Thus, there was Henry Ford, who, while not a radio speaker himself, supported a weekly program, in fact, result- ing in a respect for all ethnic minorities. In the late 1930s, however, there were others on the radio, brutal voices blaming the Jews, most especially, for dictatorial events in the world. Number one on this list was Charles E. Coughlin on his program The Golden Hour of the Little Flower. While his fal-ceous remarks were about them began in to a head in his November 20, 1938 broadcast. In this sermon, coming on the heels of Kristallnacht, the clever Father, among other things, simply rationalized away the Nazi attack on the Jews of Germany. How? He claimed that Nazism was simply a “defense mechanism” against communism spread by the Jews. Thus, according to the Father, Nazism was simply protecting their country when they attacked them.

Nora was Father Coughlin alone. There were others spewing their brand of anti-Semitism over the radio. There was Charles Lindbergh, best known for his his-toric nonstop flight from America to Europe. Lucky for him, the surface of this volume was that Coughlin, Lindbergh, Smith, and Ford? Moreover, if they didn’t like it, could they completely erase what so many listeners had heard? Ileave that for readers to dis-cover and contemplate . . .

Needless to say, this reviewer has only just scratched the surface of this volume. Radio and the Jews “examines over 100 radio programs that featured Jewish themes and/or characters.” Moreover, the book comes with a wonderful CD containing existing excerpts of radio programs discussed in the volume. In short, this is a thought-provoking and major work reading and research. 

Dr. Diane Cypkin is a Professor of Media and Communication Arts at Pace University.
REMEMBERING “THE DUTCH AUSCHWITZ” – THE STORY OF SOBIBOR

BY RABBI DR. BERNHARD H. ROSENBERG

A child of survivors of the Nazi death camps who has published extensive articles and editorials regarding the Holocaust, I am deeply disturbed and sense the deep pangs of anguish of those who still cannot either comprehend or appreciate the true acts of heroism which prevailed. As a practicing rabbi who refuses to allow the memories of the past to be distorted, I appeal to our fellow Jew: “Never forget the acts of heroism which made it possible for us to exist.”

The recurring questions which haunt survivors and their children echo through the halls of time. “Why didn’t they fight back? Why did they enter the chambers of death like sheep to the slaughter?” By our standards, such actions as placing lining up against a wall to be shot or walking silently into the gas chambers or standing nude and obedient at the edge of a ravine filled with blood-covered bodies awaiting one’s own turn to die, defy all understanding. Indeed, anti-Semites would suggest that Jews were different, somehow not quite as brave, not quite as courageous as the average person. Our enemies will even conclude that the Jews were guilty of crimes they were accused of, and hence with heavy conscience and accepting the punishment for their “crimes,” the Jews quietly submitted to their deserved punishment.

T here is little in Sobibor to remind one of the Nazi concentra-

tion camp where 34,000 Dutch Jews died. That is going to change, thanks in part to the work of Jeetje Manheim.

Anyone who didn’t know better would think they are in a typical Polish hamlet, where clean streams flow in the wind, farmers on old tractors rumble by and lumbermen lug tree trunks. But Stara Kolonia Sobibor is not typical, nor will it ever be.

During World War II this was the site of the German extermination camp Sobibor, where 170,000 Jews, more than 34,000 of them Dutch, were sys-

ternatically murdered. It is a difficult place to reach, deep in the forests of Poland’s eastern border area, and easy to forget. But that is going to change. The Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, and Israel recently agreed on a major “renovation” aimed at opening up the former camp to the outside world and pulling it out of the shadow of what was once Auschwitz-Birkenau camp in southern Poland.

“We must do right by the victims of Sobibor,” State Secretary Jel Bussaker said during a working visit to Poland. “The camp is unknown, even in the Netherlands, since virtually no one survived and lived to tell.”

Unlike at Auschwitz, there is nothing to see at Sobibor. The Germans dismantled the camp in 1943 after an uprising in which 12 SS officers were killed and sev-

eral hundred Jews managed to escape. Fifty of them died in the war. The Germans planted trees on the bare terrain.

As Bussaker’s delegation made its way to the edge of the young forest, Jeetje Manheim, chairman of the Sobibor Foundation, makes the invisible visible. The camp was built, and raw oaths were on the menu,” she says. “Anyone who was unable to supplement this nation did not have much hope of survival.”

The handful of houses that make up present day Stara Kolonia Sobibor, adjoined the forest, are from after the war, with its own version of the historical truth. “The camp guards in Sobibor were Ukrainian,” says Janusz Kloc, the local starosta (county leader). “But you could not say that out loud to anyone part of the Soviet Union then, a friendly nation.”

In the 1970s an austere monu-

ment was built at the place where the bodies from the gas chambers were burnt on grates in the open air. A plaque explains that “Soviet prisoners of war, Jews, Poles and gypsies” were murdered here. The fact that it was mainly Jews was kept silent. The Polish suffering could not be over- shadowed by Jewish suffering. “This really shouldn’t be,” Bussaker says, pointing to the hill of ashes where she has just laid a wreath. “Somewhere here are all those ashes and we are just merri-

ly treading on it.” It is one of the issues she hopes to resolve with the ren-

ovation of the camp.

A great deal has already changed since the fall of communism. There are new plaques — and these ones do declare the victims to be Jews. In 2003 a “reflection lane” was opened, where survivors can place stones with the names of mur-

docked and other victims who had coincides with the route to the gas cham-

bers, dubbed the Himmelfahrtstrasse (road to heaven) by the deportees. “The reflection lane is unique in our country,” says Marek Bem, director of the regional museum of Wodawa, the nearby town in whose territory Sobibor falls. “In Poland we often remember collectively; victims are anonymous. Here there is a story behind every name.”

Jeetje Manheim, herself a surviving rela-

tive, is happy with the attention now being paid to the camp, but she is also con-

cerned. The last thing she wants is for Sobibor to become like Bełzec, a former extermination camp to the south, where a genocide monument funded by American money was unveiled in 2004. “Holocaust architecture,” Manheim calls it.

“Bełzec is overwhelming,” Manheim says. “You don’t get the space for your own thoughts there. Sobibor is much more intimate.” She does see room for improvement: the small museum in the hamlet does not have decent toilet facili-

ties or heating. And the texts are in Polish. “But beyond that Sobibor can stay as it is.”

Bem too hopes the good intentions of the various governments will not degenerate into architectural bombast. “This is the truth,” he says, with a sweeping move-

ment of his arm indicating the forest.

First published in De Spiegel.

THEY WENT LIKE SHEEP TO THE SLAUGHTER AND OTHER MYTHS

BY RABBI DR. BERNHARD H. ROSENBERG

N othing could be a greater falsifica-

tion of the truth. The hopelessness seen in their faces was not a reflection of guilt; rather it was a realization that they had been completely deserted and betrayed by humanity. The light of morality, con-

science, and brotherhood had been completely extinguished, and for them life became a terror-filled abys.

Responsibility for their death clearly lies with the Nazis and their collaborators.

Individuals confront-

ed by the Holocaust often ask obvious questions to which there are no simplistic answers. One needs to read, to study, to discuss, to reflect, and to interview individu-

als who have lived through the tortures of hell on earth. Since it is evident that many will not read the volumes we have written, we will try to provide you with the sober, by the scientific, by humanity. The light of morality, con-

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THE STORY OF SOBIBOR

Sobibor town in whose territory

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The recurring questions which haunt survivors and their children echo through the halls of time. “Why didn’t they fight back? Why did they enter the chambers of death like sheep to the slaughter?” By our standards, such actions as placing lining up against a wall to be shot or walking silently into the gas chambers or standing nude and obedient at the edge of a ravine filled with blood-covered bodies awaiting one’s own turn to die, defy all understanding. Indeed, anti-Semites would suggest that Jews were different, somehow not quite as brave, not quite as courageous as the average person. Our enemies will even conclude that the Jews were guilty of crimes they were accused of, and hence with heavy conscience and accepting the punishment for their “crimes,” the Jews quietly submitted to their deserved punishment.

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First published in De Spiegel.
During the past year.

A member of the Army division who died during a memorial service in New York City included dozens of soldiers and people, including about 50 other relatives and gave thanks to survivors.

The train wandered for five days before it was abandoned by the Germans after five days and liberated by troops from the U.S. 30th Infantry Division. On March 27, eight survivors of that horrific experience of an annual reunion that is held in different cities each year. The survivors shared stories and gave thanks with about 50 other people, including dozens of soldiers and their wives.

A number of them choked back tears during a memorial service when a brass band sounded 80 times — once for each member of the Army division who died during World War II.

"As we marched out of the camp under SS guard, we were passing stacks of dead bodies. They were stacked like cordwood," said Spitz, 79, a Jew who was arrested in Budapest, Hungary, and spent 13 months in the camp before being put on the train. He weighed 65 pounds at the time.

"Only God knew where we were going or what the future held for us," said Spitz, who now lives in Fayetteville, Ark.

The train wandered for five days until it was abandoned near Magdeburg, about 50 miles southwest of Berlin.

"When the American medics arrived they said, "You are free! You are free!"" recalled Spitz. He said many on the train were too weak to move or even comprehend.

"The train is thought to have carried 2,500 prisoners, and reunion organizers think as many as 400 may still be living. It included both passenger and cattle cars, which were used by the Germans to transport 40 soldiers. On this trip, however, those cattle cars were packed with 90 prisoners with no food or water.

"They were filthy. They were skin and bones," said Spitz, who was freed in Magdeburg, Germany, in April 1945. "They were freed by the Americans in Magdeburg, and they were the last train to come out of the concentration camp."

The reunion with the Holocaust survivors results from a project started by Matthew Rozell, a history teacher from Hudson Falls, N.Y. He posted a soldier's account of the liberation on the Web in 2002 and survivors have found the site over the years.

To date, about 50 have been located, Rozell said. "They are all over the world. We want to find more," he said.

The train was liberated on April 13, 1945, days before Bergen-Belsen, which is in northern Germany.

The Magdeburg train was one of three to leave the concentration camp in the last days of the war. One arrived at another German concentration camp in Czechoslovakia, while the third was inter- cepted by the Soviets.

Muddling the Holocaust in Lithuania

BY STEVEN F. LAWSON

At Peter Novick argues in The Holocaust in American Life (1999), in the late 1940s Americans, especially Jews, hesitated to discuss the Holocaust openly. The Nuremberg Trials and the presentation of film footage of Nazi atrocities in U.S. government accounts had appropriately shocked the citizens in the U.S. and Allied countries. The conversion of postwar Germany into an ally against the Soviet Union as the Cold War began did not change the horror of the extermination of Jews, Lithuanian citizens by the Nazis and their collaborators, but it did encourage American leaders to focus on the "Red Fascism" of the U.S.S.R. instead of the German fascism that had produced the Holocaust.

This has changed of course during the past sixty years. American presidents have visited the sites of concentration camps, and Hollywood has supplied a vast array of television series, documentaries, and feature films testifying to the human misery inflicted by the Third Reich during World War II. The end of the Cold War in the last decade of the twentieth century further allowed the Holocaust to become a subject of public discussion and analysis without upsetting the U.S.'s geopolitical demands in battling Communism.

Yet the end of the Cold War has brought about new and subtle misrepresentations in remembering and depicting the Holocaust. The dissolution of the Soviet empire and the creation of independent republics in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States brought political, economic, and intellectual freedoms. However, this independence has posed challenges both for keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive and for safeguarding those remaining elderly Jews who fought on the Partisan side during World War II along the Soviet Union. Such is the situation in Lithuania, where the Nazis and their collaborators murdered over 200,000 Jews, around 95 percent of the country's prewar Jewish population.

Ironically, as Lithuania has entered a new internal cold war without rejecting the idea of the Jewish Holocaust, the Lithuanian government has called for historical "symmetry," one that recognizes and even privileges the suffering of Lithuanians under Soviet rule. In promoting a kind of Holocaust equality, the Lithuanian government financed an "International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania" and established a "Genocide and Resistance Research Center of Lithuania" in its capital, Vilnius.

The problem is not in vindicating the historical suffering of diverse victims of tyranny, but in using this anti-Soviet sentiment to minimize Lithuania's enormous complicity in the destruction of its wartime Jewish population. This is no attempt by the government to engage in the shameless, anti-Semitic practice of Holocaust denial, as practiced by the Iranian government, but to confuse the issue in a way that diminishes sympathy and support for Jewish victims of the Holocaust. The dis- creditable cause of Holocaust denial has been replaced by what one scholar, a professor at the Vilnius Yiddish Institute, calls "the Holocaust obfuscation." The term has been gaining traction since The Economist published a piece on the subject in August. Lithuania must stop blam- ing the victims.

The key to Holocaust obfuscation is to dress the connection between Jewish citizens who escaped certain extermination by joining the Soviet-sponsored partisan groups in fighting the Nazis on the one hand, and on the other the Stalinist regime that inflicted pain and terror upon the Lithuanian people and upon its Jewish minority too. Undoubtedly there were Lithuanian Jewish Communists (before the war well under 1 percent of the Jewish population), but placing their actions on a par with the Nazi slaughter of millions of people masks a sophisticated and pernicious form of anti-Semitism in the name of equality and tolerance.

Indeed, Vilnius's Genocide Research Center displays many books about Soviet-era atrocities, but almost none about the Jewish Holocaust. Its Genocide Museum barely mentions the Holocaust at all. To make matters worse, Lithuanian officials have recently sought to question Holocaust survivors George Sosnjen, left, and Robert Spitz, right, who were liberated from train out of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, reunite with their liberators from the 30th Infantry Division of World War II.

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The Reader starring Kate Winslet and David Kross.

The question for the judge is whether Schmitz wrote a report about the death by burning of female prisoners locked up for the night in a church hit by an Allied bomb. (Note that an Allied bomb has hit a holy place – the night in a church hit by an Allied bomb.)

The Reader opened in New York on Wednesday, with private screenings having been made to identify the real Schmitz. Bernhard Schlink, who wrote the 1995 novel behind the film, rightly insists she was invented but I have little doubt that Braunsteiner's trial, along with those of 15 other defendants accused of murder at Majdanek, was a significant influence starting in 1973 and lasting nearly six years, the trial stigmatized German justice as prejudiced and galvanized sympathy for the defendants for their "oralde" 30 years after the alleged crime. Braunsteiner's story is similar to Schmitz's. Born in Vienna in 1919, the daughter of a butcher, she was recruited to work in 1938 at the Henkel factory in Berlin. Soon after, she was recruited for training as an SS guard with the promise of better pay. After training, Braunsteiner progressed from the Ravensbrück concentration camp in Germany to Majdanek.

Survivors testifying in Düsseldorf recalled her wild rages, stamping and whipping women to death.

She was nicknamed "the Stomping Mare" because of her fatal tantrums. One witness had her face covered with a cage attached by her hair and threw them on trucks heading to the gas chambers.

At the end of the war she returned to Vienna, where she was convicted in 1949 for brutality to inmates at Ravensbrück but released in 1950. Working as a waitress and a hotel receptionist, she was still good-looking and seductive. Her prize was Russell Ryan, an American soldier.

(Continued on page 15)
At the February 2009 Spring Luncheon, Nechama Tec was the Guest of Honor. "My great-grandfather, Nuchum Kushner, both a furrier and a member of the Bielski otriad, is the reason I am such an advocate for the survivors and their children. I have always admired his bravery and his compassion for others in need, and I continue to feel the impact of his courage and selflessness at any opportunity to help. "

"Each Bielski otriad member has a unique and miraculous story of survival, which is more than just the story of saving a Jew. It is a story of the bravery and goodness of the Bielski family who saved my grandmother, Rae Kushner. "

"I remember my father's tears as he recited the Kaddish for 'the grandmothers' and for the participants who perished.  I cannot thank you enough for capturing the essence of the many fundamental values that our Torah teaches us."

"Each Bielski otriad member has a unique and miraculous story of survival, humanity, and bravery in the forest during those horrific years. Fortunately, my grandparents met and married through the YLA as a child, and I was privileged to hear her that day. Prof. Tec has made major scholarly contributions to our understanding of the Holocaust. As a young mother I see the importance of my generation taking a leadership role in continuing to make sure that the memory of those who perished will never be forgotten."

"Nechama Tec is a remarkable woman who has captured the primary period in history through her book Defiance. "

"My great-grandfather, Nuchum Kushner, for whom I am named, arrived at the camp frail with two young daughters by his side after escaping from the Nogovudeck Ghetto. They were 3 of the 300 who escaped through an underground tunnel out of the 18,000 Jews in the Ghetto. They were too weak to fight, but Tuvia did not turn them away. He welcomed my family with open arms and gave them an opportunity to help. My Zaide Nuchum, a malevolent acts: "I am proud to be a member of the American Society for Yad Vashem's Young Leadership Associates and as a member of the YLA acknowledge the importance of continuing to carry the torch of the Legacy of the Holocaust. As a young mother I see the importance of my generation taking a leadership role in continuing to make sure that the memory of those who perished will never be forgotten."

"Nechama Tec is a remarkable woman who has captured the essence of the many fundamental values that our Torah teaches us. By telling the story, Nechama has captured the importance of the ph"
ANCE & RENEWAL
FOR YAD VASHEM ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON

Lindenbaum, member of the Young Leadership Associates, Luncheon Co-chair: “Yad Vashem is not only an organization that pays testament to those who perished in the Holocaust, but has provided a family with a community of those like us who also look to the future while always remembering the past.”

Dara Orbach, Seryl Kushner, Guest Speaker Professor Nechama Tec, Nicole Meyer, Charles Kushner and Joan Meyer.

Elizabeth Zborowski, Cultural Director, American Society for Yad Vashem; Stella Skura, 2009 Award Recipient; Guest Speaker Professor Nechama Tec; Eli Zborowski, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem Inc.; and Gladys Halpern.

Young Leadership Associates, Sam and Stella remember, instilled in their family the phrase ‘never forget.’

They went to Poland. They met survivors of the Nazis. They met of the Nazis. They met survivors of the Nazis. They met survivors of the Nazis. They met survivors of the Nazis.

Marilyn Rubenstein Table.
C

omeing as a self-described "pilgrim of peace," Pope Benedict XVI vowed to fight anti-Semitism and called for a Palestinian state in the months after his arrival in Israel for a five-day visit. But controversy has marked the visit from the start, as the pope's supposedly non-political trip abounds with politics and his hosts in Israel and the Palestinian Authority parry his words with nearly Talmudic precision, eyeing support for their positions.

"There is no place for the killers murdered the victims. It is a cry raised against every act of injustice and violence. It is a perpetual reproach against the spilling of innocent blood."

The killers murdered the victims. It is up to us to ensure that the victims memories will not be killed also.

VICTIMS’ MEMORIES WILL NOT BE KILLED

The Pages of Testimony in the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem stand as symbolic mazevot (tombstones) for the martyred Jews. The victims dignity that the murderers tried so hard to obliterate.

The information will be used for a joint project between the Jewish Council of Ukraine and Yad Vashem Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, called the Shoah Victims' Names Recovery Project.

"For the first time in the territory of one of the countries concerned, we received data from every possible source concerning the history of Jews during the Holocaust in two of Ukraine's regions," said Boris Matris, a manager of the project in the former Soviet Union.

The handover of the database's disks took place during a meeting Jan. 30 to discuss the project.

The Jewish Council of Ukraine and Yad Vashem initiated and co-organized the event.

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Elie Wiesel, Dr. Heike Fettelschoss, and Mr. and Mrs. Rupert La Cour of Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, were among the first to view the database

Three thousand ghetto residents murdered by the Einsatzgruppen in Ukraine in 1942, as Minister for Culture, Science, Education, and Tourism of Ukraine, and chairman of the Excavation Council of the Ukrainian Holocaust Memorial Center, Volodymyr Lanovyi, reads the first name to be copied into the database.
WHY BRITISH INTELLIGENCE REFUSED TO BELIEVE ALL REPORTS OF THE MASS MURDER OF POLAND’S JEWS

BY MICHAEL EVANS, TIMESONLINE

Britain’s intelligence chiefs refused to accept witness reports of the German massacre of Polish Jews in the Second World War and discounted the existence of the Holocaust, according to an authorized account based on official archives.

The intelligence chiefs thought that reports of the genocide of Jews in Poland, brought by two emissaries from Warsaw, lacked credibility. Their disbelief was one of the reasons why Winston Churchill was kept ignorant of the scale of the Holocaust at a time when decisive action might have been taken to stop the wholesale killings.

The dismissive response to the Holocaust by the British intelligence hierarchy, he stated in August 1943 that they were “exaggerating the German atrocities, and did so to ‘stiffen our resolve’.

The two key emissaries from Warsaw, both witnesses of the slaughter, were Jan Karski, who came to London in December 1942, and Jan Nowak-Jezioranski, who arrived in December in 1943. Karski, a liaison officer of the Polish underground, told Cavendish-Bentinck about the mass murder of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto and in a concentration camp called Belsen.

Nowak-Jezioranski said that some 3.3 million Polish Jews had been murdered from the beginning of the war until August 1943. His report in the intelligence archives says “the Germans used troops, tanks and artillery to liquidate the ghetto in Warsaw.” He handed over photos as evidence.

Although Karski, who was initially interrogated by MI5, wrote his own account of the disbeliefing Allies after the war, the new history shows up the Whitehall brick wall that he and the other emissaries faced when they tried to convince London and Washington of Germany’s Holocaust strategy.

The new official history says: “As chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee and thanks to Enigma, Cavendish-Bentinck had access to the decrypted German police and SS reports which also mentioned the persecution and genocide of the Jews on the territories held by the Germans.

“...was a clear validation of Polish and Jewish information. Cavendish-Bentinck [a former ambassador to an Axis of Warsaw] was more interested in military intelligence on the German Navy than the fate of dying Polish Jews.” It goes on: “As the case with his political master, Anthony Eden, who was responsible for SIS [Secret Intelligence Service], he believed that only the slightest possible end to the war could save the Jews of Europe from complete annihilation.”

Roger Allen, a high-ranking Foreign Office official who met Karski with Cavendish-Bentinck during the war, “refused to believe that the Germans used gas chambers in Poland to murder people.”

At the end of August 1943, Allen wrote in a memo that he could “never understand what the advantage of a gas chamber over a simple machinegun or over starving people would be.” He said the recurring mentions of gas chambers in reports were “very general and tended to come from Jewish sources.”

The testimony of both Polish emissaries was kept secret. In the War Cabinet minutes concerning Karski’s account of the massacre, Karski was denied and, when Eden wrote to Churchill on the subject, he also removed everything which mentioned Jews being murdered.

The British intelligence service was not alone. In an interview in his book, Karski said his mission to London was to get Churchill to believe what he was saying.”

There were, for example, that learning and teaching a religion was highly valued; we see

**IN BERLIN, TEACHING GERMANY’S JEWISH HISTORY**

**BY EDWARD ROTHSTEIN, THE NEW YORK TIMES**

There may be worse Jewish museums in the world than the Jüdisches Museum Berlin, which opened in 2001. But it is difficult to imagine that any could be as unsparing and banal, particularly given its pedigree and promise. Has any other Jewish museum been more cele-

The Jüdisches Museum inverts the formula. Here it is the new — the building, for example, proposes making its case.

The museum’s director, W. Michael Blumenthal, explains, too, that the exhibition’s story “far transcends” the history of German Jewry, demonstrating a “widely shared determination to apply its lessons to societal problems of today and tomorrow,” and promoting “tolerance toward minorities in a globalized world.”

The resulting strain is almost bipolar, with the building aggressively squeezing about apocalypse as its exhibition amplifies harmonious universalism, with neither making its case.

The building, for example, proposes that the shattered, fractured world of the Holocaust is best suggested by the shattered, fractured space. You enter the exhibition by descending a lobby staircase through thousands of glass plates that lead you from daylight into dense alleys of looming stone, as if you are gradu-

The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Displays are off-kilter. And rather than

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE

**THE MEMORIAL TO THE MURDERED JEWS OF EUROPE**

The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the Scriptures were highly valued; we see

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upstairs, where you learn about where all of this fits into 2,000 years of German Jewish history. For example, the items on display are so

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A list of Jews saved by Oskar Schindler that inspired the novel and Oscar-winning film Schindler's List has been found in a Sydney library, its co-curator said.

Workers at the New South Wales State Library found the list, containing the names of 801 Jews saved from the Holocaust by the businessman, as they sifted through boxes of Australian author Thomas Keneally's manuscript material.

The 13-page document, a yellowed and fragile carbon-type script copy of the original, was found between research notes and German newspaper clippings in one of the boxes, library co-curator Owen Pryke said.

Pryke described the 13-page list as “one of the most powerful documents of the 20th Century” and was stunned to find it in the library's collection.

“This list was humbly typed on April 18, 1945, in the closing days of WWII, and it saved 801 men from the gas chambers,” she said.

“The music helped me to survive because it was sublime music for human skeletons, and for prisoners envied and hated them. And playing it was a madhouse,’” said Anita Lasker Wallfisch, a survivor who arrived at Auschwitz.

The orchestra was forced to play for new arrivals during the devastating selection processes in which Nazi guards separated them into groups bound for gas chambers or labor details. The orchestra also performed at the gates as prisoners were marched in and out for grueling work assignments. They were often made to play mocking tunes during executions.

Schindler died relatively unknown in 1974, but he gained public recognition following Keneally's book and Spielberg's film. Many women arrived at Auschwitz without their instruments, and many quickly adapted to other ones to join the orchestra. Six months into the ensemble's existence, Rossé arrived and took leadership.

IN THE HOLOCAUST

BY COREY KILGANNON

Wearing grave expressions and lavender scarves, dozens of women filed into a church garret in Woodstock, N.Y., recently and began talking,Schindler's Ark. The 1982 novel told the story of how the roguish Schindler discovered his conscience and risked his life to save more than 1,000 Jews from the Nazis.

Hollywood director Steven Spielberg turned it into a film in 1993, starring Liam Neeson as Schindler and Ralph Fiennes as the head of an SS-run camp.

Pryke said that, although the novel and film implied there was a single, definitive list, Schindler actually compiled a number of them as he persuaded Nazi bureaucrats not to send his workers to the death camps.

She said the document found by the library was given to Keneally in 1980 by Siegfried Pfefferberg — named on the list as Jewish worker number 173 — when he was persuading the novelist to write Schindler's story.

As such, it was the list that inspired Keneally to tell the world about Schindler's heroics, she said. Pryke said she had no idea how much the list was worth.

Schindler, born in a German-speaking part of Austria-Hungary in 1908, began as the head of an SS-run camp. He turned it into a film in 1993, starring Liam Neeson and Ralph Fiennes.

A huge responsibility to tell that story to the best of their ability,” she said.

Many women arrived at Auschwitz without their instruments, and many quickly adapted to other ones to join the orchestra. Six months into the ensemble's existence, Rossé arrived and took leadership.

Ravensbrück and play other music instead, Ms. Radosh said, because “survivors said it would be too painful.”

Esther Béjarano, 84, a pianist who played accordion in the Birkenau orchestra, said, it saved her life. But she called the current orchestra's revival of the music “distasteful.”

“I don't want to listen to this music,” she said recently from her home in Hamburg, Germany. “I don't want to be reminded. Never in my life do I want to hear it again.”

Another survivor, Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, who played cello in the Birkenau orchestra, said recently from her home in London that she had disputed some details of the choral lyrics and sent corrections to Ms. Radosh. When pressed, Ms. Wallfisch, 83, said, “It is laudable that people have an interest to do this.”

The orchestra, the subject of the 1980 film Playing for Time, with Vanessa Redgrave, was founded in the spring of 1943 at Birkenau, the death camp at Auschwitz, and

“Desperate Times,” Ms. Radosh said, is meant to be a poignant reminder of the horrors of the Holocaust and of how a group of women used music to survive. While this mission has been hailed by numerous Jewish groups, some survivors find it too poignant. The ensemble has agreed to forgo the “Desperate Times” program of music and lyrics at last for 18 months. As Jews poured into Auschwitz, musicians were found by word of mouth and auditions. Compared with other prisoners living in rags amid filth, death, disease, and starvation, the musicians received better food, treatment clothing, and living quarters, in barracks near the road leading to the gas chambers and crematoriums. They slept in triple bunks, each

with a mattress and blanket.

A spot in the orchestra also meant survival. All 54 members avoided being killed in Auschwitz, where more than a million Jews were murdered in gas chambers.

Ms. Wallfisch recalled. “I was naked without hair and I said, ‘I played the cello.’ I was expecting to go into the gas chamber and suddenly we were talking about cello playing. I thought, ‘This is a madhouse.’”

Ms. Béjarano said that she arrived at Auschwitz in early 1943 and hauled stones until she joined the orchestra as an accordionist. She had never played one, but quickly applied her theory and keyboard knowledge at her audition.

“The music helped me to survive because if I would have continued the work,” she said, “I would never have made it.”
PHOTOGRAPHER TRICKED NAZIS TO SAVE AUSCHWITZ IMAGES

Wilhelm Brasse was put through daily torture photographing the horrors of the Auschwitz death camp, but the young Pole pulled a fast one over his Nazi captors to make sure the terrible events were documented. Brasse, now 91, was ordered to photograph women whose genitalia were butchered in medical experiments, Jewish prisoners arriving at the death camp and the brothel where female prisoners were turned into sex slaves. Somehow Brasse survived the war and with the Soviet Red Army approaching, on January 17, 1945, his Nazi commander ordered him to burn all the negatives.

"He said, 'Brasse, the 'ivans' are coming -- destroy everything," the photographer recalled in an interview.

"But he didn't know the negatives were non-flammable. I put them in the stove, lit it, my boss waited 10 minutes and when he didn't pour out on the flames," said Brasse.

It was one of the miracles of Auschwitz, when Brasse, a portrait photographer from Katowice in southern Poland, was held after being caught trying to escape the camp. His description of what he saw was corroborated by Dr. Hubert G. Locke, a leading Holocaust scholar and supporter of Israel, who traces his lineage to an Austrian Jewish family.

"This one, it's a special photo ordered by Dr. Mengede in 1943, they were Jewish teenagers, two sets of twins," said Brasse, holding up a copy of one of his photos of four living skeletons that he acquired from the Auschwitz archive after the war.

"They were so young, terrified and so embarrassed, but I took it -- you'll be 23 in a year," he told AFP, showing a photo of himself as prisoner.

Former prisoner of Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp Jerzy Michael shows pictures of himself and his family in front of the Auschwitz-Birkenau monument as he participates in a ceremony commemorating the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the camp, on January 27, 2009.

He also photographed prisoners arriving at the camp.

"When we arrived at Auschwitz, people's faces were full, they looked normal. Just weeks later, if they were still alive, they were unrecognizable," Brasse was among the first prisoners to arrive at Auschwitz on August 31, 1940 and was put to work in the "Ereignungsdiensst," a unit identifying the death by the Nazi Gestapo security force in January 1941. He had tried to get to France to join a free Polish force but was caught at the border and shipped to Auschwitz among 460 Polish political prisoners.

"The Germans wanted me to declare I was German," said Brasse. But he refused to renounce his Polish nationality. "My mother was Polish; I felt Polish even though I spoke German well, just like my grandfather," he said.

He had been a photographer because his parents were too poor to pay for school.

"I was the only professional photographer in the 'Ereignungsdiensst.' The Gestapo needed pictures, that is why I survived," he said.

He tried to photograph the sev- ered head of a prisoner who had drowned in the Sola river, adjacent to the camp. Brasse was also required to photograph women forced to work in a camp brothel and the elite German SS officers who ran it.

Days before the liberation of Auschwitz on January 25, 1945 by the Soviet Red Army, Brasse was evacuated to the Baltic coast. "I knew they would die in a few days or a few hours. It was their last photo. The only thing I could tell them was that nothing else would happen to them," he said.

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Franklin Littell, left, Methodist minister and supporter of Israel, with Meuachim Begin, the Israeli prime minister, in 1981.

Franklin Littell, Scholar of Holocaust, Dies at 91

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Franklin H. Littell, a father of Holocaust studies who traced his engagement with the subject to the revulsion he felt as a young Methodist minister while witnessing a big Nazi rally in Nuremberg in 1939, died May 23, at his home in Merion Station, Pa.; he was 91.

His wife, Marcia Sachs Littell, announced his death.

Dr. Littell, the author of more than two dozen scholarly books and a thousand articles, was among the first intellectuals to delve into the question of how baptized Christians in the heart of Christian Europe could have either killed or ignored the killing of six million Jews. A big part of the answer, as he found it, was that Christians from the time of Jesus on had shown systematic contempt for Jews and their beliefs.

Hubert G. Locke, a leading Holocaust scholar and former dean of the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington, said in an interview on Wednesday that Dr. Littell had had "singular influence" in turning a focus on these ancient prejudices as the basis for the Holocaust.

Another Holocaust scholar, John K. Roth, emeritus professor of philosophy at Claremont McKenna College, said Dr. Littell had "helped to turn the tide on the awareness of Christian complicity in this mass murder, in defiance of the fact that was happening to Jews under Hitler."

For more than a decade after the end of World War II, the Holocaust was studied and publicly discussed sparingly; the common wisdom was that survivors needed time to heal. But by the 1960s, attention to it was starting to grow with the publication of books like Elie Wiesel's "Night," the trial of Adolph Eichmann and other efforts to collect testimony of survivors.

It was around then that academic programs on the Holocaust were pioneered by Dr. Littell. At Emory University in 1959, he started the first graduate seminar on the Holocaust, preceding what are believed to have been the first undergraduate courses on it, in 1960 at Brandeis and in 1961 at Brooklyn College. In 1970, with Dr. Locke, he set up one of the first annual scholarly conferences on the Holocaust, a forum that continues today.

In 1976, at Temple University, he began the first doctoral program in Holocaust studies. And in 1998, he and his wife established the first interdisciplinary master's degree program in Holocaust studies, at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

When Franklin Littell started his work, it was almost the case that there was no such thing as Holocaust studies as a field," Dr. Roth said. Now hundreds of colleges offer courses on the Holocaust, and many states require public schools to teach about it.

Dr. Littell also became an enthusiastic supporter of Israel, in part because he believed that its very existence refuted the withering away of the Jewish people. He rejected the theology of some Christian backers of Israel that Jews must ultimately become Christian, Marcia Littell said. Soon after the Six-Day War of June 1967, Dr. Littell started an organization called Christians Concerned for Israel, to promote a pro-Israel spirit in Roman Catholic and mainline Protestant churches.

In 1978, he founded the National Christian Leadership Conference for Israel, which lobbied against arms sales to Arab nations and campaigned against the United Nations resolution, adopted in 1975 and since repealed, that described Zionism as racism.

Franklin Haim Littell was born on June 20, 1917, in Syracuse, graduated from Cornell College in Iowa and earned a divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary. Afterward he visited Germany on the way to a religion conference for young people in Amsterdam. It was then that he attended the Nuremberg rally, out of curiosity. Later in life, he recalled having been appalled by its open racism and its religious glorifica-
with the ideals of the Enlightenment, anti-Semitism creates an atmosphere where the old Jewish themes of the past are revived. The museum tends to become a place of refuge and escape, where visitors can momentarily leave their worries behind. The exhibits and artifacts serve as a reminder of the past, and their presence is both comforting and daunting.

Jews feel on firm ground, recounting the ways in which they have fully entered into secular history. After modern is left behind, for now we see debates shaped by the persistence of anti-Semitism in Europe. The museum has recently sent her a joint letter to the government, asking for the return of the victims' belongings. Three American congressmen have planned to escape with a guard's help. They were part of a group of about 500 American Jews who were deported to concentration camps. They planned to escape with a guard's help, but they were caught and sent back to the camps. They were able to escape again, and this time they decided to make a break for it. They were part of a group of about 500 American Jews who were deported to concentration camps. They planned to escape with a guard's help, but they were caught and sent back to the camps. They were able to escape again, and this time they decided to make a break for it.

The victim dreams and longs for a better world. He yearns for the time to come when humanity will truly understand the suffering, revolts, and rage of those who have been subjected to it. He yearns for the time when anti-Semitism is no longer a tolerant force in the world. He yearns for the time when the Jewish past is truly understood and appreciated by all.

The remains of Hitler's inferno came to light when Dr. Selma Stern was found among the survivors of the Buchenwald concentration camp. She had been a prisoner there, and her parents had been killed. She had been separated from her family and had to fend for herself. She had survived the war, but she had lost everything. She had lost her family, her home, and her country. She had lost everything, but she had survived. She had lived through the horrors of the war, and she had come out the other side, stronger and more resilient. She had survived, and she had succeeded.

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Harold Charych, left, and Arthur Charych, who inherited a book on the Holocaust.

BY AILEEN JACOBSON, 
THE NEW YORK TIMES

D uring their childhoods, Arthur and Harold Charych — known as Artie and Hal — would often sneak looks at the black-covered volume, filled with gruesome photographs, that their parents kept in a hutch in their living room in New Jersey.

“Oh, my God, it was so shocking,” Harold Charych recalled recently as he and his older brother carefully turned the fragile pages of the book, Extremification of Polish Jews: Album of Pictures.

In 1991, after their father’s death, Arthur Charych carried the tattered volume to his younger brother. “I was a child of that time and, as I looked through the book, it brought back the memories of seeing those images,” he said. “It was a terrible, haunting memory.”

The graphic book shows Jews being humiliated and tortured, as well as bodies of those who had been killed, in photos that an introduction says were mostly taken by German soldiers who wanted “charming” keepsakes. It was published in December 1945 in Lodz, Poland, by the Polish Jews: Album of Pictures.

The book was acquired in Lodz by their parents, Holocaust survivors who had met earlier that year.

In this country, the parents, Alex and Henia, took the book out when friends — mostly of them also survivors — came to visit, the brothers said. The grown-ups sat at the kitchen table, telling stories in Yiddish and poring over the book as though it were a family album, they said.

The boys lingered nearby. “They thought we couldn’t understand Yiddish, but we could,” Harold Charych said.

Arthur Charych said their father never talked to them about the Holocaust. “The only information we had when we listened in on their conversations,” said Mr. Charych, explaining that this was how they learned about their father’s years in Dachau, the German concentration camp. Their mother sometimes told them about her life during the war, working in Siberia. The book would probably still be lingering in Arthur Charych’s basement, the brothers said, if Harold Charych, who lives in Poquott, had not had dinner more than a year ago with a neighbor, Steven Schrier, and told him about the book.

Mr. Schrier, who is the executive director of the Suffolk County Center on the Holocaust, Diversity and Human Understanding, asked to see it. He said he discovered, through research how rare it was, and now the book is a focal point of an exhibition mounted by Mr. Schrier and Stephen Klipstein. The exhibition, “The Occupation of Poland and the Extremification of Polish Jews,” includes 22 framed photos, a slide show of others, the book, and a photo of the family’s mother, then Henia Lin, with her parents and four siblings.

At 14, Henia left Poland to study in Russia, a week before the war started in 1939. When she returned at age 20, she learned that her family had perished in Auschwitz. All that was left of her former home was a boulder. “She sat on that boulder and cried,” Harold Charych said.

Their father, the brothers said, was a gregarious risk-taker who had been a singer and stand-up comic. His personality, and luck, helped him survive, they said.

When he arrived in Dachau, along with his brother, Alex Charych claimed to be a metal worker. He wasn’t, but the Nazis needed skilled metal workers, Harold Charych said. By selling metal outside the camp, Mr. Charych could get extra food. Just before the war’s end, the Nazis took the inmates on a forced march. When Mr. Charych’s brother collapsed, Arthur Charych said, a guard shot him.

Alex and Henia met in Warsaw and lived in Lodz before emigrating to the United States when Arthur was almost 12 and Harold, 7. In Lodz, they said, their father continued to work with metal, making containers with false bottoms, suitable for smuggling.

In Guttenberg, N.J., where they settled, Mr. Charych worked as a roofer and his wife ran a launderette that the family owned. They had another child, Deborah, now 44 and living in California. At some point — they are not sure when — the brothers discovered that their father had had a wife and three children in his hometown, Vilna, Lithuania, who had all been killed.

The parents’ behavior, not discussing the Holocaust experiences with their children, is not uncommon, said Irving Roth, 79, a survivor of Auschwitz and Buchenwald. It is less common now to mention a murdered family, Mr. Roth said, a sign underestimation.

“We are who we criticize?” he said.

PERCENTAGE OF JEWS IN THE WORLD IN DECLINE SINCE HOLOCAUST

BY OFRI ILANI, HAARETZ

I t isn’t for the Holocaust, there would be as many as 32 million Jews worldwide, including the current 15 million, demographic expert Professor Sergio Della Pergola has written in a soon-to-be-published article. Delta Pergola, who is the head of the Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, attempts to estimate the demographic damage to Jews of the Holocaust. The Holocaust “ruined a mortal blow particularly at the Jews of Eastern Europe because of their especially young age structure, and particularly the number of children. This led to significant long-term demographic damage. The quantitative features are in a way we won’t think,” he writes.

In the article, to be published in Botsalted, the periodical of the Yad Vashem Holocaust commemoration authority’s school of Holocaust studies, he writes: “This was the destruction of a generation, and what we are lacking now is not only that generation, it is their children and their children.”

A ccording to Delta Pergola, while the birth rate of the Jewish population out- wayed that of the general population, the Jewish population of Eastern Europe has great potential for growth. “What would happen if, instead of the 5.6 and 5.9 million Jews in Eastern Europe? It raises questions that are science fiction — for example, would the State of Israel have come into be?”

Delta Pergola says another demographic outcome of the Holocaust is the lower relative number of Jews in the world. “At present, the percentage of Jews in the world is constantly in decline. Before the Holocaust, the rate was eight Jews per thousand people in the world; today it is two per thousand.”

Delta Pergola also notes in the article that various estimates put the number of Jews killed in the Holocaust at between 5.6 and 5.9 million, and that part of the problem in pinpointing the numbers lies in the question of who is a Jew. “He writes, since some of those killed converted to Christianity before the Holocaust or were part-Jewish.

COGS IN THE MURDER MACHINE?

(Continued from page 7)

mechanic serving in Germany. They married and moved to New York.

By all accounts, Ryan remained enthralled by her wife and unaware of her past. In 1964, an American journalist, acting on a tip-off from Wiesenthal, confronted Hermine Ryan on her doorstep.

She immediately confessed to being Braunsteiner.

“My wife, sir, wouldn’t hurt a fly,” protested the hospital doctor that was on duty. “She didn’t volunteer, she was conscripted.”

Repatrating her to stand trial in Düsseldorf took no time. No woman had previously featured in a similar war crimes trial prosecuted by the German government, especially involving Mädels. Her middle-class lifestyle in New York conflicted with the testimony of her brutality.

The easy transition from the Heinkel production line to an extermination camp and then to domesticity in New York suggested to the apologists for the dominant defendant, like Schmitz, had no choice, becoming — said the prosecution manager. “We believe in the mature woman, but we — an accidental cog in the murder machine, unable to escape.

But the court judged her to have been a committed and fanatical devotee of Naziism, ambitiously seeking promotion by murdering Jews. On conviction she received two life sentences. Released as a sick woman in 1996, she died in 1999.

In the courthouse it was impossible to equate the middle-aged woman with a uniformed sadist smashing a child’s skull against a wall. When, over the next 20 years I interviewed dozens of Nazi murderers in Germany and South America. Although all had different ranks, backgrounds and intellects, they all offered the same disarming pose of innocent obedience and, only then being considered, their helpless- ness about the fate of the Jews and other persecuted races; and, uniformly, none had genuine remorse.

From Düsseldorf I drove south to a new city on a train that wound through Innsbruck, a lawyer and the mayor, had been an SS officer central to the Holocaust. He had previously featured in a similar war crimes trial prosecuted by the American government.

Near Innsbruck I met Karl Wolf, the SS general who accompanied Himmler to Auschwitz, who told me that they were “a regrettable part of Nazi ideology.”

In north Germany I met Arthur Rudolph, the production manager of V2 rockets, who had previously featured in a similar war crimes trial prosecuted by the American government. They married and moved to New York conflicted with the testimony of his brutality.

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**BY SUSAN SAULNY.**

**THE NEW YORK TIMES**

Barbara Steiner survived life as a child in the Warsaw ghetto and three Nazi death camps, emerging against dreadful odds without family or siblings. She walked on the street with them, shopped with them at the grocery, sat with them at the movie theater. “You've lived with the witnesses,” he went on. “It removes the distance. This didn’t happen a thousand miles away. It’s about right here, and that’s very clear.”

Long before the group of survivors, officials called the Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois, had a sparkling new building complete with art galleries and a children’s wing. It did its work out of a modest storefront on Main Street in a residential neighborhood next to a pub. Without large donors or the attention of designers and architects, they cobbled together a modest but poignant exhibit that welcomed bulletsod of schoolchildren and anyone else who wanted to hear their stories. There were about 20 or 30 members. Ms. Steiner recalls. (Of that original group, she said, “only three are alive today.”)

They worked with little fanfare until an epiphany of sorts. It was time to do some repairs to the storefront. What if they skipped the repair work and instead put their energy into fund-raising for a whole new center? “They began to dream,” said Richard S. Hirschhaut, the museum’s executive director. “And this is an organization that had an annual budget at its high point of $200,000.

But, as Mr. Hirschhaut said, it was a group known for its “luck and pluck.” “They started asking, ‘What if we could do more, reach more people? And how do we do it?’” he said. “It was an easy sell with the survivors, who adore and respect them, to go forward.”

One such relative newcomer to the group was J. B. Pritzker of Chicago, the philanthropist scion of the Hyatt hotel chain and other investments, who said he had become enchanted by the survivors, adopting their dream as his own. Approached to be the capital campaign chairman about 10 years ago, Mr. Pritzker, the managing partner of a private investment firm, accepted. He brought the group from having essentially nothing in the bank to where it is today, several tens of millions of dollars later.

Among the people who told their stories at the museum is Aaron Elster, who moved to Skokie in 1955 by way of New York City. This is where his nightmares of hiding in a Polish family’s attic for two years during the Holocaust began to subside. “Like many people, I didn’t want to speak about my background,” said Mr. Elster, 76, a retired insurance executive. “I didn’t want to be known as a victim. But while we can, I feel that it’s incumbent on every survivor to speak up.”

So many are already gone. “I personally believe that their souls are here,” Mr. Elster said. “And it becomes a holy place for people like myself.”

Other speakers included writer and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, U.S. Sen. Roland Burris, Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn and President Barack Obama, who said in a video statement that “there is no greater obligation than to confront acts of inhumanity.”

**HOLOCAUST MUSEUM LETS LOCAL VOICES MEMORIALIZE**

**BY SUSAN SAULNY.**

Barbara Steiner in 2005 in front of a German rail car from the Nazi era. The car is now a center-

free speech and democratic ideals. And although the march never materialized here, it prompted a movement among the death camp survivors that manifested itself in an urge to speak up and teach the lessons of their lives. And so they organized a group and got to work.

All those decades of effort came to fruition this weekend in the form of the building’s own neighbors.

Several of the Holocaust survivors are working as docents and other staff members, weaving their first-person stories into the history, exploring issues of genocide around the world. They are candid about how their sense of tranquility was shattered by the threat of having to encounter the swastika on Skokie’s streets, decades after their desperate escapes from the Nazis.

The rightful place for this is here, because of the march,” said Samuel R. Harris, the president of the museum and learning center, whose parents and siblings were killed at the Treblinka death camp. “You must know what fear the swastika brings to a survivor. The fear is immense, more than you can write. It’s felt, what can I do? Very simple solution: education.”

The museum’s co-curator, Yitzchak Maïs, former director of the Yad Vashem museum in Jerusalem, explained its significance as filling a largely unexplored niche.

“These are your neighbors from the Minsk,” Mr. Maïs said. “You’ll realize that you walked on the street with them, shopped with them at the grocery, sat with them at the movie theater.”

“Like many people, I didn’t want to be known as a victim. But I said, ‘Wait! You’re talking about millions! You’re kidding, right? How are we able to do that?’” she recalled telling Mr. Pritzker in a meeting. “He said, ‘Don’t worry, we’ll have the money.’ Thank God I was wrong. He was right.”

Mr. Pritzker, leading a pre-opening tour, said, “The lesson we’re trying to teach is that in small ways in everyday life we can rise and be up-standers. This is the universal message that the museum is all about.”

Samuel R. Harris, president of a new museum about the Holocaust in Skokie, Ill.