Michael R. Bloomberg is the 108th Mayor of the City of New York. He was first elected in November 2001, two months after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, a time when many believed that crime would return, businesses would flee and New York might take decades to recover. Instead, through hundreds of innovative new policies and initiatives, Mayor Bloomberg has made New York City safer, stronger and greener than ever.

Today, compared to 2001, crime is down by more than 35 percent. The welfare rolls are down nearly 22 percent. High school graduation rates are up more than 40 percent since 2005. Ambulance response times are at record lows. Teen smoking is down more than 50 percent. More than 755 acres of new parkland have been added.

The Mayor’s economic policies have helped New York City avoid the level of job loss that many other cities experienced during the national recession. Today, New York City has more private-sector jobs than at any point in history. Mayor Bloomberg has made New York City a better place to live, work and raise a family.

Mayor Bloomberg is the father of two daughters, Emma and Georgina.

IN THIS ISSUE

"Wanted": Nazi hunters track war criminals in Germany
70 years after liberation, Holocaust memorials continue to proliferate
Hollywood’s pact with Hitler
Auschwitz through the eyes of a child
The story of Dr. Mengele’s delivery girl
Escape from Novogrudok...
After decades, family unravels Holocaust mystery
Bearing witness ever more
Auschwitz Holocaust exhibition opened by Netanyahlu
The Holocaust and “Hatikvah”

HONORING THE MEMORY OF E 1 ZBOROWSKI, Z”L
Eli Zborowski was born in Zarki, Poland. He joined the Jewish underground, serving as a courier to the ghettos of western Poland. His father was murdered by Poles in 1943. Eli was then forced to take on the responsibilities for the family as an adult. His remaining family survived the war in hiding. Following the war, Eli met Diana Wilf in Feldafing, a displaced persons camp. She was a survivor from Drohobycz, Poland. They were married in Feldafing in December 1948. Diana stood by his side and was an equal partner with Eli for 57 years. She passed away in 2004.

Eli Zborowski founded the American and International Societies for Yad Vashem in 1981 and served as the organization’s Chairman from its inception, guiding it to raise over $100 million for the benefit of Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. He established the Diana and Eli Zborowski Interdisciplinary Chair for Holocaust Studies and Research at Yeshiva University. Eli also endowed the Diana Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Holocaust at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

In 2006, he married Dr. Elizabeth Mundilak, and they worked together to continue his dreams of Holocaust remembrance and education.

Eli was the proud father of two children and seven grandchildren.
ON TRANSITIONS

Rabbi Eric M. Lankin, DMin., Executive Director/CEO of the American Society for Yad Vashem

For the family and friends of Eli Zborowski, z"l, his passing at age 86 on September 19, 2013, was a tremendous loss. His love and concern were a profound source of strength for them throughout his life. For his second family, the community and staff of the American Society for Yad Vashem (ASYV), Eli's death was also profoundly felt, as he was the founder and volunteer chair of ASYV for over 31 years. The Society and the Holocaust survivor community had an outstanding leader with vision, courage and fortitude, and his death created a terrible void.

Our upcoming Annual Tribute Dinner on November 10, chaired by Barry and Marilyn Rubenstein, will include an acknowledgment of Eli's most significant contributions to ASYV, to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and to Holocaust remembrance. This will give us the opportunity to reflect on the impact of his leadership over his many years of most dedicated service.

We are grateful that the outstanding leadership team led by Eli as Chair, and his Executive Committee and Board managed the process of transition with direction towards the future. The staff that had been nurtured by Eli's leadership, continued on a daily basis to keep the organization functioning at full capacity, including organizing and conducting our Annual Tribute Dinner last November and the myriad of other activities that define the ASYV year.

Personally, I feel very fortunate to have gotten to know Eli briefly the summer before he died. In the hours we spent together in the office, he shared some of his experiences during the Holocaust, and his thoughts about our Jewish future, what ASYV and Yad Vashem had meant to him, and some of his concerns and struggles faced by the organization. Although he said his body was tired, his mind was sharp, his comments were incisive, and his legacy remains intact.

Today, I sit in his chair as Executive Director/CEO of ASYV. I do not pretend to fill Eli's shoes, but instead, I spiritually stand on his shoulders to face the future. Eli's imprint on every aspect of ASYV and its commitment to Yad Vashem is a gift that he has left me. I inherited a strong and visionary organization with devoted volunteer leaders and staff.

As the new professional leader, the future calls me to respond in my own way, guided by my training and experience. I have dedicated my professional career to a better Jewish future. For fourteen years, I served as a congregational rabbi on the front lines, teaching and spiritually guiding wonderful Jews and strengthening congregations and the communities we served. And for fourteen more years, I have served on the national scene in Jewish communal organizations, bringing people together to address the challenges facing Jewish life, guiding national educational programs and developing financial resources to insure our future. At ASYV, I am using everything I have learned, as we review every aspect of how we are functioning to face the challenges of the present and prepare for the future, cognizant of Eli's vision and effort.

We are at a time of great transition as many of our founders who were Holocaust survivors are passing the torch to the second and third generations of their families. ASYV, we are quite sensitive to this transitional period and are strategically working hard to strengthen our connection to survivor families, the Jewish community and other supporters of our work. In partnership with Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, we are dedicated to providing the most significant leadership in promoting Holocaust education, remembrance and commemoration using the tools available to us in the 21st century.

Please save the date for our Annual Tribute Dinner on Sunday, November 10 in New York City. Not only will we be paying tribute to Eli's memory, as I discussed above, but also recalling the tenth anniversary of the tragic voyage of the ship that was eventually discovered as the capsized with people killed. The son of one of the three Czechs, who lives in Canada, had received a package of documents covered with secret numbers that had been found in a cardboard box at the Swedish consulate in New York City. The campaign to seek out former Nazis who have been in hiding for decades after the end of World War II,

The campaign to seek out former Nazis who have been in hiding for decades after the end of World War II, called Operation Last Chance II in Berlin. A similar "Wanted" project that began in 2002 in nine countries, including Germany, turned up 615 suspects, 103 of whom were submitted to prosecutors for trial. Zuroff said the latest project would have started sooner, but it took a while to raise money.

In the past, German governments and foundations, including all the giants of German industry, but only three were willing to help us,” Zuroff said. “The hardest thing in connection to the Holocaust that a country has to do is to put its own nationals on trial, and that is a sensitive subject.”

Among the pile of administrative documents, there were three Righteous Gentiles certificates on behalf of three Czech citizens who were saved during the Holocaust.

As they had to leave in a rush, the Israeli embassy staff did not have the chance to deliver the certificates, and they were buried in the basement of the Swedish embassy.

Upon receiving the box of documents, the Israeli embassy contacted Yad Vashem and received verification that those three Czech citizens had indeed been registered as Righteous Gentiles.

The son of one of the three Czechs, who lives in Canada, had received a package of documents covered with secret numbers that had been found in a cardboard box at the Swedish consulate in New York City.

The son of one of the three Czechs, who lives in Canada, had received a package of documents covered with secret numbers that had been found in a cardboard box at the Swedish consulate in New York City.

The campaign to seek out former Nazis who have been in hiding for decades after the end of World War II, called Operation Last Chance II in Berlin.
A Polish Woman Recognized as Righteous Among the Nations

A ceremony in honor of Mr. Danuta Renk-Mikulskia, who was recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem, took place July 18 at the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center.

Ms. Renk-Mikulskia received the certificate and medal of the Righteous Among the Nations from the Israeli Consul General to the Midwest, Roi Gilad, and the ASYV Director of Development, S. Isaac Mekel.

Danuta Renk-Mikulskia is the fifth member of the Mikulski family to be recognized by Yad Vashem.

Jan and Melaniia Mikulski lived on the outskirts of Bilgoraj, in the Lublin district, with their children Jadwiga, Danuta and Jerzy. Mr. Mikulski, a local forester, had enjoyed good relations with the Jews of the town before the war. During one of the Atidion carried out by the Germans, Rivka Wajenberg and Lila Stern, two young women from the town, fled to the home of Jan and Melaniia Mikulski, who willingly took them in, treating them with the same devotion they gave their own children. While working in the forest, Mikulski came across brothers Benczon and Chaim Rozenbaum, past acquaintances, and Pola Kenig. Mikulski helped them find a place to hide in the forest, and from time to time brought them home to sleep. With the arrival of winter, after it became too cold to survive in the forest, Mikulski moved the Jewish fugitives into his home, and all five found refuge in a special hiding place the Mikulskis prepared for them in one of the farm buildings. The Mikulski family treated the Jewish fugitives with warmth and kindness, taking care of all their needs and doing whatever was necessary to make their hiding place as pleasant as possible. Fearing that the hiding place would be discovered, the Mikulskis lived in constant terror, which reached a climax when a group of German soldiers established themselves in their home for eight days.

During this period, the Mikulskis greatly feared that the Jews would be discovered, and consequently gave them poison pills, but fortunately, the Germans left without discovering the fugitives. The two young Jewish women and Benczon and Chaim Rozenbaum remained in hiding in the Mikulski home for about a year, after which they joined the partisans. Chaim Rozenbaum was killed in the ranks of the Polish Army, his brother emigrated to Israel together with Pola Kenig, and the two young women emigrated to the United States. Everything the Mikulski family did to save Jews was motivated by pure altruism, for which they never asked for or received anything in return.

Jan Mikulski, Melaniia Mikulski and all three of their children were recognized as Righteous Among the Nations.

Nearly 70 Years After Liberation, Holocaust Memorials Continue to Proliferate

BY GIL SHEFLER JTA

No earth was moved recently at the groundbreaking of one of the nation’s newest Holocaust memorial.

Instead, the gatherers stood silently, symbolic shovels in hand, on the immaculate lawn where the privately funded $400,000 monument will soon rise. A succession of speakers delivered number histories remembering one of the darkest chapters in human history.

“It was an absolutely unbelievable world that I lived in,” survivor Fred Lorber was quoted as saying by local media. “It’s hard for me to describe, but whatever time I think about it, it’s there. It never left my memory.”

The phenomenon is also not a uniquely American one. Norway, a country with only 1,300 Jews, has two Holocaust memorials.

There are probably more than 300 Holocaust study centers and memorial centers around the country, and the number of memorials would be hard to track down because of all the small ones,” said James Young, a professor of Jewish studies at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and the author of a book about Holocaust remembrance.

“Young says the single most important factor driving the construction of Holocaust memorials nearly 70 years after World War II is the initiative of elderly survivors. With the youngest of them nearing 80, survivors are eager to educate future generations about their suffering and, in so doing, give meaning to their lives.

“It doesn’t take a big community,” Young said. “If someone is inspired to build a memorial site, it is possible to do so.”

One such person was Eva Mozes Kor, 79, who along with her twin sister was subjected to savage medical experiments carried out by Nazi war criminal Dr. Josef Mengele.

“My life story is just a symbolic number in the Hebrew tradition,” Young said. “It’s a human thing.”

First they came” by the German journalist Theodor Eicke, published in 1939, is now translated into all the world’s languages.

“If everything goes according to plan, Tudor will break ground on a Holocaust memorial in his hometown of Alexandria (population: 7,000, November 2013).”

“I can think of many reasons we ought to have one even though we are a small city,” Tudor said. “There’s a real historical tie to the liberation of camps. And we’ve always had a vibrant Jewish community for a small town. They’ve been the foundation blocks of our community.”

The privately funded $80,000 structure will feature an 18-foot granite obelisk — “because 18 is a symbolic number in the Hebrew tradition,” Tudor said — and be engraved with the famous poem “First they came” by the German pastor Martin Niemöller.

The memorial also will remember local U.S. soldiers who participated in the liberation of the camps, as well as the victims and survivors.

“The greatest generation is dying out and the probability of the survivors being fog,” Tudor said. “You realize, if not now, when?”

Young expects that with the young survivors becoming octogenarians, the trend is likely to continue indefinitely. Once they pass, the money and interest for such projects may disappear as well.

“Youth expects that with the young survivors becoming octogenarians, the trend is likely to continue indefinitely. Once they pass, the money and interest for such projects may disappear as well.”

“Then the next generation,” Young said, “might be less likely to be doing this.”

September/October 2013 - Tishri/Cheshvan 5774 MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE Page 3

REVIEWED BY J. SCHUESSLER, The New York Times

The collaboration: Hollywood’s Pact with Hitler.

REVIEWED BY J. SCHUESSLER, The New York Times

T he list of institutions and industries that have been accused of whitewashing their links to the Third Reich is long, including various governments, the Vatican, Swiss banks and American corporations like I.B.M., General Motors and DuPont.

Now a young historian wants to add a more glamorous name to that roll: Hollywood. In The Collaboration: Hollywood’s Pact with Hitler, Ben Urwand draws on a wealth of previously uncited documents to argue that Hollywood studios, in an effort to protect the German market for their movies, not only acquiesced to Nazi censorship but also actively and enthusiastically cooperated with that regime’s global propaganda effort.

In the 1930s “Hollywood is not just just some of the excuses Nazis dreamed up to defend themselves when it comes to acts they committed during the war against the Jews. Then there are those who claimed they were ‘just following orders.’ Then there is the greater number of Nazis who never paid for their monstrous crimes. And then there is the story of the Cold War that encouraged the Allies to turn a blind eye to everything. Donald M. McKale delves into all of this in his well-researched book Nazis after Hitler: How Perpetrators of the Holocaust Cheated Justice and Truth. Finally, and most interestingly, he highlights just how these arguments used by the Nazi murderers would become the arguments used by today’s Holocaust deniers.

Thus, for example, McKale tells us of the twenty-one-year-old, notoriously sadistic, “beautiful golden-haired” Nazi female guard Irma Grese. She worked at Ravensbrück, Birkenau, and Bergen-Belsen. “Grese beat prisoners;” she shot them; “she set her violent dog on them;” she assisted


REVIEWED BY J. SCHUESSLER, The New York Times

The collaboration: Hollywood’s Pact with Hitler.

REVIEWED BY J. SCHUESSLER, The New York Times

T he list of institutions and industries that have been accused of whitewashing their links to the Third Reich is long, including various governments, the Vatican, Swiss banks and American corporations like I.B.M., General Motors and DuPont.

Now a young historian wants to add a more glamorous name to that roll: Hollywood. In The Collaboration: Hollywood’s Pact with Hitler, Ben Urwand draws on a wealth of previously uncited documents to argue that Hollywood studios, in an effort to protect the German market for their movies, not only acquiesced to Nazi censorship but also actively and enthusiastically cooperated with that regime’s global propaganda effort.

In the 1930s “Hollywood is not just

Not the moral equivalent of Vidkun Quisling.

That the German government meddled in the film industry during Hollywood’s so-called golden age has long been known to film historians, and such activity was chronicled in the American press at the time. (Long Arm of Hitler Extends to Hollywood Studio, ran a 1937 headline in Newsweek.) But Mr. Urwand, 35, offers the most stunning take by far, drawing on material from German and American archives to argue that the relationship between Hollywood and the Third Reich ran much deeper — and went on much longer — than any scholar has so far suggested.

On page after page, he shows studio bosses, many of them Jewish immigrants, cutting films scene by scene to suit Nazi officials; producing material that could be seamlessly repurposed in Nazi propaganda films; and, according to one document, helping to finance the manufacture of German armaments.

Even Jack Warner, praised by Groucho Marx for running “the only studio with any guts,” after green-lighting the 1939 film Confessions of a Nazi Spy, comes in for some revisionist whacks.

I was Warner who personally ordered that the word “Jew” be removed from all dialogue in the 1937 film The Life of Emile Zola. Mr. Urwand writes, and his studio was the first to invite Nazi officials to its Los Angeles headquarters to screen films and suggest cuts.

“There’s a whole myth that Warner Brothers were crusaders against Fascism,” Mr. Urwand said. “But they were the first to try to appease the Nazis in 1933.”

Mr. Urwand, an Australian-born scholar whose Jewish Hungarian maternal grandparents spent the war years in hiding, said his project began in 2004, when he was a graduate stu

(Continued on page 13)

Mr. Urwand, an Australian-born scholar whose Jewish Hungarian maternal grandparents spent the war years in hiding, said his project began in 2004, when he was a graduate stu
AUSCHWITZ THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

BY SUSANNE BEYER, SPIEGEL ONLINE

H e was sent to Auschwitz as a boy, and never forgot the images and dreams that defined this period of his life. Now Jerusalem academic Otto Dov Kulka has written an unusual book about his life in a Nazi concentration camp.

His office window looks out over Jerusalem, where the light-colored stone buildings contrast with the fading late-afternoon light. But Otto Dov Kulka’s thoughts are far away. “Let’s take a virtual journey,” he says. On his computer, he opens black-and-white photos that depict the ruins of the crematoria, a forest of crumbling chimneys amid tall grass.

Kulka moves the cursor across the chimneys and through the grass. “That’s the landscape of my childhood,” he says quietly. He was in Auschwitz between the ages of 10 and 11. There is a strange tone in his voice — not sadness, not rage, but something that sounds like longing. It seems almost strange to ask the question: Is he homesick for Auschwitz?

“Well, yes!” he exclaims. “Auschwitz was my childhood! I learned to become a humanist at Auschwitz.”

Kulka doesn’t just say these kinds of things. He also writes them, and in doing so has managed to compose one of the most astonishing books ever written about Auschwitz: Landscapes of the Metropolis of Death: Reflections on Memory and Imagination.

It’s a cumbersome title in a genre that already has many books and eyewitness accounts. Despite a few glowing reviews, Kulka’s book has not attracted the attention it deserves.

AN ACT OF “EXTREME SARCASM”

I n his book, Kulka doesn’t empathize with the pain of the victims or the motivation of the perpetrators. Like someone looking in from the outside, he considers his childhood days in Auschwitz from the observer’s perspective. He completes a self-psychanalytic narration of sorts, invoking images and scenes, wondering about their significance, though he knows the questions will have to remain unanswered.

In one such passage, he describes the scene in which he watched his mother walk away for the last time. She was pregnant and being taken to another concentration camp, where she had hoped that she and the baby, conceived in Auschwitz, would survive. But they wouldn’t make it; both died shortly before liberation.

“...I could not understand. … I thought about it afterwards, and think about it to this day; why did she not turn her head, at least? In another scene, this time at the children’s camp at Auschwitz, a Jewish man named Irme teaches the children the Ode to Joy from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony. “What was his intention in choosing to perform this? Was it a kind of protest demonstration, or an act of “extreme sarcasm.”

PUBLICLY SILENT FOR DECADES

In this way, Kulka strings together questions and questions, mixing these tape recordings and his diaries. It’s hard to believe that Kulka managed to remain publicly silent about Auschwitz for so long. Now, sitting in his office, he sees the questioning look on my face as I stare at the tattoo on his forearm, where the concentration camp number 148975 is clearly recognizable. He says: “I used to have thicker, blacker hair, and it wasn’t as easy to see the number. You know, it was like this: I didn’t say anything, and hardly anyone asked.”

THE LAW OF THE “GREAT DEATH”

H e was born on April 16 in what he calls the “fateful year” of 1933, in the small Czech town of Novy Hrozenv. The Nazis had assumed power there in January of that year, and before long they had passed the first anti-Semitic laws.

His parents, Elly and Erich, spoke Czech and German with him, and he had a German nanny. Otto completed his first grade in a Czech school. It was “a happy year,” he says, but then...
A 1940, Leah London Friedler still has a beautiful face and a charming, almost cheeky smile. Her family had always known she survived Auschwitz, but it was long taboo to mention it in her presence. But a family trauma caused Leah to break her silence, and she led her daughter, Adina Bernstein, to a locked drawer where she showed her a letter of hope she’d written as a teenager, after the death camp was abandoned by the fleeing Nazis. From there, she revealed more of her letters from Auschwitz, and her story of survival finally unfolded after decades of secrecy.

Leah describes her childhood as a very happy one, being an only child always in the company of a lot of family and friends. “Everything I remember from then is beautiful. I had a very loving mother and father. We were not very rich, but for my grandparents I was the only grandchild, so they always bought me nice clothes. I was a spoiled child,” she beams.

But by the age of 16 she had experienced two invasions: the Hungarian occupation of Northern Transylvania including her home city of Oradea in 1940, followed a few years later by the Nazis. The arrival of the Hungarians saw the first organized discrimination against Jews in employment and schools. There was also the conscription of 18-year-olds into the army, including her cousins, forcing them into labor and sending them off to the front against Russia. “They didn’t come back,” she says quietly.

Leah’s parents felt something was wrong when they stopped receiving letters from family living in former Czechoslovakia and Poland, but, like so many, they could not imagine what was to come. With the arrival of the Nazis, schools closed, the curfew came down, non-Jews were told to evacuate the Jewish quarter, the Jews were forced to wear the yellow star, and overnight a wooden fence cornering off the ghetto went up, enclosing, she says, 30,000 people.

Leah was living just outside the ghetto with her parents, in a boys orphanage run by her father. When the Nazis came to force the Jews into the ghettos, the caretakers of the synagogues opposed implored her father to look after the Torah scrolls. “But we had to leave too. So my father instructed my mother to hide away a scroll to the cart. One Hungarian officer accused us of trying to make a scene. My father tried to reason. ‘Please sit, this is very important for us.’ When we arrived at the ghetto entrance they took my father to the SS police headquarters for three days. He never told me what happened there.”

She pauses in her narration. “I can only tell what I see myself. What happened to my father, I did not see. I can only give you testimony, not history. Because everybody has heard about such things — in books, films. But I prefer to speak only for myself.”

Her father was returned, but after they had just three weeks together in the ghetto, a long train used for livestock pulled up at the local station. “In every wagon they put 80 to 100 people. There were no places to sit. Two buckets — one with water to drink, the other for a toilet. No food. For three days.”

Leah pauses to take a sip of water. “We did not know where we were heading north. They only opened the door once, for a half hour, to take out the bodies of those who died along the way. My two grandfathers died on another train.”

It was dark when they arrived at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Leah remembers clearly the lamps, the shadowy words “Arbeit Macht Frei” looming above the entrance, and the flurry of worn-down inmates in striped uniforms directing them into lines. Her mother took two small children by the hand, but a woman who had been there for some time warned her in Yiddish to stick with Leah rather than the orphans or else they would lose each other — but to also avoid letting on that Leah was her daughter, or they would be deliberately separated. At the head stood the SS guards, and in between was a very elegantly dressed officer. Later I knew him to be Dr. Josef Mengele.”

Leah demonstrates how Auschwitz’s Angel of Death, as he came to be known, had been holding a little stick daintily between his fingers, indicating left and right with it. one way to the gas, the other way to stay alive. She and her mother entered the camp.

After being shaved from head to toe, the women were forced to undress and stand naked in a line, stripped of all dignity and humanity, clutching only their shoes and small bars of soap. “There were a lot of soldiers laughing at us, making jokes. From there we entered a great building with showers.” Once outside again they were left to rummage through a large pile of uniforms left behind by previous inmates.

Every day Dr. Mengele then came to their block C to make his “selections.” Leah and her mother survived for longer when a Czech friend in charge of their block accused the SS guards in the camp’s dreaded review (clinic), where Mengele conducted his “experiments” on inmates. While her mother was sent into the number A25401 and worked as a nurse, Leah, touching her shoulder, explains she had worn a badge that read lieferant — literally meaning “office boy.” Leah remained close to the other female revier workers, every day eating from shared bowls in a line like animals.

“I was a delivery girl for Dr. Mengele,” she clarifies. “There were two of us.” She pulls up her left sleeve, revealing the number A25402 on her forearm. Three years ago, a woman from Kibbutz Neot Moredechai got in touch after reading an article about Leah launching a book of memories, compiled by her daughter Adina. “Her number was A25403.”

The woman marked with the number A25404 was Dr. Gisella Perl, the Jewish gynecologist who saved the lives of hundreds of expectant mothers in the camp. While heavily pregnant women were sent straight to the gas chambers, those in the first few months of pregnancy were harder to spot. “Dr. Mengele asked Dr. Perl for the women who were in the early stages,” Leah’s voice drops. “He wanted to do experiments with the babies. But Dr. Perl, at the risk of her life, took the pregnant women out in the middle of the night with my mother to perform abortions, as so not to put the mothers in the hands of Dr. Mengele, giving them a chance to survive.”

Leah helped by holding up candles so Dr. Perl could operate in the darkness. “I only remember one child being born there. Dr. Mengele cared for the mother until the end of the pregnancy, and a healthy baby was born. He gave it one month with the mother. He bought it clothes and nappies. Then he realized this was no place for a baby, saying it’s better to take it to the ‘children’s hospital.’”

“Because I was the lieferant, he gave me the baby to take it to the gate. I heard him tell the mother that ‘the ambulance will come to take the baby.’ When I got to the gate, the guard told me to throw the baby on the floor. I put the baby on the floor. When I came back the mother asked me frantically, ‘What happened to my baby?’ And I told her the nurses came to take it. But I knew the baby was no longer alive.”

As a teenager Leah wrote in one of her letters while at the camp: “The devil, whom people called ‘the doctor,’ worked with sadistic pleasure made decisions of life or death for the innocent. Usually the decision was death. To the ill patients, he said: ‘Why are you crying? You’re all going to the healing home! Those patients knew they were going to the furnace while they were still living.’

Leah had not been a delivery girl in any obstetric sense of the word. “When somebody died, it was our job to take the body to the gate. Not only the dead, also the dying.” Asked if Mengele ever spoke to her, Leah is matter of fact. “No, he did not speak with me. But we had no name, we were numbers.”

Toward the end of the war Leah recalls a blur of shoeless enforced marches and excruciating labor in the freezing Polish winter, which nearly killed her, as the Nazis tried to push them all over the brink. By this point Mengele had fled, and the burning and furnaces had ceased to exist.

“My heart was very weak. I didn’t want to swallow anymore. No coffee, no bread, I was at my end. But then my mother spoke to me very angrily. I was ashamed, so I ate. She saved my life, again.”

By the time the Nazis tried to force them on a final march, Leah and several others were so ill that they were sent back to their block. “They wanted to make one last furnace. But then God sent us a snowstorm, so they couldn’t make the fire. And then they left.”

She arrived back home on May 11, 1945. “My daughter Adina was born on May 11 some years later,” Leah smiles. “I got off the train. It was Friday afternoon before Shabbat, I was with my mother. There was nobody at the train station. No family, no friends, only strangers. I was very sad. I thought I saw my father, but my father had died in a camp.”

As their taxi stopped at a red light a boy rushed up to them, snatched Leah into his arms and kissed her, exclaiming “Thank God you’re alive, you came back! How are you?”

(Continued on page 15)
ESCAPE FROM NOVOGRUDOK

BY DOREEN RAPPAPORT

On February 4, 1943, a radio smuggled into the Novogrudok forced labor camp brought the glorious news to the 250 Jewish prisoners that the Soviets had defeated the Germans at Stalingrad. But that same day brought word that the remaining 500 Jews in the ghetto had been murdered. The Jews in the camp knew they too would soon be murdered, and began planning their escape. They decided on digging a tunnel out to the middle of a wheat field 328 feet on the other side of the barbed wire. From there they would try to find their way to the family camp that the Bielski brothers had set up in the Metliski forest ten miles away.

They decided to start the tunnel under the bunk beds in their living quarters in a stable far away from the guards’ stations. The SS never came there, fearful that they would get discovered from the appalling conditions under which they had forced the Jews to live. Everyone in the camp, except for one Austrian Jew, suspected of being an informer, was told about the plan.

Berl Yoselevitz, an engineer, worked out the measurements: the tunnel would be five feet below the ground, two feet across and thirty inches high, just big enough for one person to crawl through at a time. He estimated that if they dug three feet a day, they would be able to escape. A Polish electrician named Yoselevitz constantly checked to make sure they were digging in a straight line. At night, the prisoners formed a living conveyor belt, passing the dirt sacks out of the tunnel, in their living quarters, up a ladder to a loft.

As the men dug further, oxygen grew scarcer. There wasn’t enough air to burn an oil lamp. The metal workers made cone-shaped pipes to bring in air through the tunnel roof. They widened the tunnel for better airflow and used the oil lamps still struggling to stay lit.

A Abram Rukovskiy, a master electrician, scavenged old wires and stole electric bulbs from his workshop, and then jury-rigged a switchboard that controlled the camp’s searchlights. To get light in the tunnel, he diverted electricity from the main switchboard, causing a power failure. The Nazi commandant called upon Avram to figure out what was wrong. Avram insisted he couldn’t find anything wrong. A Polish electrician called in said the switchboard had failed. The Nazis came to accept the frequent, short power failures as normal.

Holes were made in the ceiling to let the stale air out in the summer. The dug-out earth was piled on both sites of the loft. When the loft was full, double walls were built. Dirt was also buried under floorboards. Rain came. The tunnel roof began to sink. Bunk beds were taken apart to prop it up. The tunnel walls began to crack. More wood was stolen to brace them. A worker caught smuggling wood from his workshop was hanged. But the smuggling continued.

As they dug, they ran out of places to hide the dirt. They mixed it with the garbage and on Sundays, cleaning day, they dumped it into the well. It clogged the well. The Germans ordered them to clean the well. It got cleaned again. They cleaned it again. The Germans couldn’t understand why the well constantly clogged. They got permission to dig new toilets and filled part of the trenches with tunnel dirt.

In August the wheat was harvested and they saw that the exit now ended in an open field. They dug another five hundred feet. More rain came. The tunnel roof began to sink. Bunk beds were taken apart to prop it up. The tunnel walls began cracking. More wood was stolen to brace them. By September the tunnel was ready. A hiding place was built in the attic for ten people who were too weak to walk quickly. The hope was that after the escape, the Germans would abandon the camp, thinking it empty, and allowing them to make their way to freedom.

The escape was set for Wednesday, September 28, 1943, at nine p.m., when the guards were usually drunk. Ikel Kagan, then fourteen, described his goodbyes to the other Jews who were leaving. "I was hoping my father, who had been a woodworker, could find something to smuggle wood from his workshop. But the smuggling continued."

"Friends came to wish me a successful escape, as if I was the only one escaping. I understood what they meant; they thought I didn’t stand a chance. I could sense that they were feeling sorry for me. My feet were somewhat healed by this time, but I could sense people were worried about me. All of them would go away with tears in their eyes. However, I was not afraid."

"We assembled in a long line, waiting quietly. I was very quiet and could just make out the faces in the semi-darkness. I sat quietly and thought about my family and what had happened to us in such a short time. I was hoping my father, who had been sent to another labor camp, was still..."

(Continued on page 14)

GOODBYE TO BERLIN: POSTCARDS FROM NAZI GERMANY TELL STORY OF THE KINDERTRANSPORT

To mark the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport, which saw 10,000 children escape from Nazi Germany to the UK, a new book brings to light the heartbreaking postcards sent by one Jewish father in Berlin to his son in Swansea.

BY DONALD MACINTYRE, THE INDEPENDENT

They are, if nothing else, a tangible testament to a father’s love. From February 3, 1939, when “little Heini” arrived in Swansea after leaving Berlin for the last time, until September 28, 1939, when war made such communication impossible, Max Lichtwitz wrote a stream of postcards to his young son. They have left a unique record of his determination to maintain the parental bond with the boy whose life he had saved by sending him to a strange country and parting with him, as he feared, forever.

What can the journey have been like for a bewildered six-year-old? Henry Foner, as little Heini Lichtwitz would become, remembers the German border guards searching the train passengers and his one small suitcase, the Dutch women on the other side of his arrival cannot have been easy. He would later learn that his arrival cannot have been easy. He would later learn that his arrival cannot have been easy. He would later learn that his arrival cannot have been easy.

A postcard from Max Lichtwitz to his son Heini dated February 8, 1939. The card reads: “Dear Heini. I received your letter today and am glad that you received your Easter eggs and that you enjoyed the Episcopal Church service. The weather was very nice here today. Have you been out in the garden? Many greetings and kisses, Your Vati.”

I can’t remember it at all. It must have been traumatic and I must have forgotten because I remember the journey very well, but I can’t remember saying goodbye to my father and my mother. Heini can remember the call stand-by. It was the last call before the Kindertransport took place. The weather was very nice here today. Have you been out in the garden? Many greetings and kisses, Your Vati.”

The crossing handing out “delicious” sausage rolls, a helmeted bobby on the quay at Harwich, the large hall where the children waited for the buses, and the endless rows of conveyors picking up the children at the Foner’s home in the Skelton area of Swansea — he had forgotten his German. Which is why..."
The American and International Societies for Yad Vashem cordially invite you to attend their ANNUAL TRIBUTE DINNER Legacy and Gratitude

Yad Vashem Remembrance Award
The Honorable Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor of the City of New York

Memorial Tribute to
Eli Zborowski, z”l
Founding Chairman of the American and International Societies for Yad Vashem

Marilyn & Barry Rubenstein
Dinner Chairs

Sunday, November 10, 2013
8 Kislev, 5774
Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers
811 Seventh Avenue at 52nd Street
New York City

Reception 5:00 PM
Dinner 6:30 PM

Kosher Dietary Laws Observed
Black Tie Option

Leonard A. Wilf
Chair

The American and International Societies for Yad Vashem
This year’s Annual Tribute Dinner commemorates the 10th anniversary of the ill-fated shuttle mission which took the life of Col. Ilan Ramon, z’l, the first Israeli astronaut, and destroyed the copy of Petr Ginz’s “Moon Landscape” drawing. At the suggestion of S. Isaac Mekel, Director of Development at the American Society, Col. Ramon took “Moon Landscape” with him on this mission. We will be acknowledging Ilan Ramon’s brother, Gadi Ramon, and Petr Ginz’s sister, Chava Pressburger.

Colonel Ilan Ramon was born in Tel Aviv on June 20, 1954. He was an Israeli Air Force pilot and the first Israeli astronaut to take part in a space mission. Col. Ramon (and his fellow crew members) died when the space shuttle Columbia exploded upon re-entry on February 1, 2003.

Colonel Ramon graduated as a fighter pilot from the Israel Air Force Flight School in 1974. He earned his bachelor’s degree in electronics and computer engineering from Tel Aviv University in 1987. In 1994 he was promoted to the rank of colonel and was assigned to head the Department of Operational Requirement for Weapon Development and Acquisition.

In 1997 Colonel Ramon was selected by NASA to serve as a payload specialist on the space shuttle Columbia. He reported for training in 1998 and remained at the Space Center in Houston until 2003.

Ramon was posthumously awarded the NASA Space Flight Medal, the Distinguished Public Service Medal and the US Congressional Medal of Honor. He is the only non-American to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Colonel Ramon was survived by his wife Rona and their four children. Tragically, his son, Air Force pilot Captain Asaf Ramon, died in 2009 during a training mission.

Petr Ginz, z”l

Petr Ginz was born in Prague in 1928. A gifted youth, Petr was an artist and wrote essays, short stories and poems. As a result of the German occupation of Czechoslovakia, Petr Ginz was expelled from school in 1940 for being a Jew, and, in 1942, he was deported to Terezin. Together with friends in the youth barracks, Ginz edited and published a newspaper called Vedem (We Are Leading), in which his drawings, stories and articles appeared, reflecting the wide scope of his interests, including science. His curiosity knew no bounds, helping him cope with life in the ghetto. In the fall of 1944, at the age of 16, he was deported to Auschwitz, where he perished. Ginz’s works were given to his father by a friend from the youth barracks. Petr’s father donated his works to Yad Vashem when he emigrated to Israel.
BY DONALD SNYDER, NBC NEWS

While Israel recently marked its annual Holocaust Remembrance Day dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, it’s hard to imagine that anyone could still just be learning the fate of their loved ones from that tragic era.

But that’s exactly what happened to Amos Cohen, a shipbuilder living in Haifa, Israel. He only recently learned the fate of his long-lost relative Rose Kobylinski, who died in a German death march and was buried in a Roman Catholic cemetery in a small village in Poland.

For decades Rose was only a name circled in black on a family tree, meaning she had died in the Holocaust.

The genealogical chart had been drawn up by Cohen’s mother, Rose’s cousin. Other than Rose’s name on the tree, all that Cohen, 64, knew about her was that she had lived in Berlin before being deported to a German death camp.

Nothing else was known — there had been no news about Rose since the Holocaust.

One day, Cohen received a call from Yad Vashem.

“We think we found your relative,” the caller said. “And she is buried in the cemetery of St. Anna’s Roman Catholic Church in Swierklany, Poland.”

The search for Rose began in 1990 when Cohen’s mother made a formal inquiry, hoping that Yad Vashem might have information about her fate. No information was available.

“It was sad that my mother died never knowing what happened to her cousin, Rose,” said Cohen.

When Cohen went to Swierklany, a small village in southwest Poland, in April 2010, he placed together what had happened to her. He recalled Kaddish, the Jewish mourner’s prayer, in the church cemetery where Rose is buried in a mass grave with nine others, all murdered by the Germans on January 18, 1945.

Konstanty Dolnik, the local undertaker, buried the victims in the cemetery in defiance of German orders to bury them in a forest to erase their memories. Dolnik also recorded the numbers tattooed on their forearms.

In 1948, the town erected a monument with a cross to mark the mass grave. Only the numbers recorded by Dolnik identified the grave’s occupants. There were no names.

The breakthrough in the search for Rose came when Yaki Gantz, a former member of Israel’s domestic security force (the Israeli version of the FBI), became involved. Gantz heads a project called “For Every Number There Is a Name.”

“Their relatives now know that their relatives didn’t just become ashes at Auschwitz,” he said in a phone interview. “They know there is a place where they can come to say Kaddish.”

When Gantz learned about the grave in Swierklany, he sent the numbers to Yad Vashem with information from the nearby Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The museum had just obtained documents that the Russian troops seized when liberating Auschwitz in 1945. This Auschwitz data recently obtained from Russia proved critical in matching many numbers to names.

Kryszyna Manka, the now-75-year-old daughter of Dolnik, the undertaker, wept as she remembered the sub-zero January night when the prisoners arrived from Auschwitz during an ice storm.

“It’s hard for me to talk about that night,” she told NBC News through a translator.

Manka was seven years old in 1945 when the Germans, losing the war, began marching concentration camp prisoners in Poland to Germany in what are known as death marches.

Wearing rags and clogs that bledied their feet, the prisoners were often shot to death when they could not walk fast enough. They were guarded by German SS men and barking dogs. The Germans spent the night in the village of Swierklany. One of the female prisoners stayed in Manka’s home that night — although she doesn’t know if it was Rose.

When Cohen went to Swierklany, he became the first to return to his mother’s tombstone to pay tribute.

The museum had just obtained documents that the Russian troops seized when liberating Auschwitz in 1945. This Auschwitz data recently obtained from Russia proved critical in matching many numbers to names.

Kryszyna Manka, the now-75-year-old daughter of Dolnik, the undertaker, wept as she remembered the sub-zero January night when the prisoners arrived from Auschwitz during an ice storm.

“It’s hard for me to talk about that night,” she told NBC News through a translator.

Manka was seven years old in 1945 when the Germans, losing the war, began marching concentration camp prisoners in Poland to Germany in what are known as death marches.

Wearing rags and clogs that bledied their feet, the prisoners were often shot to death when they could not walk fast enough. They were guarded by German SS men and barking dogs. The Germans spent the night in the village of Swierklany. One of the female prisoners stayed in Manka’s home that night — although she doesn’t know if it was Rose.

“It still remember her beautiful blond curly hair,” Manka said. “Her feet were torn by the wooden shoes and the long walk in the freezing cold.” They had walked 40 miles, the distance from Auschwitz to Swierklany, according to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

It didn’t really matter. The next day, 10 prisoners were shot to death outside the village, including the woman who had stayed in Manka’s home.

The residents of Swierklany marked this massacre with an annual remembrance service on January 18, and also during religious holidays.

“The fact that the Jews are buried in a Roman Catholic cemetery helps us to recognize that we are brothers,” said Father Jan Klyczyka, a priest in the village for the last 40 years, in a phone interview.

Local teenagers maintain the grave and learn about a massacre that’s hard for them to imagine, said his history teacher, Ivona Barchanska.

Gantz continues to scour the dirt roads and churches of rural Poland, seeking to restore the names of the murdered.

“When a person finishes life, he has a name. He is not a number,” said Gantz. Now, beneath the 1948 monument where there were once only numbers, there is a new memorial plaque with names that include Rose Kobylinski.

BY YORI YALON, ISRAEL HAYOM

AFTER DECADES, FAMILY UNRAVELS HOLOCAUST MYSTERY

BY YORI YALON, ISRAEL HAYOM

Our books stamps with his name, the only tangible keepsake that Moshe Hofstadter has of his father Abraham, who was murdered by the Nazis, were returned to him in a moving ceremony at Yad Vashem.

The return of the books marked the culmination of an unusual sequence of events. Three years ago, Christoph Schlegel, the grandson of a senior Austrian Nazi officer, found several books that had been stamped with the unfamiliar name Abraham Hofstadter in the home of his grand-
A doctor walks into an operating room and asks if the patient is asleep yet. As he is about to operate, a group of Nazis in uniform marches in — a round of “Heil Hitler” is followed by orders that the doctor put his scalpel down and leave the hospital. In the next scene, the doctor is paraded down a crowded street, still wearing his white uniform but with the word Jude scrawled across his chest in thick letters.

We know the doctor is headed to certain death, because that is what happens in Holocaust films. But this is no ordinary Holocaust film. This is a scene from Professor Mamlock, a Soviet film released in 1938 that tells the story of a German Jewish doctor living under the Nazis. Part of a small but significant wave of anti-Fascist Soviet films, it was one of the first films in the world to address the issue of Jewish persecution in Nazi Germany and was seen by millions of people in the USSR before it was banned in August 1939, when the Westerners are first exposed to the Holocaust, there are no parallels in Soviet/Russian culture — Professor Mamlock was shown briefly after Hitler invaded the USSR, but had disappeared from Soviet theaters by the end of the 1940s.

Gershenson’s work is a monumen-
tal achievement in giving a voice to the lost Soviet Holocaust films — to the filmmakers, and to also the mil-
tions whose fates they attempted to memorialize. As the charges of cen-
sorship pile up, and the list of silenced filmmakers grows, the sense of loss is overwhelming. The tragedy of what might have been might is most poignant in the details of Gershenson’s own research — such as the moment she found the screenplay for Golof mit Unis (God Is With Us), with a blank sign-
out sheet signaling that no one had touched it in nearly 50 years. “(When I called scriptwriter Grigorii Kanovich in Israel, he nearly fainted. He’d thought it was lost,” she told me.)

Or writing about Boris Ermolayev, whose battle to bring his film Our Father to the screen cost him his career. Ermolayev now lives in a outbreaks rejection by Goskino, the cen-
tral film governing body. Of course, it was never a matter of the Jewish topic being addressed. “Saying out loud that the screenplay’s problem lies with its representation of Jews would itself be anti-
Semitic,” Gershenson writes. “This is why the SRK (a film studio — editorial board) was hard pressed to avoid any on-
the-record discus-
sion of Jewish top-
ics, while effective-
tly trying to sup-
press it.” Modern filmmakers would shudder to read the details of all approved stages each film had to undergo, from the initial idea through to the dis-
tribution of the final film.

To understand Soviet Holocaust films, it is also important to under-
stand the way that the Holocaust unfolded in Soviet territories. There were no concentration camps in the USSR, and Soviet Jews were not sent westward to the camps in Poland. The vast majority of Jews were round-
ed up and shot (or just outside) their towns by the Einsatzgruppen. For Russian Jews, Babi Yar, not Auschwitz, is the ultimate symbol of the Holocaust.

Jews also fought in the Red Army, often giving their hometowns before the occupation and returning to noth-
ing but deserted homes and mass graves. Others were evacuated east-
ward into areas like Tashkent and Uzbekistan. Most Russian Jews today can count being Holocaust vic-
tims, Red Army veterans and evac-
uees among their family wartime experiences.

The evacuation, and the failure of the Germans to fully occupy the coun-
ty, also meant that a Yiddish culture (newspapers, film, theater) continued to exist throughout the war. As a result, the Jewish response to the Holocaust was immediate — and it was often supported by Soviet offi-
cials. The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, formed by direct order from Stalin, not only documented Jewish losses, but its archives also reveal plans for a number of Holocaust films.

It’s often forgotten today, but the Soviets were the first witnesses to many Nazi atrocities — a point also made by David Shneer in his 2011 book on Soviet Jewish photojournal-
ism Through Soviet Jewish Eyes: Photography, War, and the Holocaust, many of whom captured some of the most iconic Holocaust imagery known today. The earliest images of concentration camps were taken by Soviet Jewish photogra-
phers; similarly, Gershenson is cer-
tain that the 1938 Pearl Boy Soldiers is the first film in the world to show the camps. Another film, the 1945 The

Still from the film Professor Mamlock (1938), directors Herbert Rappaport and Adolf Minkin.

“Ghosts of Soviet Holocaust Cinema: Finally Escape from the Censors’ Files” by Lea Zeltserman

MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE
The study of the Holocaust is expanding worldwide — for differ-
ing reasons.

Across the globe, schoolchildren study the industrialized slaugh-
ter Jews but also Germans, at museums in America, Israel and Poland each draw more than a million visitors annually. The UN has passed two resolutions in the past decade to institutionalize memory of the Holocaust worldwide. Yad Vashem, an Israeli museum and remembrance authority, trains 10,000 domestic and foreign teachers every year. "Interest is growing immensely," says Doni Novak, the director-general. Membership of the Association of Holocaust Organizations (AHO) has increased from 25 in the late 1980s to over 300. Commemorative museums have opened from Germany and France to Brazil and Japan. Of the 16 books on the subject published in America’s Library of Congress, more than two-thirds were published in the past two decades.

In its immediate aftermath, the Holocaust went largely unacknowl-
edged. Perpetrators and bystanders preferred to forget. Conscience began in Israel, where many survivors had gathered. But even there it was done quietly. A 1960 study showed that barely a quarter of schools taught the children about the Holocaust. Only when Israelis came to feel an existen-
tial threat during successive wars with Arab neighbors did that change.

In 1982, the education ministry made teaching about the Holocaust compulsory for all children. Coverage in history textbooks increased from 20 pages in the 1960s to 450 in the 1990s. Today, every Israeli school-
child has a copy of a book on the history of Shoah, along with further coursework in literature, music and art classes. Some 200,000 students and soldiers tour Yad Vashem annual-
ly, the soldiers carrying their guns. The state has managed to draw great strength from keeping alive the mem-
ory of the murdered.

Yet over time the depiction of mass slaughter has changed. When Israel was meek, it stressed the heroism of the Warsaw ghetto. Now, with reas-
suringly powerful armed forces, the focus is more on victimhood. Schools teach that "we need a strong army because the world hates us," says Dan Porat, a professor of Jewish edu-
cation at Jerusalem. Domestic critics have called some Israeli history teaching simplistic. The Holocaust is at times played down as evidence of a lack of Jewish national spirit, they say, rather than an excess of Germany’s. Government offices exhibit photos of Israeli soldiers who fell in the death camps of Auschwitz. On Holocaust Remembrance Day, inaug-
urated five years after the founding of Israel, people fly the flag of the country's foes as would annihilat-
ors. "All our [current] dangers are viewed through the prism of Auschwitz," says Avihu Ronen, a lec-
turer in Jewish history at Haifa University.

In the West, it fell to the media to heighten public discussion of the Holocaust. Early works struck themes familiar to Israelis. Schindler’s List, a 1993 Hollywood film about a German businessman who bribed Nazi offic-
ials to shield his Jewish employees, turns from black and white to color when the survivors arrive in Jerusalem. More recent Western depictions have diverged from the Israeli narrative. Europe’s young, now three generations removed from the killing, flinch from guilt imposed by elders. According to Centropa, an educational center in Vienna, stu-
dents respond best to Holocaust teaching when first told about the Jewish past they have lost. “If they relate through Franz Kafka’s Metamorphosis to the Nazi’s plan and Weimar culture, they will learn about the Holocaust through the back door,” says Edward Serotta, Centropa’s founder. Dutch schools draw pupils in by holding commemo-
rative walks to buildings that once housed Jews.

Unlike Yad Vashem, which portrays Jews as outsiders in Europe who find redemption in Israel, new Jewish museums in Austria and Poland pres-
ent Jews as an intrinsic part of European heritage and culture. “It shocked me,” says Mr. Porat after a visit. “I never thought of Jews as being Poles.” The exhibition at Yad Vashem ends with a display of Israel’s declara-
tion of independence and the playing of the national anthem, whereas European equivalents emphasize a Jewish rebirth in places where mas-
sacres happened (Berlin has the world’s fastest-growing Jewish community — from a very low base).

America may have the world’s sec-
ond-biggest Jewish population but, with no death camps to commemo-
rate on its soil, it follows a surprising-
ly universal path in Holocaust teach-
ing. Museums and syllabuses are often used as pathways to examine other genocides, focusing on the dangers of “racism, bigotry and intol-
erance,” says Dan Napolitano, direc-
tor of education at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. Southwest of the largest America’s 30 museums and 70 centers on the subject. An increas-
ing number offer courses for soldiers, law enforcement, and government against the abuse of power.

Discussing the Holocaust in the context of other human horrors is popular in Latin America, Africa and Asia as well. Richard Freedman, who runs the oldest of South Africa’s three Holocaust centers, has used Nazi race laws to examine white rule. “There are very deep parallels between Germany’s establishment of a racial state in 1933–39 and South Africa’s apartheid,” he says. “Recall the Senegal, a UN official in charge of promoting memories of the Holocaust in Africa has spoken of using it as a way ‘to develop remembrance about slavery.’” Argentine pupils examine the Holocaust in the light of who was responsible for their own dictatorship a little more than a generation ago.

Later this year AHO, the world’s biggest Holocaust association, is to stage China’s first international con-
ference on the topic in Harbin. The northeastern city once had a thriving Jewish community, but a more impor-
tant stimulant for local interest in the conference will be to draw, rightly or wrongly, between the Holocaust and Japanese wartime atrocities. The Imperial Japanese Army used the city for experiments on humans, including vivisec-
tion and dropping anthrax from low-flying planes, killing an estimated 400,000 people.

Methods developed by early Holocaust centers have become guides for memori-
als to Asian tragedies. The Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Cambodia and a Chinese museum commemorating the “Rape of Nanking” by Japanese sol-
diers in 1937 have drawn on Yad Vashem. “Israel people did a great job of teaching the past,” says Xiaofei Yu, director of the Jewish Center in China-
gdu. She has tried to drum up interest in the Holocaust with an essay competition offering a cash prize.

In some places, the Holocaust now overshadows the conflict that fueled it. Indian history textbooks devote much of their Second World-
War coursework to the slaughter. “Imagine yourself to be a Jew or a Pole in Nazi Germany. It is September 1941, and you have been asked to wear the Star of David,” instructs a tenth-grade textbook called India and the Contemporary World. Here and in some other places, the Holocaust is seen as the core event of the twentieth century in Europe, and it thus draws millions of tourists to its memorials. Last year, 46,500 South Koreans visited Auschwitz, only a few less than Israel’s 68,000.

The main geographic exception to the swelling global interest in the Holocaust is the Muslim world, where it is commonly viewed as a dramatiza-
tion meant to win sympathy for Jews who grabbed Arab land. None of the three main UN information cen-
ters in the Middle East marks Holocaust Remembrance Day. "I can-
not really speak about the Holocaust in the Muslim world," said Ali Zaid, Iran’s recently retired president called the Holocaust a myth. In parts of Paris with a lot of Muslims, some schools have adopted a syllabus that excludes the Holocaust from the syllabus for fear of provoking pro-Israel. “I know that some teachers talk about Auschwitz and Treblinka, and students clapped,” wrote Georges Bensoussan, a French historian, in a 2004 study of immigrant schools.

Nonetheless, Western Holocaust centers are making inroads in the Muslim world. The interest allows cir-
cumvention of local censors. The Aladdin Project, a Paris-based initia-
tive, has staged Holocaust lectures from Beirut to Baghdad, praising Arabs who offered refuge to Jews fleeing persecution in the fifteenth century. The UN’s Palestinian refugee agency has arranged for Holocaust teaching on its syllabus. King Mohammed VI has long sought American congressional support to wooing Jewish groups. Members of the Berber ethnic minority also champion it to win support for their struggle to reverse 1,400 years of Arabization; they have taken Holocaust courses at Yad Vashem and translated teaching material into their vernacular, Tamazight. “We’re trying to relate the Jewish physical genocide to our cultur-
al one,” says Massin Asouaïd, a doctor of a university center promoting memories of the Holocaust teaching on its syllabus. King Mohammed VI has long sought American congressional support to encourage a Holocaust road show in sou-
thern Morocco two years ago.

Perhaps the biggest threat to remembrance of the six million Jews killed by the Nazis is trivialization. "The Holocaust has lost its specifili-
ity," says Eckhardt Fuchs, a German academic preparing a study of text-
book coverage worldwide. Politicians in America and elsewhere routinely employ the Holocaust as a rhetorical device to denote evil. The term has cropped up in comic books and heavy-metal music. Even in Israel, mentions are increasingly casual; farmers upset at diminishing returns from tomato concentrate have called killing their relatives "genocides." Politicians flock to Holocaust survivor beauty contests. A joke popular in Israeli schools: "Morocco may not have Hitler kill himself? (Answer: he read his gas bill.)" In Britain, some teachers use the Holocaust as a les-
don for terrorism, reducing Nazis to schoolyard thugs. Trating it as a near moral issue, warns Paul Sainsbury, a British academic, could develop into a stigmatization of regardles of its proliferation.
AUSCHWITZ THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

(Continued from page 5)

sounded. Today he finds his name choice amusing. "I look nothing like a bear," he says. Kulka is short and has a slight build.

Israel was the utopia of a new beginning. "They tried to destroy Jerusalem in Auschwitz, which is why we wanted to build it up again," he says. He went to a kibbutz at first, where he worked in agriculture. Eventually he began his studies: first early, then medieval and finally contemporary Jewish history. His professor of early Jewish history, Menachem Stern of the Hebrew University, was himself a Palestinian on his way to work, which happened to be the Way of the Cross in Jerusalem. The killer later testified that he had wanted to kill a Jew, any Jew.

From then on, Kulka's life was shaped by the conflicts between Palestinians and Jews, like the Six-Day War and the opening and closing of various zones of the city.

RETURNING TO THE RUINS

Kulka married a Slovak Jew who had been persecuted by the Nazis and had fled from Europe, and the couple had a daughter. They didn't discuss Auschwitz very much at home. His daughter is a clinical psychologist today. When she became a member of the Israel Psychoanalytical Society, she asked her father for the tapes in which he had talked to himself about Auschwitz. Today his three grandchildren are involved in the pursuit of his research. "I have very seriously considered your proposal. It was and is remains clear to me that I want to forever preserve for myself the desolate images of the landscape of the metropolis of death, in just the way they had been imprinted on my mind when I returned in 1978. For me, the changes to those images would signify an estrangement from that landscape."
GOODBYE TO BERLIN...

(Continued from page 7)

from then on, his father wrote the cards as frequently as ever, but in English. The cards his father sent have now been published, along with other letters and cards, in a book produced by Yad Vashem, entitled Postcards to a Little Boy: A Kindertransport Story.

They are a rich document of a program which, when finally approved, was a kind of compromise by a UK government that was at the time resisting demands for an increase in Jewish immigration to British-run Palestine. The Bielskis, together with 10 other Jewish families, were accepted to come to Palestine. They went to London, then Paris, then backstage, and eventually they were accepted for immigration to Palestine. They were the last of their group when every victim was another story. The executions, the ghettos — nonresistance is a very complicated science don't want to talk about it because it's so uncomfortable," Gershenson sums up this loss best (which was screened in Moscow 2010, and a well-known character was made to look more jaded Soviets in the finest socialist-realist tradition. Gershenson sums up this loss best when she writes of the 1964 Goodbye, Boys! (which was screened in Toronto in 2012 for the first time in decades). "In an alternate reality, in which he had not been constrained by Soviet policies and restrictions, (director Mikhal Kalik) would have included images representing the Holocaust on Soviet soil. In the only reality we have, Goodbye, Boys! was made and even distributed, but in some ways it remained a phantom, a phantom of a film that could have been."

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine- ma. Decades of repression and propaganda had done their work too well, and Holocaust films continued to follow the existing formulas. Russia is one of the few countries in the world where Schindler's List was a box-office flop.

The final film had no Jewish character heroes — all strong- jawed Soviets in the finest socialist-realist tradition. Gershenson brings the story full circle, writing, as it were, the next chapter in Soviet Jewish cinema. Two of the scripts she uncovered have found a new life — the 1965 Stalemate was transformed into a Moscow theater production in 2010, and a well-known Eastern Corridor, produced in 1965 and one of the few films to explicitly address the Holocaust, a Yiddish plea was uttered by a character during the drowning execution scene. (Like The Unvanquished 20 years earlier, it too quickly disappeared from theaters.)

This all echoed the official Soviet response to the Holocaust, which was to universalize suffering and thus convenience avoiding mention the specific group of Soviet citizens who were targeted for being Jewish. Some 27 million Soviets died in the war — "So in Soviet discourse, those three million were just 'peaceful Soviet citi- zens,' " Gershenson said. Why talk about Jewish victims as a unique story. The executions, the ghettos — it was impossible without local assis- tance. Today, even people with con- science don't want to talk about it because it's so uncomfortable." Gershenson summed up this loss best when she writes of the 1964 Goodbye, Boys! (which was screened in Toronto in 2012 for the first time in decades). "In an alternate reality, in which he had not been constrained by Soviet policies and restrictions, (director Mikhal Kalik) would have included images representing the Holocaust on Soviet soil. In the only reality we have, Goodbye, Boys! was made and even distributed, but in some ways it remained a phantom, a phantom of a film that could have been.

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine- ma. Decades of repression and propa- ganda had done their work too well, and Holocaust films continued to follow the existing formulas. Russia is one of the few countries in the world where Schindler's List was a box- office flop.

"If we start talking about the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, it's very uncomfortable," Gershenson explained. "Because then everyone is implicated. Maybe not in Moscow, but certainly in places like Kiev and Kharkov and all these other areas. The story of wartime collaboration or nonresistance is a very complicated story. The executions, the ghettos — it was impossible without local assis- tance. Today, even people with con- science don't want to talk about it because it's so uncomfortable." Gershenson summed up this loss best when she writes of the 1964 Goodbye, Boys! (which was screened in Toronto in 2012 for the first time in decades). "In an alternate reality, in which he had not been constrained by Soviet policies and restrictions, (director Mikhal Kalik) would have included images representing the Holocaust on Soviet soil. In the only reality we have, Goodbye, Boys! was made and even distributed, but in some ways it remained a phantom, a phantom of a film that could have been."

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine- ma. Decades of repression and propa- ganda had done their work too well, and Holocaust films continued to follow the existing formulas. Russia is one of the few countries in the world where Schindler's List was a box- office flop.

"If we start talking about the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, it's very uncomfortable," Gershenson explained. "Because then everyone is implicated. Maybe not in Moscow, but certainly in places like Kiev and Kharkov and all these other areas. The story of wartime collaboration or nonresistance is a very complicated story. The executions, the ghettos — it was impossible without local assis- tance. Today, even people with con- science don't want to talk about it because it's so uncomfortable." Gershenson summed up this loss best when she writes of the 1964 Goodbye, Boys! (which was screened in Toronto in 2012 for the first time in decades). "In an alternate reality, in which he had not been constrained by Soviet policies and restrictions, (director Mikhal Kalik) would have included images representing the Holocaust on Soviet soil. In the only reality we have, Goodbye, Boys! was made and even distributed, but in some ways it remained a phantom, a phantom of a film that could have been."

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cine-

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemp-
A child’s drawing chosen by artist Michal Rovner for the “Shoah” exhibit. Rovner chose more than 100 of 6,000 collected images to be shown on the room’s white walls.

AUSCHWITZ HOLOCAUST EXHIBITION OPENED BY NETANYAHU

(Continued from page 13) ed to some of the nations of Europe a barracks building, for it to memorialize what had happened to their citizens here, and so there is an Austrian block, a Hungarian block, and on and on. Block 27 was designated the “Jewish block.”

When the Israelis decided to remake Block 27, they were faced with several challenges. The barracks are small, only about 10,000 square feet, and the enormity of the Holocaust — in facts, figures, emotion — is huge.

“Our challenge was to create a new language to explain to the visitor the more comprehensive idea of the Holocaust,” said Shalev, who served as curator of the exhibit. Or as the Holocaust survivor Aharon Appelfeld put it: "to deconstruct the and presented at waist level, where a child might scrawl on the wall. In the spare white room, the drawings depict increasingly disturbing episodes.

First, there are crude renderings of happy times — a girl with a flower or a family celebrating the Sabbath. Then there is a soldier brandishing a weapon and taking a girl into a forest, and the soldier returning alone. Later, trains arriving at the camps, then gallows, graves.

The artist spent a year studying the archives of children’s drawings, and their reproductions are very sparing, very simple. The curator of the exhibit spoke of their tenacity and fragility. “The hovering image captures the present tense of the story of the Holocaust in Poland.”

The remaking of Block 27 is part of that revision. “It is remarkable in the sense that it represents the reassertion of the Jewish story, long ignored, even here,” said Marian Turski, chairman of the council at the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

When visitors exit the Block 27 barracks, they do so through a simple side door. And there right in front of them are the rusting barbed-wire fences erected more than 60 years ago.

The STOrY of Dr. Mengele’s Delivery Girl

(Continued from page 6) “I did not know him!” Leah leans forward like a child revealing a secret.

“He said he was called Yossi, and that he was related to one of my classmates.” She flashes that mischievous grin. “He’s now my husband.”

L eah and Yossi migrated to Brazil, where they lived happily for four decades. But Dr. Mengele apparently had the same idea. Leah heard the reports of the manhunt for Mengele — in facts, figures, emotion — is huge.

A child’s drawing chosen by artist Michal Rovner for the new exhibit at the Auschwitz death camp devoted to 1.5 million Jewish children who were killed in the Holocaust.

There are empty pages yet to be filled, as Yad Vashem is still collecting names from old census data, reports by families and other research. In three years, the center expects to have documented five million names. The others might be lost to history.

The main exhibition at Auschwitz is the state museum, which is now applauded by Jewish scholars as being accurate and presenting the full story of the Holocaust in Poland.

From the end of August until mid-October 1944, I experienced the worst atrocities ever. I saw one by one my friends from home and from here, girlfriends from my class, their mothers or sisters, exterminated, ruined, or dragged to the gas and the furnace. Then I was working in the revier, and these two words, “revier work,” contain all the horrible atrocities. Because you had to know there was nothing worse than this.

Auschwitz — February 27, 1945

My dear Mother!

I am pondering what sort of gift I would give you. I am thinking hard but I can’t think of any smart ideas, for the choices aren’t many. You know... I don’t have anything... Yet in any case, now I notice that there is one treasure I will have, that in the most meticulous search while we were standing naked for washing, they did not take away from me. That is the single quality that never, no one and nothing would ever take away from me. Yet I have in my capacity to give it to whoever I want. I feel the person is worthy of it. That is my heart and the innocent love that is in it. This I managed to maintain all along, and now I would like to hold your hand and pass to you my pure love, so that you feel, know what you mean to me.

MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE

Page 15
THE HOLOCAUST AND “HATIKVAH”: A SONG OF HOPE IN A TIME OF DESPAIR

BY RAPHAEL MEDOFF

A national anthem written more than 50 years before the birth of the state for which it was composed, “Hatikvah” has served as a source of hope and inspiration for Jews who have found themselves in the most dire of circumstances. During the darkest hours of the Holocaust, Jews defied their tormentors by singing the song’s powerful lyrics.

“The SS COULD NOT STOP THEM”

Filip Muller was a Sonderkommando in Auschwitz—a Jewish slave laborer who was kept alive because he helped the Nazis gash live corpses from the gas chambers to the crematoria. One of the very few Sonderkommandos to survive the Holocaust, Muller later described the remarkable behavior of one group of Czech Jews who were being marched toward the gas chambers and were told what was about to happen: “Their voices grew subdued and tense, their movements forced, their eyes stared as though they had been hypnotized… Suddenly a voice began to sing. Others joined in, and the sound swelled into a mighty choir. They sang first the Czechoslovak national anthem and then the Hebrew song ‘Hatikvah.’”

Enraged SS men tried to halt the singing by beating the Jews into submission. Muller wrote, “It was as if they regarded the singing as a last kind of protest which they were determined to stifle if they could.” But the SS was unable to stop them. “To be allowed to die together was the only comfort left to these people… And when they sang ‘Hatikvah,’ now the national anthem of the state of Israel, they were glancing into the future, but it was a future which they knew they were about to happen.”

“DESPITE IT ALL THEY SANG”

Jan Michaels was a 23-year-old Polish Jewish pilot who was shot down in 1944 and imprisoned near what he called “a forced labor camp in Silesia” (German-occupied southwestern Poland). Michaels managed to escape, and his eyewitness testimony about the mistreatment of the Jews reached the West in November of that year.

Michaels reported that 300 Jews between the ages of 18 and 25 were being held in the slave labor camp. “The prisoners, who came from France, Holland and other European countries, were forced to work inhuman hours in the freezing cold, although they received little food and man hours in the freezing cold, although they received little food and were clothed in rags,” according to news reports relaying his account. “Persons who became ill feared to report to the camp infirmary because they knew that it meant death.”

Despite their mistreatment, the youths maintained their morale,” Michaels said, and he “could frequently hear the strains of ‘Hatikvah’ coming from the camp.”

“AM YISRAEL CHAI”

BBC Radio reporter Patrick Gordon Walker was on hand when the British Second Army liberated the Bergen-Belsen death camp in April 1945. On the first Friday after the liberation, Walker broadcast an account of a British Jewish army chaplain, L. H. Hardman, leading what Walker called “the first Jewish service that many of the men and women present had taken part in, for six years — probably the first Jewish service held on German soil in absolute security and without fear, for a decade.”

“Around us lay the corpses there had not been time to clear away.” Walker reported. “People were still lying down and dying, in broad daylight…. A few hundred people gathered together, sobbing openly in joy at their liberation and paying homage to the memory of their parents, brothers and sisters that had been taken from them, gassed and burned.”

“These people knew they were being recorded, they wanted the world to hear their voice. They made a tremendous effort, which quite exhausted them. Listen.”

Walker evidently assumed that what he heard was part of the traditional Sabbath prayer service, but the survivors actually sang “Hatikvah.” At the conclusion of the song, a voice — perhaps that of the chaplain, L. H. Hardman — declares: “Am Yisrael Chai, the children of Israel still liveth!” (The song can be heard on YouTube.)

Mrs. Oran Aviv (formerly Helen Einhorn), an Israeli health care practitioner originally from San Francisco, has identified her mother, Cedia Frommer Einhorn, among the survivors on Walker’s recording. Just days earlier, Mrs. Frommer had “contemplated running and killing herself on the electric fence of the camp,” Mrs. Aviv notes on her Web site.

But there she is on the BBC broadcasting, “belting out the song with her operatic voice, full of determination, wanting the whole world to hear their voice. They being recorded, they wanted the world to hear their voice. They made a tremendous effort, which quite exhausted them. Listen.”

Walker evidently assumed that what he heard was part of the traditional Sabbath prayer service, but the survivors actually sang “Hatikvah.” At the conclusion of the song, a voice — perhaps that of the chaplain, L. H. Hardman — declares: “Am Yisrael Chai, the children of Israel still liveth!” (The song can be heard on YouTube.)