BROADFORD STUDENTS & BERNARD KORBMAN AT UN DAY
400,000 STUDENTS HAVE VISITED THE CENTRE

JEWISH HOLOCAUST CENTRE INC.

Registered Museum
Under the Patronage of “Yad Vashem” Jerusalem

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**EDUCATION... EDUCATION**

**Stan Marks**

What does it mean for now and the future to be a grandchild of a Holocaust survivor? An article on page 23 of this Centre News reports on special workshops held at the Centre with grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. Written by Natalie Krasnow, who was awarded this year’s Mayer Burstone scholarship, it explains the six workshops run by Natalie with survivors’ grandchildren. It is even more necessary as we contemplate what it will mean for grandchildren when survivors are no longer with us and also what part grandchildren might play in keeping alive the message of the Holocaust.

The magazine also has an article by Lionel Sharp, secretary of the Genealogical Society of Australia (Vic) about the quickening search for victims and survivors of the Holocaust. There also is a very timely feature by noted journalist Len Radic asking how do we maintain interest before any so-called “Holocaust fatigue” sets in. This is particularly pertinent in a world where the public has a voracious appetite for human interest stories of death and destruction - never ending.

In keeping with the workshops of the future of Holocaust education, it is very satisfying to also point out that the Centre has just reached quite a milestone: the 400,000th high school student education, it is very satisfying to also point out that the Centre has visited it, since it opened in 1984. This is quite an achievement and a tribute to all involved in our diverse educational program. It is a tribute to all those, right back to the visionaries who began the Centre, the planners, the survivor guides and other volunteers who speak to the students and also to the Centre’s highly active Education Department. That the aims regarding students are being achieved is evident in the many letters received from teachers and students, as reported on page 10. And perhaps a recent very practical indication of how students have benefited from Centre visits was shown at the UN Holocaust Memorial day at Springvale cemetery.

Three non-Jewish students from Victoria’s Broadford Secondary College spoke. Their words about remembering the Holocaust and its important message for the world today were inspiring, and, as is not usual at these occasions, brought applause from many of the 250 attendees. They were moved by the youngsters’ words, which came from visits to the Centre and exchanging ideas with survivor guides. Broadford students are very Holocaust minded: they have made a film about the Holocaust and also, at their own expense during their holidays, visited concentration camps.

These youngsters, including many of our future leaders in a diversity of activities, including local, state and federal governments, augur well for keeping alive, and, indeed spreading into their daily lives, the lessons of the past. They are shining examples of what education for understanding can achieve.

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Thanks to the many scores of people who answered the Centre News questionnaire. The positive answers and suggestions, and even the very few criticisms, have been noted. There were a few suggestions for running letters by readers. As I keep on explaining, please send them and they will be considered for possible publication. We welcome diverse letters, including constructive criticism. We do reserve the right, as with any publication, to reject articles and letters or sub-edit them, without in any way altering the meaning.
Volunteers from the Melbourne Holocaust Centre, in a memorable ceremony, joined with men, women and children of all ages world wide, on Feb. 27, in commemorating the United Nations’ International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Around the world, in large and small cities, in villages and at the Springvale cemetery in Melbourne, they came together to remember the six million Jews and others who perished in the Holocaust and pledge to fight against genocide, racism and hatred in all its forms. They came together in an uncertain world but spoke of hope and the need to live and work together so that the Holocaust wouldn’t happen again.

In the ceremony at Springvale, dedicated to all Jews who perished and also to the Righteous Among the Gentiles who risked their lives to save Jews, more than 250 people heard MC Stan Marks read messages from Prime Minister John Howard, Opposition leader Kim Beazley, and the Minister Assisting the Premier (Steve Bracks) on Multicultural Affairs, John Pandazopoulos. There also were inspiring addresses by renowned award-winning author and Centre volunteer Maria Lewitt (who also that day had a thought provoking Opinion Page article in the Herald Sun); Bernard Korbman, Centre’s acting CEO; Pauline Rockman, Descendants of the Shoah; Michael Danby MP, and inspiring words from Broadford Secondary College students, Yvette Ferguson, Eliza Renouf and Daniel Clarke. Arnold Erlanger said Kaddish and survivors lit candles at the Holocaust monument.

The United Nations last year accepted February 27 (when Auschwitz was liberated) as Holocaust Remembrance Day. It called on all nations to reject any full or partial denial of the Holocaust and condemn all manifestations of religious intolerance, incitement, harassment or violence against communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief, wherever they occur.

John Pandazopoulos said it was important that Victorians came together as a Community to pay their respects to the victims of one of the most horrific period of the 20th century.

John Howard said Australian would never forget the unmitigated evil which led to the murder of six million Jews and countless thousands of others in Nazi concentration camps.

“I am proud of the fact that Australia, and in particular Melbourne, was to become home for many Holocaust survivors,” he added.

Kim Beazley’s message spoke of the courageous efforts by the “Righteous Among the Nations” in saving Jews.

“Theyir humanity and courage was a beacon in one of the darkest episodes in our history and today we honour them as we remember the millions who perished,” he said. “Today, as then, we need good men and women - people of brave heart and strong conviction to fight fanaticism and racism- so the world knows that the six million victims of the Holocaust did not die in vain.”

Daniel Clarke, of Broadford College, said that students would remain inspired by the spirit and courageous hearts of those affected by the Holocaust, and they would continue the message of the Holocaust to future generations.

“The hard work, dedication and commitment of the Holocaust Centre volunteers, is evident in the amazing job they do to ensure the Holocaust is forever recognized and remembered. Without such dedicated people the story and meaning of the Holocaust would be difficult to preserve,” he said.

Yvette and Eliza spoke of how Jewish heritage was an important part of “our history” and learning about it was of great worth to students. They said if history was a tapestry then the Holocaust was a thread running its entire length.

Pauline Rockman said individuals who made moral choices and act upon them can and do make a difference. They demonstrate that those who actively opposed prejudice, racism, persecution and murder can make a difference.

“It is about making the choices to do what is right rather than what is expedient,” she added. “It shows that one person can achieve a great deal, however modest their actions might initially appear.”

The ceremony concluded with Rabbi Heilbrunn singing the El Malay Rachamim.
An engaging small but comprehensive display at the Holocaust Centre gives some insight into how the Nazis introduced their own currencies in the countries they occupied.

After 1929, economic crisis hit Europe and Germany. Unemployment rose to six million in 1932. The unstable political situation caused radical political parties to rise. In 1933 the National Socialist Party led by Adolf Hitler took over the government. The money now started to carry the symbols of the Nazis. As World War II progressed, new money was issued in the occupied regions.

The “Wehrmacht” (German army) used its own money in the territories it occupied. Civilians used local money together with Reich Marks. In some ghettos and camps, money for use by Jews only was issued, designed to isolate them from the rest of the community and deprive them of their dignity, possessions and livelihood.

During the Nazi Period, the Deutsche Rentenbank and Reichskreditkasse controlled the monetary system.

Banks used the eagle holding the Swastika (emblem of the Nazis) on all bank notes, which became tools of propaganda for “Gleichschaltung” (unification). Between 1939–1945, Nazi money was issued in Reichsmark and was used by the civilians and military within the occupied territories together with local currency.

COUNTERFEIT MONEY

After the Battle of Britain, the Nazis set up an elaborate counterfeiting project at the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp under Major Walter Bernhard Kruger.

Kruger assembled a group of Jewish engravers, printers and other technicians. One of those, Morry Sheppet, survived and later served as a volunteer at the Melbourne Holocaust Centre. All prisoners working on the notes were granted special treatment in exchange for their work.

The code name for the operation was Operation Bernhard. The aim was to destabilize the British economy.

Paper identical to that used in British bank notes was especially produced. Perfect printing plates were made and a numbering system that would mesh with the British output was worked out.

The results were indistinguishable from the original. The notes were pronounced genuine by the Bank of England and the Swiss banking authorities.

After the war Britain issued a new set of bank notes making the suspect notes obsolete.

As the Nazis came to power, German Jews were forced to sell their property and possessions at extremely low prices in order to leave Germany. The Jews could go to a foreign bank and convert promissory notes to the host country’s currency at much lower rate than their real value. Eventually the notes became worthless.

Ukraine. Within the Ukraine, Nazis issued their money through Zentralnotenbank Ukraine (Central Bank of Ukraine) which was based in Rowno. In 1942 the money called Karbowanez was in use within the borders of Reichskommissariats, Ukraine.

Czechoslovakia. The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was established by the Nazis after the country was annexed in 1938.

The Germans issued their own money called Kronen through the National Bank in Prague.

Poland. German money was issued by the Bank Emisyjny in Poland based in Krakow. The denomination was in Zloty and issued in 1940 and 1941 for use within the General-Gouvernement – a central district of the occupied Poland. 1RM = 2 Zlotych.

Nazis issued special money in some ghettos and camps and used it to create the false impression that inmates were being paid for their labour. That money could not be used outside of the camps and in fact it served to humiliate and isolate the prisoners and increase their sense of helplessness.

Litzmannstadt (Lodz) Ghetto. Jews in the Ghetto were forced to exchange their own money for ghetto money. Issued in 1940 it was denominated in Marks. Called Quittungen (Receipts) they were signed by Chaim Rumkowski, the head of the Judenrat. Lodz
German student vivacious Maria Munzert, 24, is working at the Centre investigating Australia (and Australians) collective memory and public remembrance of the Holocaust, an oral history project, for her thesis. She is one of those younger generations of Germans with a vital interest in keeping alive the message of the Holocaust today and for the future, and wants to make some contribution to ensuring it never reoccurs.

A student at Luenburg University, she visited Australia three years ago, and became absorbed in the Centre, its mission statement and the survivor guides. This led her to decide to do her thesis about the Holocaust and returning to Australia and spending some time at the Centre.

She said she had been interested since age 10 about the Holocaust, reading many books about it, and wanting to learn more. Her father is a history teacher, covering the world's history from the stone age to the present. Unlike him, she is very curious about the past and present. Although she knew about the Holocaust and there are numerous books and information about it in Germany, until she came to Australia, she had never met a Holocaust survivor. It was a revelation and opened new doors to her.

Maria said many of her friends had similar thoughts to her, but there were other Germans who had a tendency to see themselves as victims of World War II. Some also thought it was time to stop talking about the Holocaust. She insisted it should be dealt with as it was an important part of German history. Discussing it was vital.

Maria said that she felt it should not be difficult to create intercultural programs between Australia, exchanging ideas about current affairs from cultural topics to politics. There also might be a possibility to get students to take part in exchange programs or special courses about the Holocaust and how it was dealt with in the two countries.

"Whoever I told about my thesis in Germany was very interested (I told university students and teachers) and was curious of what my results will be," she added. "I don't know if my thesis can help make students want to know more about the subject I don't have any plans of publishing it as it is a master thesis but a copy might be put in the library of my university. But if there where programs like that I definitely would like to take part."

Her local research will include discussions with survivors to discover just how Australians dealt with the Holocaust and how they viewed it.

"It is most important that we know about it, discuss it and hear from the survivors. It is vital," she added. "I want to talk to survivors here and also discover how Australians see what happened."

She also is keen to meet young Australians, forge links with them and perhaps foster increased understanding between German and Australian youth. This was important in today's world.

DISCLAIMER: The opinions expressed in Centre News are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the magazine's editor or the Holocaust Centre. While the Centre News welcomes ideas, articles, photos, poetry, and letters, it reserves the right to accept or reject material. There is no automatic acceptance of submissions.
“When the Nazis rounded us up they took away our names and gave us numbers. What we are involved with is taking away the numbers and giving them back their names.”

So wrote Arthur Kurzweil, author of From Generation to Generation, and an outstanding leader in the world of Jewish genealogy. He makes a plea to the current generation to develop a personal connection with the Holocaust. He suggests that we ask such questions as: ‘Who was murdered? Where were they? What are their names? How old were they? Who were in their families? Where did they die? How did they die? What is their relationship to me?’

With no personal grave on which to place a tombstone, the entry on a family tree chart or in Yad Vashem’s Hall of Names, may be the only evidence that those who perished ever existed.

This short article will attempt to overview sources for answering Kurzweil’s questions. It aims to encourage those with family connections with those who perished, to embark on a voyage for the recovery of names, dates and family history.

Much progress has been made in the past few decades in making available new documentation and to place it on the internet. Many survivors will recall that, in the post-war years after World War II, the central point for the collection of information was the International Tracing Service (ITS) of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The ITS was located in Arolsen, a town Germany, in 1955 and has remained there since.

The ITS gathered identification on the fate of millions of persons, Jewish and non-Jewish, who were killed or displaced between 1939 and 1945. By 1955, the ITS had created more than 45 million index cards relating to more than 14 million individuals. Those who recall utilising this valuable service will remember that replies often came after many months, if not years, following the initial enquiry. A very frustrating and occasionally, a fruitless search resulted.

In 1955-1957, Yad Vashem, located in Jerusalem, filmed the ITS records of Jewish victims of the Nazi regime allowing visitors to Israel to search these records. Since then many more records have since come to light, especially from the former USSR, so ITS continues to be utilised as a resource for research.

2004 BREAKTHROUGH

A major breakthrough for Holocaust research occurred in November 2004. Yad Vashem, the key institution in Israel dedicated to perpetuating the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, made available the Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names on the internet. Overnight letter writing and trips to the Yad Vashem were a thing of the past. The Hall of Names/Pages of Testimony Division had been actively collecting ‘pages of testimony’ from Jews around the world and now one could search these extensive records from one’s living room.

Some three million names from pages of testimony and other sources, such as deportation lists, Gedenkbuch books and concentration camp lists have been entered on the database.

In 2004 it was reported that there were 2.75 million visitors to the website in the first few weeks of its launch. Such was the demand to search, not only the names of the deceased, but also the name of the individual who lodged the page of testimony.

Viewing the signature of the person who lodged the form has enabled searchers to locate the name and address survivors or their descendants who, in many instances, have turned out to be unknown living close relatives. For example, child of a refugee who fled Germany to South America in 1939 and later settled in Israel, recently found a German refugee relative, now in her eighties, living in Geelong, Victoria.

It is also useful to check out the Pages of Testimony for the names of all those relatives who you believe died in the Holocaust. Recently a member of the Jewish Genealogical Society found his own name among the deceased. A copy of his passport was requested to remove his name.

I am convinced that all members of my own wife’s perished family members were entered in the Pages of Testimony database by surviving relatives. Everyone must have thought that someone else had made an entry. However the only records I found were a number mispelt names or incorrect details taken from French deportation lists. This has now been rectified and photographs have been included with the forms sent to Yad Vashem. Visit: www.yadvashem.org

There are other sources available for Holocaust research. Often overlooked are the Yizkor Books. After World War II survivors from a town or shtetl gathered together writings and photographs about their lost communities. These were published by landsmanshaften or individuals to memorialise their destroyed shtetlach and homes, as well as stories about relatives and friends who perished.

More than 1,200 Yizkor (memorial or remembrance) books have been published. For the genealogist they can provide a valuable source of information about specific individuals. However, most are written in Hebrew or Yiddish, although some have sections in English and this may present difficulties for the Australian born researcher.

In 1994 a group of volunteers started a project ‘to unlock the valuable information contained in Yizkor Books so that genealogists and others can learn about their heritage. The JewishGen Yizkor Book Project is a translation project, available on the JewishGen website, which enables us to read translations of selected parts of Yizkor books. It also offers us the opportunity to search a ‘necrology’ index of Holocaust victims whose names appear in these books.

A number of Australians have assisted.
**JEWISHGEN HOLOCAUST DATABASE**

Perhaps the most exciting development apart from the Yad Vashem initiative, is JewishGen’s Holocaust Database incorporating 100 different datasets and containing over one million entries and constantly updated. Among the datasets is the Lodz Ghetto database which contains 250,000 names and the Sugihara Passport list containing 2,140 names of Jews saved by the Japanese diplomat in 1940. Visit: [www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust/](http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust/)

Other valuable resources include the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum which maintains a Registry of Jewish Holocaust Survivors with a list of over 170,000 survivors and their children in the U.S. and Canada. Visit: [www.ushmm.org/remembrance/registry/index.php?content=offerings/](http://www.ushmm.org/remembrance/registry/index.php?content=offerings/)

In 2004, when Yad Vashem’s Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names was released on the Internet, Lena Fiszman (Administration Assistant at the Centre) was one of the 2.75 million visitors to visit the website. Finding ‘Pages of Testimony’ for members of her mother’s maternal family, she was amazed to find that two of her mother’s first cousins (a brother and sister) were alive and living in Israel, unaware that their cousin had survived the war. And Lena’s mother, Franka (Gotlib) Fiszman, had always assumed that they had perished with their mother in the camps, as they were young children at the outbreak of war. Since that time the two families have been reunited and maintain regular contact. On a sad note Lena’s mother discovered that her aunt (mother to her cousins) had also survived the war but died 11 years ago in Israel, never knowing that her niece was alive and living in Australia with her own family.

**CONSIDER A PLEDGE TO HELP CONTINUE THE CENTRE’S WORK. A FORM IS ON PAGE 41. PLEASE RETURN WITH SELF ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.**

“Six million were wiped off the face of the earth. There is a danger that they will be annihilated from our memories. Are they doomed to a two-fold annihilation?”

*Abraham Joshua Heschel*
BISHOP AND MP AT “COURAGE TO CARE” LAUNCH

They gave hope where there was none and showed that the courage to care for others could exist among such terrible events. Above all, it indicates that one person, a single human, can (and did) make a difference. The smallest act of kindness does matter.

It gives a sense of empathy by helping those who have never seen or been exposed to discrimination to see the results of prejudice or racism. There is absolutely no place for divisiveness, discrimination or racism, attitudes which must be rejected. As well as so-called ordinary men and women who saved Jews are the famous names, such as Raoul Wallenberg and Oskar Schindler.

The exhibition includes both “Righteous” and some of those saved who live in Victoria.

A school's program usually lasts for two hours and comprises a background video, a Holocaust survivor’s testimony, viewing the exhibition and a group discussion with a facilitator on various issues raised. A teacher’s preview is generally held before an opening.

The exhibition has the support of the department of Education and Training, and is relevant to the secondary school curriculum in a variety of key learning areas such as History/SOSE and English.

BISHOP’S LETTER

Following an earlier visit and talk to volunteers at the Centre, the Most Rev. Prowse, wrote:

Thank you so much for arranging the beautiful afternoon we shared at the Holocaust Centre.

It was a great surprise and honour for me to address such a gathering of heroic people who have survived the horrors of the Holocaust. I would have preferred to remain seated and have them talk to me! “Autumn” was pouring out of so many eyes listening to me. It was an autumn that had survived the scorching summer of racism and remained with great dignity intact. Humanity thus remains tortured but resilient through their good example.

Please pass on my special thanks to Kitia Altman. What a privilege to have her living witness of hope in adversity to guide us through the exhibition. The two books you gave me as gifts will always be reminders of my time with you all. Thank you so much. I hope we can find opportunities in the future to witness together as Jew and Catholic to the importance of dialogue and peace. A culture of life is surely the most fitting response to conquer a culture of death. May the peace of God be with you always.
INTERESTED IN BECOMING A VOLUNTEER?

For 22 years, our volunteers have been the lifeblood of our museum. If you have the time, interest and commitment to become a volunteer and want to know more, contact:

Linda Faigen on 9528 1985 or email: lindaf@holocaustcentreaustralia.org.au

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Many of the 400,000 Victorian High School students who have visited the Centre, since 1984, have written that their lives have been changed by what they have seen and heard. Their thousands of letters, including comments from teachers, have especially mentioned how they have been affected by the personal experiences of the survivor guides and the need to safeguard Australian democracy.

Guides explain that the students, during their more than two hour visits, ask important questions about the Holocaust; how it could have happened and, above all, how to ensure it does not reoccur. They want to know how the survivors feel about today's world and how they have managed to live with the memories, the nightmares, of their experiences. Guides also visit schools and speak to individual classes and large assemblies.

We print just some of the most recent letters from teachers and students.

The Kyabram Secondary College’s English class’s response is summed up by teacher, Candy Abbey, who wrote “When I read of the profound effect their visit has had for so many of them it strengthens my conviction that we will always set a Holocaust novel for our year twelve classes. It is important that teenagers brought up on farms in sunny Kyabram learn what humans are capable of doing to another. Thank you for bringing their reading to life.”

Other Kyabram students wrote:
I can’t believe that the Germans truly believed that they would be successful in erasing an entire race. Hearing some of the things that many went through to survive was hear wrenching. I thank you for the experience and am now a better person because of it. Lloyd Manks

I really found it interesting meeting some of the survivors and talking to them about their experiences. We are currently studying the book “If this is a man” at school but to actually see the people who underwent many of the horrible events we read about was really eye-opening for me. It allowed one to understand the harsh reality of it all and I realized that it really wasn’t that long ago that it happened.

I loved a lot of the artwork that was on display and the information also provided me with just a little bit more of a glimpse into the tragic history of Jewry.

I remember the first time I ever heard about the Holocaust was by reading the book “Ellie”. I was horrified and just couldn’t understand how any human being could treat another so harshly. I think it is very important for everyone to be educated about this history and your Centre is doing a great job. Jane Hosking

I am sorry for such tragic suffering but I’m also grateful that in a way, without offence your suffering has enabled generations of children that respect life all the more because we can see what ignorance and disrespect allow. Thank you for allowing the blind to see. Glenn Newman

Actually seeing these people who had survived this horrific event was amazing in itself. Visiting the Holocaust Centre put another meaning to the unimaginable. I thank the people who took the time to talk to us because I can’t imagine how hard it would have been. Marnie

I suddenly realized the horror and evil of the atrocities the Nazis committed in more than just a textbook way. Thank you for everything you showed me, visiting the Centre really changed my views and opinions of this event. Evan Riti

The Centre proved a very interesting and well worth the visit. It broadened my view even more through the speakers that had been involved one way or another in the camp. Seeing and hearing from these people about their experiences really touched us and gave me more depth into the background of the Primo Levi book.

While wondering around the museum, it produced some great information and portrayed very strong images of what these individuals went through in their time at the camp. It provided more insight to note only what the Jews went through, but people of different cultures and races and what they also had to endure. The showing of the identification number was mind blowing. The visit was very worthwhile. Shannon Tinning

I think the Holocaust Centre is a great remembrance for the people who lost their lives. You should continue talking to school groups. Thank you for sharing your past with me and our school. Amanda Sellick

Seeing the pictures on the walls unnerved me. It was almost too much for me, but now I’m glad I went and stayed. I am truly sad for the people who spoke to us, but also grateful because it was obviously hard for them to talk about it, so to them I say thank you. Visiting the Holocaust Centre is something I will never forget. I will never forget the speakers’ pain and the pictures. Thank you so much once again. Sarah Mitchell

Coming to the Holocaust Centre and meeting people who were actually there was a remarkable and inspiring experience. Seeing these people and hearing
I think everyone in Year 12 at Kyabram Secondary College who visited the Centre gained a very good insight into the horrors of the Holocaust and it was really an amazing experience. Thank you to all the staff at the Holocaust Centre for letting us take the time to view your museum. Thank you to the two speakers who told us their stories. You are very strong to do so. Thank you. I will never forget my experience there. Rikki Busch

their stories made the Holocaust so much more real and had a huge impact on me. The books I’ve read have been extremely unbelievable and remarkable and visiting the Holocaust Centre has opened my eyes even more to the horrors and heroes the Holocaust brought. Tegan Murnane

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RENOVATED GENERAL LIGHTS CANDLE AT CENTRE

In the Yom Kippur War, 1973, Brigadier-General Kahalani, who visited the Holocaust Centre recently, served as commander of an armored battalion of eight tanks on the Golan Heights that held back an advance of more than 200 Syrian tanks and personnel carriers. He was severely wounded and burnt, and he earned Israel’s highest medal of honour, the Medal of Valour. In 1992 he was elected to the Knesset for the Labour Party.

INTERNATIONAL HUNTER AT CENTRE

Internationally renowned Nazi hunter Dr. Efraim Zuroff gave a press conference at the Holocaust Centre in February. He spoke of alleged war crimes in Hungary by a Melbourne man during WW11. Centre volunteer Susanne Nozick told of her sufferings by the Arrow Cross in Budapest. After being beaten and raped and suffering at the hands of the Arrow Cross, Hungarian Jews, including Mrs Nozick and her mother, were taken to the partially frozen Danube River and shot. Mrs Nozick survived but her mother didn’t. She said it had been dark when they were tortured and they never saw their torturers’ faces. Mrs. Nozick talks to students about the Holocaust. She has received many comments about how her experiences have affected young Australians, and made them look differently at the past and the future, especially about combating any signs of racism and prejudice locally.

Photo: Renowned Israeli Brigadier-General Avigdor Kahalani lit a candle in the Memorial Room. Seen with him are, from left to right: Eitan Drori, Tom Ben-David, Eldad Halachmi, Dalia Kahalani, Brigadier-General Avigdor Kahalani and Sara Saaroni.

NAZI HUNTER AT CENTRE

Susie Nozik and Dr. Ephraim Zuroff
I wonder how future generations, similar to the students I talk to and show over the Holocaust Centre, will react to the Holocaust, how they will perceive it? This seems even more vital in view of the United Nations now having an annual International Holocaust Commemoration Day.

There are varying opinions about this UN Day. Some people think it will trivialise the Shoah and become just another one of the many world wide different commemoration days.

I personally think the UN Day and UN’s existence and the continuing work of we survivors is a very good thing and will contribute to remembering the Shoah, but do wonder about the future, the many years ahead and how non Jews, especially students, will recall the atrocities.

The students I meet listen to my experiences during the Holocaust, watch a film and then see over the permanent exhibition, including photos of the atrocities against Jews, gypsies and others. We exchange views and ideas, and I find their questions pertinent and refreshing.

The students are stunned and some cry. I feel sorry for them: the truth can be very traumatic. But they have to know and they want to know, many saying that they will never forget what they have heard and seen. In some cases, they feel it will change their lives in various ways.

During one of these school visits, I had a strange experience. It shows that truth can be stranger than fiction.

I met a teacher whose father, a British officer, had helped liberate Bergen Belsen, sitting on a tank. The teacher cried when I explained I had been liberated by the British on September 15, 1945. What a coincidence. A remarkable moment for the teacher and I.

There have been many similar stories out of the Holocaust and meetings at the Centre, stories of unbelievable suffering and devastation but also of rare courage and man’s humanity to men, women and children.

Polish born, I was eight when the war started. One of the main features of my childhood was caring for others, showing humanity and compassion. My family was wiped out, as was my husband’s family. I grieve for them.

Nobody lifted a finger to help us. I wonder where were the supposedly civilised nations. They are as guilty, as are the perpetrators, for their silence. For me, the Holocaust is a denial of humanity. I have lost much of my reverence for the human race in what happened.

But, I hope, that through the students, I can help combat what happened during the Nazi era and also the hatred, prejudice and misunderstandings that exist today.

Maybe through talking to the young, the future men and women, including possible future leaders of Australia, I will contribute in some way, however small, to a better world and to ensuring that the message of the Holocaust is heard, listened to and acted on. It seems more necessary than ever today.
The Temptation Box, 349 Glenhuntly Road, Elsternwick, was recently flooded and many of its wares, especially chocolates, ruined.

But, the Jewish community, customers and others, rallied to help the genial owners Jim and Voula (non-Jewish Greeks) Malmidis.

They took food and drinks daily, flowers and well wishes, to The Temptation Box, ensuring the owners were well looked after and, indeed, helped in other ways.

The Temptation Box was recently given the 2006 Rotary “Business of the Year Award,” for outstanding service to the community, including $500 for a charity of its choice.

Because of the way the Jewish customers almost alone rallied to support them - they gave the money to “their friends” at the Holocaust Centre.

Jim said the Jewish community had been quite unbelievable and magnificent. And as so many Jewish people lost their lives and their businesses and came to Australia with nothing, he felt this was some small gesture to give back something in their memory.

“The Jewish people are a wonderful group, not just as customers but as a community,” he added.

Centre President, Shmuel Rosenkranz said, “A wonderful gesture, a very touching act. We at the Centre appreciate such feelings and donations, especially from the non-Jewish members of our diverse and harmonious area. It is a great gesture.”

An example for others to possibly follow.

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**THE BURNING CHILDREN**

Bill Anderson

> In the staring dead eyes
> of the burning children
> we see ourselves
> mirrored and judged.
>
> They are entitled
> to be harsh judges, these eyes,
> doubly innocent,
> wise beyond their years.
>
> The eternal flames
> which light these eyes
>
> will judge our words
> and our deeds.
>
> Our excuses and
> our weaknesses.
> will melt under
> their blazing gaze.
>
> If we have a spark of humanity
> we will never dishonour
> the memory of these children,
> these judges of the flames.

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**THE IDEAL GIFT**

**REFLECTIONS**

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edited by Stan Marks

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Thought-provoking articles by renowned contributors including
Elie Wiesel, Professor Yehuda Bauer
Dr. Paul Valent.
Two insightful books by Melbourne child survivors were launched in early April.

Both give a rare look into how the Holocaust affected children, including lasting legacies which have played a role in their resilience, especially in settling in Australia and establishing new lives, alone or with their families.

Heirloom, published by Hybrid, is the second anthology of the Melbourne Child Survivors of the Holocaust. It was launched by Judge Michael Kirby at the Caulfield Town Hall. Volunteer Sue Wright’s book, A Ballad by Johannes Brahms, published by Makor, was launched, at the Holocaust Centre, by Maria Lewitt and Peter Gourlay of the Equal Opportunity Commission, Melbourne. Heirloom was published with a generous contribution from the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

The anthology contains very short and longer articles, poems and drawings and paintings (some in colour), by more than 30 contributors. They cover the relevance of childhood experiences to the modern world. (Sue Wright also has an article in the anthology telling of her war years in Vienna.)

The book in part could perhaps be summed up by Eva Marks, survivor of six years in the dreaded Soviet gulags, who writes, “I realise that the tough survival lessons I learned during the war have helped me get through the bad times when I first came to Australia and, indeed, many times since.” The book shows a painting of Eva by Danial Kogan, who also has an article included.

The foreword explains the hope that the anthology of the Child Survivors group, started in 1990 and has come of age, gives a new meaning to survival. To show what child survivors have done with their lives, how they reflect on their experiences, family and memory.

Since its founding, the group’s focus has changed from “What are we still sleeping from our past?” to “The relevance of our experiences to the modern world and our lives today.”

Founder of the Child Survivors’ organisation, Dr Paul Valent has contributed items to the anthology. He asks how survivors have made sense and meaning of their lives. They have replenished their numbers with children which was a defeat of genocide. The Holocaust needs to be understood at a deep and ubiquitous human level.

Dr Valent added that ultimately, the survivors may offer tools to understand how innocent people were victimised, and help in its prevention. The many lessons arising from the Holocaust and the insights gained may contribute to achieving a world where was becomes a dinosaur, like the Plague.

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From “Heirloom”

By Eva Slonim

Nobody really knew his name. He sat on the brick oven that spanned almost the whole length of the barracks. All day he was swaying to and fro, no sound, no word came out of his mouth. He only left his favourite place at four in the morning when chased out of the barracks for Zählapel. When chased back to the barracks he would stand diligently in a queue, rusty mug in hand, to receive his daily breakfast ration of what was called black coffee and one slice of bread.

He would return to his usual place and continue swaying. Who was this shaven little boy? I asked myself, was he scared, was he stupefied or was he retarded? Staring at him, I could visualize him sitting in a cheder, with long payot (sideboards), learning our sacred Torah in a class with lots of little boys. Now he sat there, abandoned, alone: mesmerised, transfixed or in a dream.

Oh yes, he also played games, cynical games, all the children were forced to play those games where, cruelly and unbeknown to them, they chose from amongst their mates in play the next group of children for medical experiments. At 4 p.m., together with all the children, he was once again chased out of the barracks for Zählapel. On returning, often hours later, he would again stand in line for the evening meal, consisting of a watery liquid called soup and a slice of black bread.

He was suddenly jerked from his reverie. With great haste, he raced towards me, tears streaming down his face, his dark piercing brown eyes staring into mine

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and pleading: ‘Eva, my name is Shmuel, I am nine years old, my turn has come, promise that you will say Kaddish after me, remember this day, this date, my name – Shmuel.’ I was panic stricken, as I did not know the day or the date. Suddenly, I felt the numbers on my left arm reaching out and fixing me in their grasp. The tattoo would not let me move! I knew then that I had found Shmuel’s Kaddish. ‘A-27201’ will be your Kaddish,’ I cried. He walked away content, knowing that he would be remembered, with faith in Hashem till the end.

Now, sixty years later, a heavy burden has been lifted from my heart. A Kaddish memorial room has been dedicated at the Holocaust Museum in Melbourne in memory of Shmuel. I have fulfilled my sacred promise of immortalising the tragic young life of Shmuel and other innocent victims who whispered with their last breath: ‘Kaddish’.

**STORY OF A MISCHLING**
*A Ballad by Johannes Brahms by Susanne Wright*

A Mischling (“someone of mixed ancestry” in German) is a term coined during the Third Reich era in Germany to denote persons deemed to have partial Jewish ancestry.

One day in 1999, Centre Volunteer Susanne Wright’s daughter Eileen, startled her by asking “You have told me a lot about your mother and her family, and that her father was killed in Auschwitz. I have met your brother and your old friends in Vienna, but why don’t you ever talk about your father?”

“What could I tell her?” Her Jewish father disappeared out of her life when she was 11 years old, she knows nothing about what happened to him. He never came back after being put on a transport to Poland and the child couldn’t even say goodbye! So started her search for answers and the connection with the Jewish Holocaust Centre, where she and Eileen started to volunteer.

For a Mischling, it proved to be a painful awakening of her confused personal identity that had slumbered undisturbed for fifty years. The book explores this journey, tracing her Jewish ancestry through the changing times of Imperial Vienna in the 19th and 20th centuries in an effort to make sense of the influences of the ‘Enlightenment’, anti-Semitism, assimilation, intermarriage, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and the outstanding Jewish contribution to the culture of Vienna.

Susanne reflects on her happy childhood and the abrupt changes forced upon the family by the Anschluss between Austria and Nazi Germany in March 1938, the trauma of the war years, liberation, and reopened educational opportunities. She describes the painful discovery of what really happened to her gentle, musical father and his brothers, all murdered in 1942.

Meeting, observing and working with the survivor guides at the Museum became a profound experience and she shares some of their moving stories with her readers.

Susanne writes about her love of mountains and the outdoors that can be traced back to walking in the Vienna Woods with her mother. The relationship to her country of origin, people and places, changed and the Australian Bush won out over the pine forests of her youth. Out of personal experiences she asks some searching questions about injustice and the effect of racism on the lives of people.
Recent acquisitions to the Centre’s Library are:

- **Hitler’s prisoners: Seven cell mates tell their stories** by E. Friedrich & Renate Vanegas.
- **Silent Places: Landscapes of Jewish Life and Loss in Eastern Europe** by Jeffrey Gusky.
- **A moral reckoning: The role of the Catholic Church in the Holocaust and its unfulfilled duty of repair** by Daniel Goldhagen.
- **The memorial to the murdered Jews in Europe: Berlin**. Tells of the memorial in the centre of Berlin with the large display section built underground.
- **Death on the Black Sea: The Untold Story of the ‘Struma’ and World War II’s Holocaust at Sea** by D. Frantz & C. Collins.
- **Six Million Paper Clips: The Making Of A Children’s Holocaust Memorial** by Peter W. Schroeder, Dagmar Schroeder-Hildebrand. (Article about project in December Centre News.)
- **Judenplatz: Peace and Remembrance. Museum Judenplatz, Vienna.**
- **The Holocaust Chronicle.** A history in words and pictures, by Marilyn Harran, Dieter Kuntz (Contributor), Russel Lemmons (Contributor), Robert Ashley Michael (Contributor), Keith Rickus (Contributor), John K. Roth (Contributor).
- **The Ransom of the Jews : The Story of Extraordinary Secret Bargain Between Romania and Israel by Radu Ioanid**
- **The Shadow Man** by John Katzenbach. Contemporary thriller about an elderly Jewish enclave of Holocaust survivors in Miami is threatened by the reappearance of "The Shadow Man", a fellow Jew who turned in Jews to the Nazis in Berlin. Nominated for the Edgar Award.
April is a particularly appropriate month in which to reflect on a little known, yet extremely important, aspect of the Nazis' assault against the Jews: The perversion of Germany's legislative system, and its conversion into an instrument of terror.

The bitter irony leaps out: To mention “legislation” and “Nazis” in the same phrase is to record what is perhaps the ultimate oxymoron. The Nazi regime in Germany stands in history as a perpetrator of rampant brutality. Yet the regime went to extraordinary lengths to “legalize” their massive assault on Jews. By legislative means — among others, of course — Nazi Germany discriminated against, ostracized and dehumanized the Jews. In the 12-year period of Nazi rule, something of the order of 2,000 laws was directed solely, specifically and directly at the Jews, with devastating effects on their daily lives.

Emblematic of the laws, which were almost all really administrative orders simply signed by one or more members of the Cabinet, was the euphemistically-named Law for the Restoration of the Civil Service, promulgated on 7th April, 1933, just a matter of weeks after the Nazis came to power.

In ordering that “Officials of non-Aryan descent are to be retired,” the law was the opening salvo in a systematic assault by the Nazi regime on the income-earning capacity of the Jews. Requiring the dismissal of Jewish civil servants, as well as university professors, the law was the model for a relentless and merciless campaign by which professions, occupations, trades and businesses, one after another, were all peremptorily closed to Jews. And as with civil servants, in each case a law giving effect to the closure was promulgated. “The profession of lawyer is closed to Jews,” proclaimed one law. “Licenses of Jewish physicians terminate,” declared another; “[Jews... are excluded from the operation of individual retail shops, as well as the independent operation of a trade,” announced a third, and so on.

HORRIFIC RESULTS

The effects of the campaign were direct, immediate and personal on the daily lives of Jews in Germany. And they were horrific. The memoirs, diaries and testimony of survivors are replete with heart-rending accounts of loss of income, and the way this translated into terrible financial difficulties, with the most basic items of food, clothing and shelter becoming an immense burden. The writings evoke the deepest empathy, especially in anyone who has ever been unemployed or endured financial hardships.

Victor Klemperer, in his perceptive and moving diaries, traces the decline of himself and his wife from the life of a middle-class academic into poverty, reporting how he took to measuring the distance of Sunday afternoon drives, conscious of the cost of gas, and how he gave vent to his frustration at being reduced to a diet of potatoes. Professor Marion Kaplan, in Between Dignity and Despair, wrote of the heart-rending cases of role reversal, in which, in a traditionally patriarchal society, women were suddenly thrust into the unfamiliar role of breadwinners, as well as the becoming the emotional and psychological mainstays of families. The descent into despair chronicled in various writings from and about the era cannot fail to provoke intense emotions, even decades later.

The campaign to prevent Jews from earning an income constituted a fundamental assault on one of their most basic human rights. The ability to work, to earn an income and support oneself and one’s family is one of the indicia of a human being. Indeed, the charter of the post-World War II human rights movement, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaims that “everyone has the right to work” and to “just and favorable remuneration ensuring himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity.” The Universal Declaration identified the very rights that the Nazis had wrested from certain classes of people, particularly Jews. The Declaration’s structure is a reaction, measure-for-measure, proclaiming those very rights to be human rights.

One of the most extraordinary aspects of the Nazi regime was that so many of their actions were perpetrated “lawfully” — from the initial denial of economic opportunity to the ultimate denial of life itself. One after another of the indignities heaped upon the Jews was affected by means of pseudo-legislation — one of the hallmarks of the Nazis’ fanatical obsession with legalizing their rising level of discrimination and atrocities.

In reflecting on the significance of the 7th April, a fundamental and sobering lesson which emerges is that law is inherently neutral. If it is administered by decent and compassionate people, it can achieve the greatest good. But if it falls into evil hands, it can become an instrument of hatred and horror, in the process even depriving individuals of the most basic of human rights.

Former Melbourne lecturer, Professor Harry Reicher is Adjunct Professor of law at the internationally acclaimed University of Pennsylvania Law School, USA; serves as Director of International Affairs and representative to the United Nations of Agudath Israel World Organisation and has been involved in landmark cases in the areas of international human rights and international environmental law.
On 16th April 2005, the Prime Minister of Hungary, Ferenc Gyurcsány dedicated the new Holocaust memorial of Budapest.

The monument on the quay of the Danube between the Parliament and the famous “Chain Bridge” is the work of sculptor Gyula Pauer. It consists of 60 pairs of men’s, women’s and children’s shoes cast in iron and it represents the footwear of the thousands of predominantly Jewish victims shot and thrown into the Danube by the militants of the Arrow Cross Party during the winter of 1944-45.

Unfortunately in July 2005, only about three months after the consecration the monument was vandalized by unknown culprits and four of the iron shoes were removed from the site with a metal rod. (Later one shoe was recovered but no trace has been found of the missing three others.) According to police reports no evidence of racist or anti-Semitic motivation was found for the attack. Shortly after this act of vandalism the creator of the monument sculptor Gyula Pauer restored the memorial.

HOLOCAUST IN HUNGARY

The largest, quickest and most efficient action of deportation in the history of the Holocaust took place in 1944 in Hungary. According to German records, within 56 days, between May 15 and 9 July, Hungarian authorities deported 437,402 women, men and children - the entire Jewish population of the Hungarian provinces - to Auschwitz. This wasn’t the first action of deportation from Hungary. In the summer of 1941, the Hungarian authorities handed over 18 thousand Carpatho-Ruthenian, so-called ‘homeless’ Jews to the Germans.

The majority of them were executed at Kamenets Podolsk, only about two thousand people survived the mass murder.) The approximately 190,000 Jews living in Budapest, temporarily escaped that mass deportation, but were forced to move into 1981 so called “Jewish houses” marked with a yellow star. (About 12,000 Christian Hungarians were allowed to stay in their apartments in the designated Yellow –Star buildings).

During the morning of 15 October 1944 Admiral Horthy, the Regent of Hungary, tried to follow the example of Romania and made a declaration broadcasted through Radio Budapest announcing that Hungary had accepted an armistice with the USSR. The reaction of the Germans was imminent. Colonel Otto Skorzeny abducted Horthy’s son and deputy Regent, and the rest of his family was put under house arrest.

Before the evening of the same day a putsch by the fascist Arrow Cross Party of Ferenc Szálasi took place. He formed a new government and a new wave of persecutions and unlimited terror against the Jews followed. Adolf Eichmann returned to Budapest and demanded the immediate delivery of 70,000 able bodied Jewish workers to be used digging defence trenches. By 26 October 35,000 people, among them boys below 14 and men over 80 were carried off the Yellow Star houses.

On 4 November 30,000 Jews were concentrated at the brickyard of Obuda and marched across the counties towards the Austrian border. Thousands of Jewish men and women died on death marches from Budapest.

Those, who were lucky enough to obtain “protective letters” from various diplomatic services or the Red Cross, later found “safe heaven” in an area of protected houses that became known as the international ghetto.

By the end of November 1944 a central ghetto was established and all the Jews previously squeezed into the “Yellow Star” houses were transferred to the ghetto. The number of ghetto dwellers was between 45,000 and 65,000 varying from time to time. An incredible terror of the “Nyilas” (Arrow Cross) thugs reigned on the streets of Budapest and particularly in the ghetto.

As the neutral states procrastinated the official recognition of the Arrow Cross government, in
providing the restitution. To give two examples, the result of legal structures set up by the governments the brunt of the criticism for problems which are the process is a rigid one and the Claims Conference bears its rationale, its raison d'etre. But because it is based on legislation, the restitution Conference website of its aims and activities. It sets out the memory and lessons of the Shoah. "

The above is a succinct summary from the Claims Conference website of its aims and activities. It sets out its rationale, its raison d'etre. But because it is based on legislation, the restitution process is a rigid one and the Claims Conference bears the brunt of the criticism for problems which are the result of legal structures set up by the governments providing the restitution. To give two examples, the

CLAIMS CONFERENCE AND RESTITUTION PROCESS
Nina Bassat

Restitution is as much about emotion and justice as it is about money.

One of the deepest injustices is the perception that the motivation for restitution is revenge. There seems to be a widespread inability, both by individuals and governments, to understand and acknowledge that there is a moral imperative that what was taken should be returned and that this is the underlying rationale for restitution.

Clearly, there never can be any recompense for the personal and communal devastation that was wreaked by the Shoah and restitution was never intended in any way to do this. But what we can do, and what the restitution process seeks to do, is to help improve the situation of survivors who suffered not only financial losses and the loss of property, but also the loss of education and the loss of health, very often resulting in lowered ability to earn income. There is no recompense for personal and financial losses, but some measure of relief can be provided.

“The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) represents world Jewry in negotiating for compensation and restitution for victims of Nazi persecution and their heirs. The Claims Conference administers compensation funds, recovers unclaimed Jewish property, and allocates funds to institutions that provide social welfare services to Holocaust survivors and preserve the memory and lessons of the Shoah.”

The above is a succinct summary from the Claims Conference website of its aims and activities. It sets out its rationale, its raison d’etre. But because it is based on legislation, the restitution process is a rigid one and the Claims Conference bears the brunt of the criticism for problems which are the result of legal structures set up by the governments providing the restitution. To give two examples, the

guidelines for the Article 2 Fund are extremely strict, and unless there is complete compliance with the criteria, including income levels, the application will be rejected. Similarly, the interpretation by the German government of eligibility for the “Ghetto pension” is very legalistic, and many survivors who worked for the Germans and whose names appear on “work lists” are being denied the ghetto pension.

Philosophical questions relating to restitution do not become less contentious with the passing of time, if this year’s Claims Conference Board meeting is anything to go by.

OVER $US1 BILLION DISTRIBUTED

Last year, the Claims Conference distributed in excess of $US1 billion dollars. Approximately 92% of that goes to survivors by way of direct restitution payments, including BEG payments, Article 2 Fund and Slave Labour.

The Claims Conference is the legal successor to unclaimed Jewish property in the former East Germany. Barely 8% of the total distribution of the Claims Conference comes from the successor fund, but at the meeting, one of the predominant issues was how the Claims Conference should allocate this relative small
GIVE YOUR SURVIVOR TESTIMONY

We want to hear from all survivors and to record their vital testimonies. This is especially urgent for future generations.

Over the years, the Holocaust Testimonies Department, part of the worldwide project under the patronage of Yad Vashem, has recorded more than 1,200 testimonies of Holocaust survivors. These have become a living record of what happened to men, women and children during the Nazi Era, and an answer to those who deny the Holocaust occurred.

Have you given your testimony yet? If you haven’t, please call:

Phillip Maisel 9527 6282 or Holocaust Centre 9528 1985

AUSTRALIAN ALLOCATION

Currently, the Claims Conference continues to be involved in the following:

- Ongoing negotiations with Germany through which the Claims Conference has received in 2005 an additional $9 m for allocation for homecare for survivors worldwide (from which both Melbourne and Sydney received grants).
- The expansion of the Article 2 and the Central and Eastern European Funds to include certain labour camps in Hungary, Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria.
- Negotiations in relation to “Ghetto” pensions; and
- The Hungarian Train Settlement, which will benefit needy Hungarian survivors who lived in Hungary between 1939 and 1945. It is anticipated that Australia should receive approximately $US1,000,000 from the Hungarian Gold Train settlement and that this will be allocated towards the care of needy survivors from Hungary and administered by Jewish Care.

The work of the Claims Conference is a problematic mixture of pragmatism and ideology. While the negotiations are driven by ideals of justice and recompense, the process becomes mired in the practicalities of what is possible and the burden of complex administration. There was a prevailing view some years ago, that by the year 2000, the work of the Claims Conference would be finished. When one looks at the status of the restitution negotiations which are still in progress, we realize that this matter will not be put to rest for many more years.

Restitution is not and never has been an easy issue to deal with. The juxtaposition of moral and financial considerations is no easier now, sixty years after World War II, then it was in 1945 and for many survivors restitution continues to be a major heart-wrenching issue.

Nina Bassat is a Board Member of the International Council of Jewish Woman and Past President of the Executive Council for Australian Jewry and is on the Board of the Claims Conference.

The Board grappled with competing needs. Is the need greater in Israel, which has the largest number of survivors but a fairly high standard of health care or should allocation focus on Eastern Europe, where not so many survivors, but with a lower standard of living and extremely high poverty levels. What of the US, which has the second highest number of survivors and very poor social service and health support. How does Australia fit in, with its high proportion of Shoah survivors, but on a world scale, outstanding social welfare and health care.

In evaluating these needs, the constant question was not only how many needy survivors there are in the year 2005, but also, how to provide for survivors twenty years into the future, for hard as it is to believe, some of us are still only in our sixties.

The Board examined the direct need of Shoah survivors as against the need to fund research, commemoration and education of the Shoah. What is more important, we asked ourselves; to use all our money on the personal needs of the survivors or should some of it go to commemorate and research, so that future generations will not forget.

The tragedy is that both sides are correct. Needy survivors, wherever they might be, must be looked after. On the other hand, there was a strong feeling that in order to honour those who did not survive, there is an imperative to fund commemoration, education and research.

Ultimately, it was resolved to continue to distribute the discretionary fund in the current proportion – 80% for direct survivor’s needs and 20% for Shoah remembrance.

Australia is among the countries that receive significant funding from the Claims Conference, primarily to Jewish Care in Melbourne and in Sydney, but also to the Melbourne Holocaust Centre and to the Jewish Museum in Sydney. The allocations to Jewish Care are for the direct the needs of survivors and the allocations to the Museums or to the Holocaust Centre must be used for purposes which directly enhance Shoah teaching or remembrance.
QUESTION OF POSSIBLE HOLOCAUST FATIGUE
Leonard Radic

The public has a voracious appetite for human-interest stories of death and disaster. Every new disaster – be it an earthquake, a flood, a tsunami or a plane crash - is milked for all its worth. But after a while the novelty wears off; and a new horror story takes its place.

For people committed to the memory of the six million Jews who were murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators over some 13 years, this must be a real problem.

In a nutshell, how do you maintain interest in the subject before “Holocaust fatigue” sets in, and people switch off, saying to themselves: “We’ve heard it all before. What more is left to say?”

In a sense, they are right. The Holocaust is probably the most documented chapter in genocidal history of any time. The books, plays, documentaries and films on the subject are countless. One way or another, possibly most people are familiar with the broad outlines of the story.

They aren’t all as ill-informed and bigoted as the President of Iran who has been heard in recent times, telling the world that the Holocaust is “a myth”, cooked up by Jews to justify the establishment of the State of Israel, and that Israel itself should be wiped off the map.

That is bad enough. More recently, there was the worldwide competition devised by Iranian journalists, to find “a cartoon on the Holocaust insulting to Jews”.

It is easy to deplore such attitudes. For they are deplorable. They muddy the waters for Holocaust survivors and their families. They call for a firm rebuttal.

For those committed to the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, there is a further problem. They have had to “compete” for attention with other more recent outbreaks of homicidal mania and intolerance in other parts of the world – in particular, Rwanda, Bosnia, East Timor and Cambodia.

All too easily, people slip into lazy ways, using the word “holocaust” loosely like the word “genocide” to describe any murderous campaign. One homicidal program starts to look like any other.

When you’ve been to Cambodia, as I have in recent times, and visited the killing fields with their mass graves and display cases of human skulls, and the Genocide Museum where prisoners were systematically tortured and exterminated, you begin to wonder whether the lesson to be learned from history, is that evil-doing is something built into Man, and is not unique to the Nazis.

HISTORY LESSONS

Where the Holocaust is concerned, the solution lies in education. What has to be emphasised over and over again is that the Nazis were committed to the extermination of the Jews in Europe. It was a vast operation, implemented by so-called “civilised” men and women and motivated by racial hatred. Germany, Poland, Hungary were turned into mass slaughterhouses.

To understand the horrors of that operation, it is not enough to watch the occasional film documentary or read a couple of books. You need to talk to the survivors themselves, and listen to their first-hand accounts of their experiences in the ghettos and the camps.

I did so myself, spending the better part of a year doing research at the Holocaust Museum and Research Centre, in the process of writing a play on the theme of survival. The play, Witness, was eventually given three public readings by professional actors.

I spoke to the survivors themselves, I interviewed them (sometimes in their own homes), I listened to their taped testimonies; and I sat in on their lectures to schoolchildren.

The first time, incredibly for teenage schoolchildren, they sat absolutely silent and spellbound. At the end the only question came from a girl who shyly asked: “Miss, can I see your tattoo?”

I remember one other lecture when the speaker, Willy Lermer, told the class: “Take nothing for granted. The most important thing in life is freedom. Freedom to speak your mind. Freedom to be yourself. Freedom to protest”. They were wise words. I included them in my play.

I also included segments from the three interviews I did with Abraham Biderman. In an outburst of anger he said to me: “Don’t let them say: it didn’t happen. It did happen. I am the living evidence. I was there. I saw it for myself. It is all here, burned deep in my memory. The Holocaust is not six million Jews. It is one…and one…and one”.

That puts it very well. If only some of the doubters and the Iranian bigots could come to the Holocaust Centre and listen to the guides and the speakers tell their stories.

I don’t know how they go on, year after year, recounting the horrors of their wartime years in the ghettos and the camps and the sheer sadness and awfulness of it all. Their dedication is extraordinary; and I admire them for it. They are proof of what I said earlier in this article: there is a need for education.

We need the testimonies of the survivors and the witnesses; we need them to write their books. We need their evidence, not just for today but for generations to come, so that the memory of the Holocaust will not be dimmed, and presidents who should know better won’t feel free to get up in public and denounce the Holocaust as “a myth”.

Leonard Radic is a former Age journalist, and an author.
HOW I FEEL THE HOLOCAUST SHOULD BE REMEMBERED
Helen Shardey MP

The name Wohl Sandor carved in gold on the tombstone of his wife was a sight that brought tears to our eyes, and I know a rush of almost unbearable emotion to my husband, his mother and sister.

For the first time, we had travelled together to the small Jewish cemetery in the tiny Hungarian town of Paszto. It was a place Gil, my husband, and I had visited 22 years previously to see the graves of his family.

Wohl Sandor (or Alexander Wohl) was Gil’s grandfather. He was a towering good looking man who was the icon of his family and the community in which he lived.

He was a man, who had been accepted as very much a part of his beloved Hungary and the community in which he and his large family lived. Like many Hungarian Jews, he never thought he would be dragged from the midst of his community and his family to Auschwitz. Yet this was to be his fate.

He never returned home and after the war those few members of his family who survived the Holocaust, scattered to many parts of the world, including Australia.

The Holocaust Memorial in that cemetery, which records the names of all the Jews of Paszto who perished now also included Gil’s grandfather’s name. This final act to record a family’s history was arranged by Gil’s mother.

This second visit was so similar to our first, when Gil and I stood alone and transfixed in front of the graves of his family. It was a feeling I will never forget and still makes me feel a great sense of grief. I often wonder why I feel such strong emotion for a man I never knew and a fate which my own family never experienced.

But maybe the grief and the sorrow I feel is for the hurt I know the man I married has felt and the knowledge that my fellow man was capable of an act of barbarism of such massive proportions. This is not a sorrow which fades. Nor should it be. We should not seek to cast aside this shocking memory.

With every Yom Hashoah and the stories that are told, successive generations deal with the memories and the knowledge of what happened in different ways. The rawness of the Shoah may be diminishing but the grief and the feeling of persecution still live on.

Perhaps however the strength of this feeling can bring goodness to our world, even while we feel the tension of world terror and strive for peace on so many fronts.

Roman Kent, Chairman of the American Gathering of Jewish Survivors of the Holocaust said recently at a UN ceremony commemorating the Holocaust: “If you the leaders of the world, remember - and teach others to remember - the Holocaust and atrocities like Darfur, Biafra and Kosovo will have no place on the face of the earth”.

Gil told our daughter recently, while cuddling our latest grandchild “Remember darling, the Holocaust, which destroyed so many lives has at least left us two legacies – Israel - a home for the Jewish people, and laws against racism.”

Hopefully our children’s generation will continue to learn the lessons and endeavour to make the world a better place. After all, as Yehuda Bauer said “Who knows who the Jews might be next time”. There should never be a next time!”

In the meantime, the name Alexander (or Alexandra) is one which has been given to many in our family - probably because we all know the importance of remembering and honouring a proud heritage.

Helen Shardey is the Victorian State Parliament Member for Caulfield and Shadow Minister for Health and Community Services.

CONSIDER A BEQUEST TO THE CENTRE

Copies of a brochure explaining how to make a bequest to the Centre are available.

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After making provision for your families and other considerations, you may consider joining the increasing number of people who have, or are, considering providing small and large bequests in their wills to the Centre.

This is a lasting acknowledgement of the Centre’s work.

You may wish to visit the Centre and discuss the whole matter of bequests with us.

For further information call Elly Brooks Bequests Officer at 9528 1985.
Pain, existential angst, struggling with sense of purpose and meaning, 'righting' injustices, pondering Jewish/cultural/human/personal identity, marrying in, marrying out, God, lack of God and anti-Semitism - are topics that regularly enter the realms of social discourse in my world.

The topic of the Holocaust to a Jew and especially a third generation descendant of survivors can easily move into many or all of those areas. With this in mind, it isn't surprising to me that while some members of the 'third' generation are drawn towards exploring the topic of their connection to their family's (and tribe's) Holocaust survivor 'past', others are equally determined to distance themselves from acknowledging any such links.

On Wednesday 15th February 2006, ten grandchildren of Holocaust survivors gathered at the Melbourne Jewish Holocaust Museum to explore the personal meaning of being a descendant of Holocaust survivors. Six three-hour workshops were designed to facilitate exploration for third generation descendants through discussion, creative arts techniques such as psychodrama, art, video journal entries, writing and self reflection. This opportunity is for the participants to engage in their own personal line of inquiry into their Holocaust survivor lineage using creative and innovative techniques, a unique rite of passage to weave the Holocaust into identity in ways that are authentic and relevant.

This project is an extension of my psychology honours thesis entitled "A Study of Third Generation Holocaust Descendants".

Throughout the five years that I spent completing my thesis the controversial question – have grandchildren of survivors been affected? - has struck a familiar nerve with many people who bring many different responses and ideas to this conversation, for example: Enough with the Holocaust; We must not let it happen again; 'Marry in' so Hitler doesn't win; How can I heal when the Holocaust is still happening?

These and other responses I hear regularly from Jews and non-Jews indicated to me that exploring the impact of the Holocaust on my generation, 3GH, was an essential line of inquiry into gaining a deeper understanding of both myself and my generation.

We are the pivotal generation, willing to look at the effects of the Holocaust with a different and perhaps more distant view than our parents, the second generation, and our survivor grandparents are able. One level of tension exists because even though there is more distance, we are still so close because it happened to our family.

The third generation has received all of the fruits of our grandparents’ labour. We have enjoyed opportunities they didn’t have - personal, cultural and religious freedom - an affluent way of life, abundance of food, education, travel, so many opportunities. In contrast, our parents and grandparents were refugees and most were denied freedom on all levels. A second level of tension exists because although we have amazing opportunities to flourish and be free compared to our grandparents, we struggle with an 'internal' war – we seek happiness, a sense of purpose, belonging and meaning.

My grandmother, my mother and myself - the maternal line - regularly gather for cappuccinos and lattes (already an intergenerational difference just in our coffee consumption). My mother and my grandmother have such different views and ideas compared to my own, and in that I feel simultaneously blessed and tormented.

I am struck by the closeness and the conflicts, – the differences, the love, the laughter and tears, the messiness and the imperfection. Something is always in the air that is powerful and palpable and I can’t put my finger on it, but I know I feel like crying at that moment and I just wish I could capture it and hold onto it forever. Maybe the fear that it won’t be forever provides the energy behind this project. Tears and laughter in the same breath.

TRUTH NERVE

The "Truth Nerve" is my term that I often use to describe the feeling which says this is wrong, this is right, this is not fair and I want it to be right. The truth nerve enables me to articulate and develop means to turn around what is dysfunctional. We have opportunities to do this politically and personally - in our families, in our intimate relationships, in the therapy rooms, at work, in court. We may be traumatised but we are not paralysed. So we gather our belongings and backpacks and travel to those places intellectually, emotionally and geographically where we can get more juice and more permission to live closer to our truth nerves.

Some third gens are grappling with the Holocaust in terms of where and how it fits into their Jewish identity. Some are deeply committed to social justice, some ponder existential concepts such as If it weren’t for Hitler I wouldn’t be me as Hitler was my grandparent’s matchmaker. The need for inner healing and family healing, dealing with anger, wanting to right the wrongs, denying effects, dealing with Holocaust denial, feeling burdened with the responsibility of carrying on the legacy, pondering notions of control, guilt, pressure to achieve and of course dealing with the good old persecution complex – are some of the issues being illuminated within the realms of this project.

3GH exists because we live in Melbourne, one of the largest Jewish Holocaust survivor communities per
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According to the Bible, murder is almost as old as humanity itself. When Cain, the first born son of Adam and Eve, killed his brother Abel, he could not hide his deed but was questioned by God: "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand." (Gen 4:12)

Cain is protected from revenge killings by a mark of blood from your hand. "...Cain was driven out from the presence of the Lord, and he wandered on the face of the earth. He became a wanderer on the earth. He lived as a fugitive and wanderer on the earth. His life is forever marked by the memory of his crime.

As a religious studies scholar, I have been studying the post-war lives of 20th Century Cain, those Nazi war criminals who participated in the slaughter of six million Jewish men, women and children in Europe during the 1940s. Have they been marked and, if so, how?

I am particularly interested in the fact that many Nazi perpetrators converted or reconversed to Christianity after the war. Can traditional Christian theological concepts such as guilt and forgiveness, sin and redemption, adequately address the reality of perpetrators of genocide? Did these executioners emerge from their conversions "cleansed of their sins" and "reborn" as different persons? For answers, I have been studying the archival documents of prison chaplains who provided pastoral care and counseling to incarcerated and convicted Nazi officials and SS-men.

PERSONALLY TOUCHED

As is often the case with scholars, my professional research interests are rooted in my personal life. I am the niece of Alfred Ebner, a SS-officer who became the deputy commissioner of the predominantly Jewish town of Pinsk in Belarus, a man who oversaw and participated in the slaughter of 30,000 Jews.

I had first learned about the charges against Ebner as a teenager but could not emotionally or intellectually connect the elderly, somewhat withdrawn man to mass murder. Clearly, a man guilty of such crimes should be "marked" in some visible way, but my uncle was free. His trial was discontinued for fraudulent medical reasons, "marked" in some visible way, but my uncle was free. His trial was discontinued for fraudulent medical reasons, and he became a successful business man, a devoted husband and father, and a welcome guest at many family gatherings. Everyone denied what he had done and the charges against him were generally dismissed as vengeful lies and Soviet Cold War propaganda.

Over the years, I have collected information about the Byelorussian city of Pinsk, examined the trials against my uncle and the police battalions involved in the massacres, and searched for the victims who vanished and those who survived the killings. Last year, my path intersected with the Nosanchuk family who emigrated from the small village of Rubel located outside of Pinsk to the United States, Israel, Canada and Cuba. Ten members of this Jewish family, including two octogenarians who grew up in Rubel before the war and the son of a third who had survived two massacres in hiding planned to undertake a journey to Belarus. And although we had never met, the Nosanchuks were willing to take me along as they searched for ancestral homes, synagogues and the graves of parents, siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins.

ALL NERVOUS

Our first meeting face to face occurred in the Pripyat Hotel in Pinsk. We were all nervous, but I was especially so. By publicly proclaiming my family connection to the Nazi deputy commissioner of Pinsk, I risked being identified directly with the legacy of annihilation wrought by Nazi Germany.

The very next day, we planned to attend a memorial in Rubel, where the Nosanchuk family's home and business, a mill, once stood and where Michael Nosanchuk had been hidden by a neighbor. The mill was burned to the ground along with all the wooden structures in the village. The mill stone was recently unearthed and now serves as the marker for the mass grave of the Jewish men of Rubel. The Byelorussian villagers joined us in this memorial. Belarus suffered greatly under Nazi occupation. By the end of the war 2.2 million civilians (Jewish and Gentile) were dead out of a total population of 10.6 in 1939. Three million people were left homeless in the wake of Germany's "burnt earth" policy, 85% of the factories were demolished, and half of the agricultural land lay devastated. Today Belarus is the poorest country in Europe with little contact to the outside world.

I was probably the first German the Nosanchuks and these villagers had met since the war and I was known as little more than the "niece of the Nazi." For a short time, this label would define me and eclipse my present-day, individual reality as religion professor and Holocaust scholar. For the duration of this pilgrimage, I would symbolically walk in the shoes of Cain.

I decided for my memorial speech in Rubel to express remorse on behalf of the perpetrators and to pledge resistance and vigilance against the ideologies of anti-Semitism, racism and nationalism that had legitimated their actions.

Such a speech act seems easy and self-evident, but few Nazis disassociated from their crimes publicly. My historical research and personal family experience confirms that most perpetrators remained caught in denial and self-
deception and could not abjure the ideologies that justified their crimes. Instead, they delegated such "coming to terms" to the next generation and transmitted moral paralysis and vague guilt feelings to their children and grandchildren.

By acknowledging the crime on my uncle's behalf and asking the attendees to build coalitions against the ideologies of hate, I wanted to contribute to the emergence of a new memorial community. For a moment, our different histories and antagonistic family roots converged and committed us to joint grief and a shared vision of humanity. Later my speech at the memorial became part of a surprising conversation in which the Byelorussian villagers acknowledged that the Jewish men of Rubel were not killed by Germans but by local thugs, members of their own families. "There were no Germans around," we were told, on the day when the Jewish men were forced to assemble and then killed in the middle of the village in broad daylight.

There together, on this hot summer day, we sifted through the historical questions of who ordered the execution of the Jewish men of Rubel. What had precipitated this "spontaneous pogrom"? Who protected the local perpetrators? Who benefited from these killings? Perhaps because I had publicly stepped into the role of Cain, the Byelorussians were willing to entertain questions of moral, political and criminal responsibility and to openly acknowledge the village's own contribution to the horrors of genocide.

The "local pogrom" against the Jewish men of Rubel happened within the larger German plan for the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question." The following day, the remaining Jewish women and children were marched to the nearby town of Stolin. Eventually, they were massacred in a gravel pit called Stasino, in the meticulous, orderly, efficient, cold-blooded, time-conscious and cruel way that has given the Holocaust its unique quality. Stasino became the final destination for twelve thousand people, the vast majority of whom were Jews.

I had never heard of Stasino and was unprepared for the emotionally wrenching atmosphere. As we approached the mass grave through an unpaved trail into the forest, dark storm clouds gathered overhead. While the Nosanchuks intoned the Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the dead, to the sound of growling thunder, I entered the pit, a vast depression surrounded by pine trees. Losing sight of the group because of the driving rain, I walked down the field and was assaulted by the memory of archival documents describing the executions. Seven thousand Jewish men, women and children were shot here in the course of one day alone, on September 11, 1942.

And what had been the punishment of those men who walked into the pit and killed seven thousand human beings? Only two of the shooters were later imprisoned, in Frankfurt/Main in 1973, and they received three and fifteen years respectively.

### GOD'S EXISTENCE

Stasino comes close to descriptions of hell, a place where God does not exist, where life, goodness and life-giving nefesh (Hebrew for breath/soul) is sucked out and drained away. There is no prayer and no redemption in such a place devoted exclusively to atrocity and destruction.

We do not like to admit that we are descendants of Cain. In the Bible, Eve gives birth to a third son, Seth, who becomes the father of humankind. Cain, and the legacy of slaughter, is comfortably written out of our line of ancestry.

In real life, however, the executioners live on and father families. The murderers, past, present and future live among us, without the mark of Cain for easy identification. Genocide entraps thousands of people in webs of complicity and collusion. It is always more than the work of one dictator, one party, or even one people. Ideologies of hate and supremacy are ever powerful and persuasive, and their appeal transcends particular times and cultures. It is only by listening to the drowned voices from the killing fields that we guard against the future spilling of blood of our brothers and sisters.

Katharina von Kellenbach is Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Chair, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, St. Mary's College of Maryland. She visited Australia last year.
While recently commemorating Yom Hashoah, I couldn't help but think that the more Commemorations we have behind us, the fewer we have in front of us.

The Centre's guides have an additional privilege. They have the opportunity to deposit the memories of their own experiences in the minds of thousands of students visiting the Museum. For some it may be an unforgettable and profound experience. We hope that our plea to fight racism at all levels and our message of tolerance of cultural and religious diversities, will remain with them forever.

The question becomes more than ever important: who will remember us and how? Will we be remembered only as victims/survivors, humiliated, dehumanized and brutalized? Shouldn’t we also be remembered for our power of regeneration? For our capacity of respect and tolerance towards others? Shouldn’t we be remembered for carrying the torch for humanity in this world still full of hatred and fanaticism? May the few among the many we have reached remember this, our legacy.

The recent death of Simon Wiesenthal is a loss to the whole world. His passing reminded us of the true purpose of his life: that the seeking of justice is not the pursuit of vengeance. A lesson mankind will do well to remember - always.

Another important lesson worth remembering and arising from the Holocaust is an individual’s sense of responsibility. Often, in the darkness of sleepless nights strange thoughts invade my mind. How was it in these times, over 60 years ago? I think of the voices of the people innocent in their ignorance whispering, hissing, shouting: "I didn’t know!"

I remember asking myself some few years after the end of the war, how was it possible NOT TO KNOW? It took me yet more years to understand that not only memory is selective. So is our awareness of reality. I was unpleasantly surprised to see in the Australian Jewish News (06/01/06) a short notice quoting Poland’s leading daily “Gazeta Wyborcza”. The Cracow edition, reported that a bus company had put up posters in hotels, travel agencies and hostels all around Cracow, in English, which read:

**AUSCHWITZ VISITS**

“Auschwitz? With a return ticket? From the City Centre? Yes, it is possible”.

More promotional information is written across the photograph, including departure times and reservation contact. It gave my memory a forceful jolt.

After I debated Holocaust denier David Irving on Channel 9 in 1993, I had published in “Generation” magazine an essay about the controversial nature of my debate. I wrote: "With horror do I visualize advertisements (about Auschwitz) of shows. Selection in authentic costumes on Mondays and Wednesdays between 2-5. Concession for group bookings”.

What can we make of such a denial of dignity to the memorial of those who died?

The disease of denial was not cured by Germany’s surrender. It passed on a view of the perpetrators as
Old grandparents, whose wounds are still festering? The soldiers who entered the camps and were shocked to the core by what they saw and remained silent for the rest of their lives? Or perhaps the ones who retreated into denial so deeply there is no way out for them anymore? Fortunately, there are more and more young people who have the moral courage to look back into the dark past and who derive their strength from the desire to build bridges for a different future.

Centre visitors learn that our experiences are a result of wider, bigger and darker picture. That, of what can happen if a group of people is made to believe that they are better than others, be it because of their religion or the colour of their skin.

A visit to the Museum should not finish with feeling of horror and unleashed fear. Rather, it should evoke reflections on the importance of caring and tolerance of our social ambience. It should bring forward the awareness of evil and inhumanity, still existing in our midst.

only obeying orders, as being themselves victims of Allied bombing, suffering disrupted lives. Who then was responsible?

Maybe more important than responsibility was conscience.

While the evil of man reigned supreme, there were people, few and far apart, who showed the world the Power of One. They are the quiet heroes of humanity, The Righteous Among The Nations Of The World. Those non-Jews who at the risk of their own lives saved Jews.

How proud must the descendants of these extraordinary, ordinary people be to have such a heritage. The Righteous deserve not only a candle on Yom Hashoah, the history of their deeds should have a place alongside our experiences.

My thoughts are turning again to the third generation, the young adults of tomorrow. They are the ones who ask questions, who want to know, hear and understand. Who is left to answer their questions?

**A SMALL VICTORY IN AUSCHWITZ**

**Genia Tigel**

I had a victory, if you can call it that over a guard, when I worked in the ammunition factory in Auschwitz.

While I was working there I was privileged to have a shower every day. A hot shower! No soap, no towels, nothing. About 10 girls under one shower spray.

One morning, as we were having such a luxurious run, all of a sudden the SS-man in charge appeared, dragging his motorbike under our shower and giving this “pet” of his a bath. There he was, in full uniform with plenty of badges, and we, naked, frightened and ashamed. He glanced at me, gave me a pat on the shoulder and said: “Das ist eine fette” which means “This one is quite plump”.

I had been working night shift for quite a while. One night I experienced another “pet aversion”. On night shift there were less guards than during the day. Only two SS-women were watching our section. At midnight there was a three quarter of an hour break and we used to get our main meal.

I organized myself differently. Instead of eating the meager dirty soup, I sneaked out and ran to the men’s section to look for a container of soapy water, sure that somebody would have it. I wanted to wash my underwear. Obviously this was very risky, but to me it was a must.

I did get it washed. I was happy because I managed to put it under the table to dry. It was daring to do this in such a place.

One of the female guards in charge went by and noticed something hanging under the table. She asked – actually she didn’t ask, she barked “Whose rags are these?” I stood up and said “Mine”. She told me to follow her straightaway to her office. When I was inside she pushed me into a corner tight against the wall and bashed me up cruelly. As she finished, she was barking again and looking for a stick, but couldn’t find one. She disappeared and let me off.

A few months later I was assigned to a mandolin orchestra. All the instruments were kept in the men’s quarters and it was there that we went to rehearsals. One morning while marching five in a row with my fellow female prisoners, an SS woman joined us. She was dressed in full uniform, a grey skirt, blouse, cape and boots while we were in our “uniforms”, striped outfits and scarves covered our shaved heads. Suddenly among all the tired, sad and indistinguishable girls she recognized me and came over.

She whispered, “I was a witness to that horrible scene and I couldn’t say anything to my partner to have pity on you and stop hurting you. However, somehow I did help, I hid the stick.”

While talking to me the SS woman moved close and suggested, “If any of the boys happen to give you some parcels of food, I will help you carry them through the gate because I know how dangerous it is for you to do it on your own.”

I cannot remember if I could take advantage of her generous offer but I haven’t forgotten her words, generosity and treasured in my mind that good woman even though she had SS engraved on her arm. In that brutal environment, I discovered her good nature and she raised my morale even though I was treated with such cruelty. I had survived.
REMEMBRANCE FOR GOOD AND BAD
Dr Natan Kellermann

The vow
I have taken a vow: to remember it all,
To remember – and to naught to forget
All along the millennia of our history – we recited on
Passover night:
"In every generation, a man must regard himself as
though he had come out of Egypt."

Avraham Shlonsky

Repeatedly, we are told that we must remember the
Holocaust and that we must not forget. ‘Why?’ we ask.
And we are told: ‘So that it will not happen again.’ This
reason for not forgetting is based on the assumption of
the American philosopher George Santayana who said,
“those who cannot remember the past are condemned
to repeat it.”

Clearly however, we should not only remember the
victims, and the Holocaust itself, but also its beginning,
and the process which lead to the genocide, including
the political and social environment at the time.
Because in order for Holocaust education to become ‘a
lesson’, it must concentrate also on the "road" to the
Holocaust in order for the students to make the
inevitable parallels with their lives today.

To forget, as Elie Wiesel has said, would be an
absolute injustice in the same way that Auschwitz was
the absolute crime.”

Well, I have lately started to feel that it would
perhaps be good to forget some of it. Perhaps it would
be good to stop thinking and talking so much about the
terrible events of World War II? Perhaps it would be
good to put an end to this 60-year old struggle at
working through? Perhaps we should stop this endless
mourning and get on with our lives?

WE CANNOT FORGET

The Holocaust has become a major collective trauma
in the Jewish history and, as such, it continues to leave
its indelible mark on the Jewish psyche. The long-term
psychological effects of this event are obvious not only
in the survivors who themselves experienced the
persecution, and in their descendants who were
vicariously affected, but in the entire Jewish people,
including those who live in and outside Israel.

The Holocaust is in our blood, in our bones and in
our minds. The terrible pictures return to us in our
dreams and in our associations and we keep re-
experiencing the tragedy over and over. We have
thoroughly internalized its lessons and are constantly
aware of the possibility of a new attempt of annihilation.
It’s not a question ‘if’, but ‘when’ it will happen again. It
is therefore both impossible and unnecessary to tell
ourselves that we must remember.

What we mean is perhaps that they should not forget. They are all the others; the other peoples of the
world, some of who were involved in the war and
others who had nothing to do with it. What we mean is
that they should learn from the Holocaust. So that it will
not happen again. It means another genocide.

But they seem to have already forgotten most of it.

Despite some public gestures of reconciliation, most
people who are today living in the perpetrator nations
Germany and Austria have been successfully repressing
most memories of World War II and left the working
through of the past to subsequent generations (Duba,
1997). As a result, the ancient anti-Semitic sentiments,
which were never eradicated despite everything, are
again expressed in various circles.

It is no longer politically incorrect to express anti-
Jewish feelings, especially if they are concealed as anti-
Zionist or anti-Israeli opinion. People living in other
parts of the world are also showing increasing
expressions of the ‘new’ anti-Semitism, as was obvious
from the conference on this issue in Melbourne in the
beginning of 2005. All of these new threats indicate that
much of the world hasn’t learned the lesson. And while
there are various shades and grades of Holocaust denial,
much of the world acts as if the Holocaust never
happened.

HOLOCAUST MEANING

So, what are the lessons of the Holocaust? What
meaning should it have for future generations?

For the Jewish people, it provided the raison d’être
for the need of a Jewish homeland and the justification
for creating the Jewish state of Israel. It was the
legitimizing factor for the state’s right to exist, and it
underscored the urgency and vital necessity for pursuing
its national interests. Contrary to popular opinion,
however, however, this original significance has not lost
its significance. While it in the future might be
compared to a distant historic event, such as the exodus
of Egypt, and be remembered and retold ‘from
generation to generation,’ it still has a profound effect
on everything that happens in Israel.

In a country that has bomb proof wastebaskets, it is
of course difficult to separate past Holocaust trauma
from present terrorist threats. But I have the distinct
feeling that much of the present emotional responses to
the Palestinian Intifada and of present-day security
politics has some of their hidden roots in the Holocaust.
This includes the basic fear of the possibility of a total
annihilation of the Jewish people again. As a sign of this

Dr. Natan Kellerman

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and self-righteous behavior of the classical Israeli, which might be part of the explanation for the arrogant, less interested in what other people think about them, as a reaction to this, Israelis have perhaps become outright paranoia.

In addition, the legacy of the Holocaust acts as glue for the cohesiveness of the Jewish People. Though we might feel uncomfortable with this ‘outside’ definition of Jewish identity, the fact is that Jews were all brought together by their executioners and thrown into the same graves, without consideration of religious affiliation, country of origin, or other differences.

For the non-Jewish world, however, the lessons of the Holocaust are much more difficult to spell out. Does the Holocaust have a lesson for the whole of people-kind, which is being ignored? The obvious lessons of the dangers of racism, of cruel dictators and totalitarian regimes, and of the possibility of recurrent acts of genocide among human beings are easily taught. But what has the world learned to do in situations when dictators again rise to power and threaten another people with genocide, such as in Rwanda, Cambodia, Darfur and today in Iran?

Strangely enough, various countries who were all involved in the WWII seemed to have learned a very different and almost opposite lesson from the Holocaust. As suggested by Frey (2005) in his book on the ‘Hitler-Syndrome’, the German population seemed to have learned to universally oppose all armed conflict and to choose peaceful means for resolving conflicts, while the US (and perhaps the UK) learned that such major threats must be confronted with military means. The latter have learned from the WWII that totalitarian regimes are real threats, which must be confronted heads on and that terrorist organizations may be as dangerous as Hitler.

In addition to these lessons, there are other more personal moral, theological and existential lessons, which cannot be simply explained by the above political conclusions. In fact, in our efforts to digest the facts of the Holocaust, we become more and more perplexed and often raise more questions than answers. For example:

- How could it have happened at all? Specifically, what happened there and there?
- What do we remember? And how could we forget? How can we talk about that which is impossible to perceive? Since our words are so inadequate, should we perhaps keep silent?
- How could the perpetrators have been so cruel? Where they not human? Did they have no compassion? Why did the victims not resist? And why did they not escape when it was still possible?

These are all central questions that cry out for answers. It’s difficult to remain indifferent to them as a Jew and as a human being. To the first question: ‘How could it have happened?’ we respond with guilty silence and to the last one: ‘Could it happen again?’ we nod in shame.

As we attempt to answer these questions, we are confronted with the forceful presence of the ultimate evil — the cruelty of human beings to each other, the mockery of basic human values, and the unlimited degradation of men and women. But at the same time, the history of the Holocaust also reveals great manifestation of compassion, courage, and heroism. In the study of the Holocaust one confronts the categorical defiance of God, as well as the devotion to human values under the worst of conditions, including dire hunger, pain, suffering, and humiliation.

**OPPOSING EXPERIENCES**

These two opposite learning experiences are perhaps the main lesson to be learned from the Holocaust.

As we become more accustomed to this dual reality, we come to realize that this duality does not only include the assumptive world of the victims, but also of the perpetrators (who may not be only cruel), the rescuers (who may not be only saints) and the bystanders (who may not be only indifferent). While we have a tendency to look at these main actors of the second World War in ‘black-and-white’ terms, and try to understand them beyond the realm of normal human existence, we may come to understand and appreciate that they were all ordinary people of flesh and blood, like ourselves and everybody else.

Being confronted with the history of the Holocaust in depth means therefore that we are also facing ourselves today. This might be the main lesson for the world when learning about the Holocaust. When they start to remember in this way, we might be able to forget.

Dr Natan Kellermann was the chief clinical psychologist of AMCHA – a treatment center for Holocaust survivors and their families in Israel between 1996 - 2000 and its executive director between 2001- 2004. He lectured at the Holocaust Centre last year.
WHAT'S IN A NAME?
Dr George Halasz

My mother and I shared a life-changing moment en route to Poland from Melbourne via London before we commemorated the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II in 2005. On the flight Alice turned to me: ‘I think that my little sister’s name started with ‘R’. What Jewish names do you know starting with ‘R’? Her eyes were at once thoughtful and lost in a distant past. This part of her mental traumascape, frozen for over six decades.

Initially I didn’t appreciate the profound significance of her question. I thought a moment, then offered ‘Rachel’, ‘Rebecca’ and ‘Rivkah’. Her face told me that I had missed the mark. That slight grimace, so familiar when she did not approve spoke to me in an instant more clearly than words ‘no, you are not right’. I was not even close. She then seemed to doze off. Stirring a little later, she said that she had been thinking deeply. Obviously she was not asleep. She asked if I knew a name that sounded like ‘Razer’.

I thought a moment. I tried ‘Raizel’. Immediately her eyes lit up, but then again she shook her head. ‘Yes, that’s closer but no, that’s not her name.’ O.K, I was closer. I wondered if, as my mother’s name was Feigelle, the diminutive of Feigel, maybe her little sister’s name was Raizelle? Bullseye. Now her eyes and face excitedly lit up. ‘Yes, that’s it, that’s her Jewish name! I did not remember it for 60 years. I’m tired, I wish to nap. Please remember her name. I think I will not remember it when I wake up.’

Alice dozed off for a while. When she awoke she asked me her sister’s name. ‘Raizelle.’ ‘Yes that’s it.’

Two days later Alice stood at Birkenau’s rail drop off. She stood with me, her son George, on the soil where she last saw her mother and sister in September 1944. On this rainy Wednesday afternoon, May 4, 2005, as part of the March of the Living, encircled by our umbrella holding participants, her new family, together we witnessed what the pent-up expression of a most private grief looks and feels like.

Alice spoke from that spot where: ‘My mother was led away helpless.’ After Dr Mengele had separated her from her mother and sister, the last words she heard her mother say to her aunty was ‘look after my little daughter.’ Reliving that moment, Alice shared and so passed on her most intimate moment of grief to be indelibly engraved on our minds. That moment transmitted a lived truth that continues to reverberate in us – all who were witnesses.

As I reflect on my mother’s testimony, after 60 years she entrusted special people to become witness to her inner anguish. Who can empathize with enduring such a past, a past that freezes a mind for six decades? The way she reconnected with her raw moments reminded me of the kinds of miracles people speak of who were blind and regain their sight; or hear once again after being deaf; or regain movement in a paralysed limb. How did her mind reconnect with her sister’s forgotten Jewish name - Raizelle - 60 years later? What compelled her to want to know?

I thought back to one of our discussions before we embarked on this journey to that traumascape when I asked Alice why she wanted to go back. She said that she had only one expectation on this journey into her darkness: to breathe the same air with me.

I wondered if Alice already started to ‘breathe’ the air of Auschwitz during the flight to Poland? Was she ready to reclaim an awareness of events that had to be banished from her mind sixty years earlier?

As my mother’s breath breathed new life into her sister’s name so she renewed not only her intimate contact with her little sister Raizelle. At the same time she forged new relationships as she breathed that memory of a little girl to her nephew, me, a new generation who never knew her, a little girl reunited with her lost name after 60 years.

Weeks after our arrival back in Melbourne, she had obviously been crying. I asked what had happened. She replied: ‘This was the first time in 60 years that I could say Yizkor for my little sister, saying her Jewish name, Raizelle.’

So, what’s in a name? Frozen Worlds within Worlds that Melt when that name is called a little rose, Raizelle, after 60 years.

George Halasz is a Melbourne psychiatrist.
ACQUISITIONS: NOVEMBER 2005 - JANUARY 2006
Ursula Flicker

The following are the latest additions to our collection:

Extensive documentation collected by the first President, about the starting of the Friends of Jewish Holocaust Centre.
Mr. Richard Rozen OAM

Litzmanstadt Ghetto Money "Eine Mark".
Mr. Jack and Mrs. Eda Wyse

Family photographs of relatives many of whom perished in the Holocaust.
Mrs. J (Tauba) Goldberg

English Testimonial - Copy with appendix written on 16/02/1994 by Kitia Altman, nee Szpigelman, to honour Mr. Alfred Rosner as a Righteous Gentile for helping Jews of Bedzin, Poland.
Mrs. Kitia Altman

Eleven books relating to Janusz Korczak, together with art folder of cards from Beth Lochamei Hagettaot.
Mrs. Anna Gouttman

Copies of two photographs taken in Lodz Ghetto of a building group.
Mr. Jacob Zylberstein

Documents, letters, photographs of family who survived war in Poland; Correspondence Poland–Australia 1932-1946; Booklet "Poetry of the Ghetto"; Lithograph sketches; Publication "German crimes against Czechoslovakia" and "The persecution of Jews in Holland."
Mr. Ralph Renard LLB

Photograph taken on 26/08/1942: Chaim Rumkowski (Head of Judenrat) talking to Hans Biebow (Head of Lodz Ghetto).
Mr. Nathan Blicblau

Documents of Dr. Alfred Valentin Marx, recipient of World War I Iron Cross, who wrote and published medical papers. Documents of wife Irmgard and daughter Irene. Marx and his wife perished in Auschwitz. Daughter Irene was the only one to survive the war in England.
Mrs. Irene Stern

Yizkor book Skarzysko-Kamienna; Memorial booklet re-Skarzysko; Identity card Gisenmann Gutek.
Mr. Ivan Benjamin

Booklet titled “Album” of photographs of Concentration Camp Dachau.
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Susan Lendon

Booklet, ticket, invitation and programme for 60th anniversary liberation of Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp, and stones brought back from the Concentration Camp Bergen-Belsen, Germany.
Erica Bence

Documents in Romanian and French and German; Birth certificate with photograph of father; DP Index Card issued by Allied Expeditionary Forces; ID Card for ex-Buchenwald prisoner; Certificate of Identification; United Sport Club Membership Card in France for Hungarians; Certificate of repatriation from Buchenwald to France; 2 Permits (one permanent and one temporary) for work with photographs of Oscar.
Mr. Oscar Hoffman

Book in Polish titled "Powstanie w Getcie Warszawskim (19 April - 16 May 1943) by Dr Jozef Kermisz; Printed in Lodz in 1946.
Mrs. Eva Rockman

The Centre’s Archives asks more donors to bring their treasured documents, objects and artefacts to it for safekeeping.
All items about the Holocaust are important to reconstruct the past.
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whose grandparents were Holocaust survivors, notes that: "I wanted people my age to know how the victims of the Shoah lived, how they died, and about their eternal dream for the continuation of the Jewish spirit."

The Young Leadership Associates sponsors social and educational events targeted at younger members of the community to support ongoing educational activities, seminars and conferences committed to Holocaust remembrance through education.

The Society's Education Department sponsors seminars and conferences to empower educators with the resources needed to teach about the Holocaust. The aim is to provide educators with a better understanding of how to transmit the lessons of this event to present and future generations. The Education Department sponsors an annual Professional Development Conference to bring educators up-to-date with resources developed by the International School for Holocaust Studies in Jerusalem.

The American Society for Yad Vashem works collaboratively with all the major Holocaust organizations worldwide. Our common goal is to nurture the memory of the Holocaust so that the young people of tomorrow will understand and be warned that wherever left unchecked, anti-Semitism can lead to atrocities such as the Holocaust. Eli Zborowski, Founding Chairman, The American Society for Yad Vashem.

YAD VASHEM SOCIETY USA

Founded in 1981 by a group of Holocaust survivors, the American Society for Yad Vashem works in partnership with Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, which was established in 1953 by the Knesset.

The American Society for Yad Vashem supports the areas of commemoration, education, research, capital improvements and special projects, while drawing support from more than 140,000 individuals nationwide. Their contributions range from a few crumpled dollar bills, to major philanthropists, to a whole cadre of volunteers who give us the gift of their time. Three major projects the Society support for Yad Vashem include: The Monument to the Jewish Soldiers (1983); The Children’s Memorial (1987); The Valley of the Communities (1992); and the Multi-Year Development Plan (2005).

The American Society’s achievements are recognized at its Annual Tribute Dinner, whose guests include survivors, their families, leading figures in government, the American Jewish Community, and members of the diplomatic corps.

The Young Leadership Associates was inaugurated in 1997, and this dedicated group has undertaken the task of developing an ongoing program to promote Holocaust education and awareness. The YLA is co-chaired by Caroline Massel and Elie Singer. Massel, whose grandparents were Holocaust survivors, notes that: "I wanted people my age to know how the victims of the Shoah lived, how they died, and about their eternal dream for the continuation of the Jewish spirit." The Young Leadership Associates sponsors social and educational events targeted at younger members of the community to support ongoing educational activities, seminars and conferences committed to Holocaust remembrance through education.

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PERSONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birthdays
Rochelle Levita; Max Zilberman; Pearl Recht;
Eva, Egon Gordon and John Younger.

Barmitzvahs
Yosef Chaim Landa
Gideon Fixler

Wedding
Mazel Tov to Beryl Chitiz & Family on the marriage of
their daughter Leigh to Adrian Varasso.

Condolences
Shirley Rak
Bela Miller

Wedding Anniversaries
Jacob and Esther Rosenberg’s 60th
Lucia and Marek Lent Diamond 60th

Get Well
Speedy recovery to Zosia Getler

Special thanks to Esther and Jacob Rosenberg,

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who contributed to costs of this issue of Centre News.

JEWISH HOLOCAUST CENTRE COMING EVENTS

MONDAY 24 APRIL

YOM HASHOAH COMMEMORATION
ROBERT BLACKWOOD HALL
MONASH UNIVERSITY, CLAYTON CAMPUS

SUNDAY 7 MAY 2:00PM

PLAYREADING
“THE TRIAL OF EICHMANN” BY NEIL COLE

SURVIVOR GUIDES KITIA ALTMAN &
ARNOLD ERLANGER’S NARRATIVES ARE
INTERSPERSED IN THE PLAY, WHICH
WAS INITIALLY STAGED AT LA MAMA IN 2005.
IT WAS DESCRIBED BY THE AGE AS
“A SKILLED DRAMATISATION OF THE TRIAL
AND ATTEMPTED TO EXAMINE THE PROFOUND
LEGAL MORAL QUESTION THAT SURROUNDS THE SUBJECT.”
JEWISH HOLOCAUST CENTRE

TUESDAY 25 JULY—29 AUGUST 8:00PM

LECTURE SERIES
RABBI FRED MORGAN
JEWISH HOLOCAUST CENTRE

All enquires: (03) 9528 1985 OR Email: admin@holocaustcentreaustralia.org.au

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HAVE YOU CONSIDERED DONATING TO THE
HOLOCAUST CENTRE?

PLEASE HELP US MAINTAIN THE CENTRE AND KEEP ALIVE THE
HOLOCAUST’S MESSAGE AND THE MEMORY OF ITS VICTIMS.

WE MUST KEEP THIS LEGACY ALIVE FOR THE FUTURE

I pledge the amount of $______________________________

Name ____________________________________________________________________________________________

Address __________________________________________________________________________________________

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JEWISH HOLOCAUST CENTRE INC.

Credit Card Payments can be made by:
Phone: 9528 1985
Fax: 9528 3758
OR
Email: admin@holocaustcentreaustralia.org.au

ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

15 Selwyn Street, Elsternwick VIC 3185
אינטגראנציאליים קאפפרטוען
עוגן חורבב דערציוונך.

פּוֹאי אָרי אָ.addItemויטש (וֹאָצוּש).
םיכמן יתעלט בה ממושב ראשית ערב יוצאת ממעגן אלדאה.

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מצורא בעלות ערב יגיעו להתמך במועצת עיר ערב יוצאת ממעגן אלדאה.

렸ן פארק ערך יotropic ערב יוצאת ממעגן אלדאה.

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ד"עות פון י"דיש
הורוב-צ'ערצ'ער

אינטערבאנצ'יאלער סטורער טאאך.

אפויזיעלער באהשלס פון די 'פרא얻יניקטס פעלקער.

מיט את אט זאער צוריק טעט די רעגירוגט פון
דיטשלאָצ' אינטיראקטואָלטQueryable דעם 27-כן
די אינטארשון', ווי די צראָטן פון פון אנונימאָט
אנרונט. טעט טאָט פון זאער בּברּיואָנט נון
פורמאַראָטס עכן דעם מוניטשָטשַט.

אַראָןשאָט פון פערּארַקיען אָקסֶמעָיָהשען אַן הָאַט
דערערָטער צי פאָלַיךַהןוען פון דעם זורַב ווי
פפמאַראָטס עכן דעם מוניטשָטשַט.

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פפמאַראָטס עכן דעם מוניטשָטשַט.

בּיָינס דוּנְקֶמְלַט אָן 'סֶפֶרֶגּנֵוָיִיל'.