The Jewish Holocaust Centre is dedicated to the memory of the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators between 1933 and 1945.

We consider the finest memorial to all victims of racist policies to be an educational program which aims to combat antisemitism, racism and prejudice in the community and fosters understanding between people.
W

hat do William Cooper, Anne Frank and Bunhom (Hom) Chhorn have in common? The answer is that they have all featured at the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) recently. Apart from Anne Frank, do you know who the others are?

On 6 December 1938, William Cooper led a delegation of the Australian Aboriginal League to the German Consulate in Melbourne to present a resolution condemning the treatment of Jews on Kristallnacht in Europe. On the 74th anniversary of William Cooper’s walk, I participated in a reenactment, but this time with a different ending. While the German Consul refused to accept William Cooper’s resolution in 1938, the current Honorary German Consul, Michael Pearce SC, warmly accepted the arrival of representatives of the Aboriginal and Jewish communities.

The JHC museum includes a panel describing William Cooper’s actions, which for me is a special place. At the JHC we pay special tribute to the Aboriginal protest. Although there had been other protests against Kristallnacht, William Cooper’s was significant because indigenous Australians themselves were persecuted, and not even recognised as Australian citizens. William Cooper’s conviction and courage resound through the decades, speaking to us all.

United Nations International Holocaust Memorial Day is held every year on 27 January. Since it began in 2005, the focus of the event has moved from a commemoration solely of the Holocaust to the recognition of other genocides as well. Nina Bassat, President of the Jewish Community Council of Victoria, delivered the keynote address on the theme of ‘Rescue and Courage to Care’, but we also heard the testimony of Bunhom (Hom) Chhorn, a young man who is a Cambodian child survivor of genocide. Hom told his story publicly for the first time at the Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration. It was a powerful and heartfelt presentation, serving to illustrate the extraordinary role the JHC plays in providing an environment in which survivors of genocide feel able to tell their story.

It is indeed a privilege that the JHC is currently hosting a truly wonderful exhibition, Anne Frank: A History for Today, at the beginning of its national tour. To this day, Anne Frank remains one of the seminal symbols after the Shoah, and her story of hope and resilience has inspired millions of people worldwide. This exhibition has the capacity to reach out to people of all ages, but particularly to young people. I accompanied my seven-and-a-half-year-old grandson Julian to the exhibition and he was drawn to it, and especially fascinated that people were confined indoors and had to be silent for most of the day. We thank the exhibition’s principal supporter, Gandel Philanthropy, and acknowledge the support of the estate of the late Jakob Frenkel for making this exhibition possible.

We bid farewell to Adam Kreuzer, who has left the JHC Board after a seven-year involvement. His contribution, particularly in the human resources area, has been of great benefit, more recently in the appointment of four new staff members. Adam will be greatly missed.

In November I attended the Association of Holocaust Organizations conference in Vienna and was overwhelmed by the huge shift in attitude towards the Holocaust by Austrian authorities. From a past where the government considered Austria as the first victim of Nazism, today’s government recognises that Austria was a willing collaborator.

This year will mark the tenth anniversary of the JHC Foundation. Mazal tov to chairperson Helen Mahemoff for all her efforts in ensuring the JHC’s future.

We are currently embarking on plans for the future development of the Centre. Watch this space for exciting developments.

Chag Pesach sameach!

A

s editor of Centre News my mission is to bring you the stories of Holocaust survivors. In this edition we feature Saba Feniger’s insightful analysis of Kristallnacht, and the personal stories of Maria Lewit and Maria (Marysia) Censor. The Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) is currently abuzz with the exhibition Anne Frank: A history for today and Anne Frank’s extraordinary diary. Like Anne, both Maria Lewit and Marysia Censor were teenagers during the Holocaust, and have written eloquently about their experiences. It is a privilege for the JHC to host the Anne Frank exhibition, but it is no less a privilege to be able to bring you the stories of our own Holocaust survivors.

Pauline Rockman mentions in her message that the scope of United Nations Holocaust Memorial Day has broadened since it was first commemorated in 2005. While the recognition of the horrors of the Holocaust is still central to observances around the world, there is recognition of other genocides that have occurred, and continue to occur. In line with the Jewish Holocaust Centre’s mission statement – that the finest memorial to all victims of racist policies is an educational program which aims to combat antisemitism, racism and prejudice in the community – Centre News aims to bring you the stories of other genocides. In our last issue, we featured the amazing testimony of Faina Iligoga and her survival of the Rwandan genocide, and in this edition we feature Bunhom (Hom) Chhorn’s moving story of surviving the Cambodian genocide as a young child. In the next edition we plan to publish an account of the Bosnian genocide from Hariz Halilovich, another witness to yet another recent atrocity.

I hope you will feel as inspired as I do when you read their stories.
A

s I sit at my desk at this time of writing, I reflect on a conversation I have just shared with Saba Feniger. Saba’s name is well known at the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC). She was curator of the JHC museum from 1985 to 2001, and in that capacity she was responsible for the design and establishment of the museum. Like Saba, almost all those who were involved were volunteers. It is hard to imagine the cramped conditions and limited resources at the time this creative and time-consuming work took place. While Ursula Flicker was responsible for collecting and archiving artefacts, Saba had the task of bringing the story of the Holocaust to light through the collection.

Our Centre focuses much of its energy on the museum, education programs, testimonies, and our collection, but through the foresight of Phillip Maisel and others, a significant project was undertaken in cooperation with Deakin University to document and preserve the history of our organisation. The work with Deakin has resulted in the publication of academic papers and presentations at conferences, and we are proud to be part of this enterprise. In early February this year we formalised our relationship with Deakin University when we signed a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’. This event was attended by the Vice-Chancellor of Deakin University, Professor Jane den Hollander, JHC President Pauline Rockman, academics and Centre staff. I am grateful to Moshe Fiszman, Holocaust survivor and volunteer guide, for guiding our Deakin guests through the museum.

The Centre’s visitor numbers continue to grow. Last year, with an average of between one and two events each week, we had some 21,000 student visitors and more than 8,000 visits from members of the general public. This represents an increase in activity of one third over 2010 figures. However, as exciting as it sounds to have such a busy level of activity, I am acutely aware of the impact on survivors, volunteers, staff and resources. Plans are afoot to ameliorate this situation with a combination of simple ‘quick fix’ solutions and some longer-term planning.

This year we welcome a number of new staff members. The Centre is grateful to Mary Starr who, having remembered the Centre in a generous bequest, has made this employment initiative possible. I welcome Tammy Reznik (Education Officer), Julia Reichstein (Librarian and Information Manager) and Rae Silverstein (Volunteer Coordinator) to the team.

We commenced the 2013 year with the annual United Nations Holocaust Memorial Day (UNHMD) commemoration at the St Kilda Town Hall, held on 27 January, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. We are indebted to Mrs Nina Bassat, Jewish Community Council of Victoria President and keynote speaker, and Mr Buhom (Hom) Chhorn, child survivor of the Cambodian genocide, for sharing their stories and words of inspiration. The Anne Frank Travelling Exhibition, was launched several days later, following months of preparation, including room-painting, setting up special lighting and a sound system, organising guide-training courses and producing booklets and pamphlets – an enormous JHC team effort. I thank the volunteers and staff who were involved in preparing this exceptional exhibition, event program and educational program. Gandel Philanthropy was a major sponsor of the exhibition. We also received support for this venture from the estate of the late Jakob Frenkel. With wide coverage on TV, radio, newspapers and magazines, we have experienced pleasing support from schools and the general public.

Much more is in store for 2013. I encourage readers to visit the Centre’s web page www.jhc.org.au on a regular basis to keep abreast of our public program.

What’s on at the Jewish Holocaust Centre

The Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) has a busy program of speakers, exhibitions, workshops, film nights run by the JHC Film Club and social events run by the Friends of the Jewish Holocaust Centre.

Details of all future events can be found on the Centre’s web page at www.jhc.org.au. If you do not use a computer, please phone the Centre on 9528 1985 for information about up-coming events.
How many of you can remember a specific present you really wanted for a birthday as a child? I remember perfectly well exactly what I wanted for my tenth birthday. I do not know what prompted this desire, but it was a diary. I cannot say that my desire was prompted by having read *The Diary of Anne Frank*, nor anyone else’s diary for that matter. For whatever reason, I wanted a diary – and received one! It was the size of a small paperback book with a strap and small lock on the front cover. The lock was symbolic at best, and the diary could easily be popped open. Still, the lock meant that it was mine, mine alone! It was gilt-edged and each page had approximately five lines on which to write the account of one day.

I still have the diary, and the other journals and notebooks in which I used to write. At ten, I cannot say that my life was all that interesting, but later, when I was at university, travelling, or living in Israel, I discovered the value of a diary. I sometimes take one out of its box in the garage and leaf through it. I am surprised at what was important to me then, the strange thoughts I had when younger, and the occasional interesting comment on life which still rings true.

Anne Frank received her diary on her thirteenth birthday. Hers is not the only diary from the Holocaust, but it has become an icon – a symbol of resilience and hope. Unlike my diary, millions of people have read hers. Unlike mine, it reflects an amazingly gifted writer, a perceptive and sensitive voice. It has inspired countless people who see in her indomitable spirit a role model.

As I write, we are approaching the opening of the Anne Frank exhibition. No students have yet seen the exhibition, and I am wondering: how will they regard her life and her words?

Today’s students have interests and opportunities that are so different from Anne’s. They have instant communication with their real friends and their Internet Facebook ‘friends’. They have all the information they need at their fingertips, just a Google search on their smart phone away. When they have a conflict with their parents they can go to a friend’s house, or Starbucks, to unload their burdens. They can update their status, send a quick YouTube clip, find any other way to occupy themselves. They most likely have a bedroom of their own, complete with computer, iPod – and the list goes on.

Today’s students’ lives are so different! What can Anne’s diary mean to them? What relevance can it possibly have?

I am confident that individual students will take away something different from their encounter with Anne and her diary. It may be an awareness that it is possible to have hope even when one is prevented from living a ‘normal’ life. It may be that they leave with a greater appreciation for all they have, and aspire to make the most out of their lives without too many complaints. It may be a commitment to fulfil their individual potential, in whatever field, with the knowledge that Anne never had this opportunity. Perhaps they will understand better the value and purpose of a personal diary and begin one of their own, or resume one they had started.

Anne clearly had a tense relationship with her mother. Although writing her diary did not necessarily improve her relationship, our students may be comforted to realise that being a teenager is never all that easy. Nor is it easy being a teenager’s parent!

And of course the role of the Franks’ helpers, Meip, Bep, Viktor and Jo, may inspire our students to be more sensitive to others in need than they may be at present. These Dutch people were courageous and caring and, without their efforts, Anne and the others simply would not have been able to survive as long as they did. Their deeds are a beacon of compassion for us all.

Knowing Anne’s experiences through her diary may not show us the detail of the horrors of the ghettos, mass shooting and death camps. However, her comments about being a Jew, and of the suffering of fellow Jews across Europe, of which she was aware, may provide our students with a different perspective on the historical context of the Holocaust.

Anne, above all, is a symbol of hope and resilience. She and her family and others in hiding had every right to abandon hope, to give up, yet to the very end Anne was looking towards the future. She found solace in her diary, and this enabled her to look past the privations and confines of the secret annex. She tried not to complain about what she lacked, but made the most of what she had.

The lives of today’s youth, and our own as adults, seem so different from Anne’s, yet her feelings, needs and hopes are not so different from theirs or ours. Reading Anne Frank’s diary and seeing this exhibition is an opportunity to meet someone not so different from ourselves. By understanding her, we better understand ourselves. By learning about her past our students develop insight for dealing with their present, and for preparing for their future.

Imagine: all this from a simple diary, a birthday gift for a girl’s thirteenth birthday!
The Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) is proud to be the first venue in Australia to host the world-class exhibition *Anne Frank: A History for Today*. The Travelling exhibition was created by the Anne Frank House as a way of giving people who cannot visit the museum in Amsterdam a chance to learn about the story of Anne Frank and the secret annex. With eleven large panels, the exhibition tells the Anne Frank story through a timeline, against the backdrop of a general history of the Second World War and the Holocaust. With photographs, plans and quotes from her diary and other sources, visitors can get a full picture of Anne’s story.

Anne Frank, a Jewish girl growing up in Amsterdam, celebrated her 13th birthday on 12 June 1942 with the gift of a diary. In it she began to record her thoughts and feelings as any teenage girl might do. But just a few weeks later, on 6 July, Anne’s life changed when she and her family moved into hiding in a secret annex in her father’s office building. From then on her diary became her best friend, her support and subsequently one of the most important diaries ever written.

Otto Frank, Anne’s father, had moved the family from Germany to the Netherlands in 1933 after the Nazis had seized power. At first, life in Amsterdam was peaceful for Anne, her parents Otto and Edith and her sister Margot, but the war in Germany began to overtake their lives again in 1940 when the Germans invaded the Netherlands and began rounding up Jewish people.

With the help of four Dutch friends, the Franks went into hiding in a series of rooms at the rear of Otto Frank’s office. The Franks, along with another family, the van Pels, hid themselves away in just four rooms, with one other person, Fritz Pfeffer, joining them later. Hidden behind a moveable bookcase, the eight people lived together for two years, staying virtually silent during working hours and never going out. The four helpers snuck in their food and other necessities. The Franks, van Pels and Fritz Pfeffer lived in constant fear of being found and anxious about what would happen to them.

On the morning of 4 August 1944, a Nazi SS officer and three Dutch police officers burst into their hiding place after an unknown person had betrayed them. All eight were sent to Westerbork, a transit camp, for one month, and then to Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. Later, Anne and Margot were transported on to Bergen-Belsen, where they died of typhus in March 1945. British soldiers liberated Bergen-Belsen just a few weeks later.

Otto Frank was the only one of the eight to survive. He returned to Amsterdam in June 1945 to learn of the fate of the rest of his family. One of the four Dutch helpers, Miep Gies, had found Anne’s diary in the secret annex just after the arrest and had kept it safe. She gave it to Otto who decided her diary should be made available to all. It was first published in 1947. The diary has since been translated into 65 languages and published worldwide.

This became Anne’s legacy: through her diary she became a symbol for the lost hope and promise of the one and a half million Jewish children who lost their lives in the Holocaust.

Bep Gomperts-Gerritse, a longtime volunteer at the Jewish Holocaust Centre, spoke of her experiences at the opening of the exhibition. She was born in Amsterdam and was two years old when the war started in the Netherlands in 1940. She too was forced into hiding at various places in Amsterdam. Most of Bep’s family died in concentration camps. Bep was so young that she only understood years later what had really happened during the war. ‘When a child is constantly taken from one family to another without understanding the reason behind it, it will have an impact on your development and your identity. You want to know who you are and where you belong. I was Jewish, but had lived with a Catholic and (Dutch) Reformed family too. Who was the real me?’

The JHC thanks the exhibition’s principal supporter, Gandel Philanthropy, and acknowledges the support of the estate of the late Jakob Frenkiel for making this exhibition possible.
On 10 May 1940, the Netherlands was invaded by Nazi Germany, beginning a period of five years of terror that resulted in many victims, especially amongst the Dutch Jews.

On 9 April 1944, Anne Frank writes in her diary: ‘One day this terrible war will be over. The time will come when we’ll be people again and not just Jews!’ When Anne Frank wrote this, more than 100,000 of the 140,000 Dutch Jews had already been transported to concentration and extermination camps.

Anne Frank, her family and a few of their friends spent 25 months in hiding in the back part of her father’s office building, the ‘secret annex’. In early August 1944 they were betrayed, arrested and transported to Auschwitz. Anne Frank and her sister Margot were sent on to Bergen Belsen at the end of October 1944 and it was there, a few weeks before the liberation of the camp, that they died. Of the group of people who had gone into hiding with Anne Frank, one person returned: her father, Otto Frank. The diary of his daughter Anne, which was saved, gave him a new purpose in life: by circulating the diary he hoped to contribute to the education of young people to combat intolerance, racism and antisemitism.

When the Anne Frank House was founded in 1957, Otto Frank’s mission was to bring his daughter’s legacy, her diary and her life story, to the attention of as many people as possible. This work has been miraculously successful. The House now receives more than one million visitors a year.

Some 85 per cent of our visitors come from abroad and their average age is younger than that of visitors to other museums. Many young people from all over the world identify with the story of Anne Frank. Entries in the visitors’ books attest to how moved they are and how important it is for them to visit the former hiding place. The global scope of the story can also be found in our archives. We keep some 76,000 letters from all over the world, written to Otto Frank in the 1960s and 70s when the diary was translated into many languages. The readers of the book felt a strong need to share their impressions of the book with Anne Frank’s father and to tell him how sorry they were for him to have lost his family. The archives include some one hundred letters from Australia. Until his death in 1980, Otto Frank saw it as his duty to answer each of them individually, sometimes maintaining a correspondence that went on for several years. While going through these letters you are moved by the significance the diary of Anne Frank had for young people in a far away country like Australia, and how they connected it with their own lives and the political events of their times.

The best way to view Anne Frank’s life story, as well as this exhibition, is as a window that opens onto a piece of the reality of the past. You look through the eyes of a child who was forced to live in terrifying circumstances, afraid every day of being discovered and of what then might happen to her. But you also see that there were people who resisted the occupation by Nazi Germany, and there were friends who tried to help the Frank family to survive in hiding.

In the end Anne Frank, like millions who shared her fate, met with a terrible death. No one can fail to feel a deep sense of sorrow and anger at the unprecedented destruction of human life that occurred during the period in which Europe was in the grip of National Socialism. We keep asking ourselves: how could this happen, how could the world allow this to happen?

The exhibition raises the question: how can we arm ourselves against a resurgence of the Nazi ideology in contemporary disguise? This is of enormous importance, for the images of the past are unfortunately quite current. It is still happening in the world in which we live: exclusion on the basis of ethnicity or religion, isolation, expulsion, torture, murder and mass murder.

We must not resign ourselves to this fact. We are convinced that visiting this exhibition will provide inspiration for every visitor – each in his or her own way – to contribute to the struggle against democracy and human rights.

Ronald Leopold is Executive Director of the Anne Frank House, Amsterdam. This is an edited version of his address at the opening of the Anne Frank exhibition at the Jewish Holocaust Centre in February 2013.
On 6 December 2012 at 8:30am, a group of people from the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC), including President Pauline Rockman, Executive Director Warren Fineberg, Development Manager Reuben Zylberszpnc, Board member Elly Brooks and myself, met up with other interested people outside 73 Southampton Street, Footscray. This is where Aboriginal activist, William Cooper, lived in 1938, and it is now significant as the place from which Cooper led a delegation of the Australian Aborigines League on that now-celebrated walk into the city on 6 December 1938. William Cooper then had the intention of delivering a letter of protest to the German Consul. The letter itself is lost to history, but its contents expressed condemnation of the cruel persecution of the Jewish people by the Nazi government in Germany. It was one of a number of protests at the time following the anti-Jewish riots in Germany known as Kristallnacht.

The special significance of William Cooper’s protest, however, is that the Aboriginal people, who at that time did not have citizenship in their own country, empathised deeply with the fate of the Jews on the other side of the globe who had been violently and harshly stripped of their citizenship rights. This protest was an expression of fraternity with other dispossessed people and was also an important statement about the Aboriginals’ own unjust situation. Sadly, in 1938 the German consul refused to admit William Cooper and his delegation, and their protest went largely unnoticed, save for a few lines in the Melbourne newspapers at the time, and the memories of the few participants, passed down orally to their friends and descendants.

More recently, however, the protest has been lauded, interest in William Cooper and his delegation has been revived, and Cooper has been honoured by Melbourne’s Jewish Holocaust Centre, the Victorian Parliament and Yad Vashem, Israel’s premier Holocaust memorial site.

The focus of the December walk was a re-enactment of William Cooper’s walk by Alf (Uncle Boydie) Turner, Cooper’s grandson, who walked in the footsteps of his grandfather to deliver a letter of protest to the German Consulate at its former site in Collins Street, Melbourne. Before the walk from William Cooper’s house to the city, there was an early morning walk around Footscray, led by Kevin Russell, William Cooper’s great-grandson. He took us to sites of relevance to Cooper in the Footscray area and read from Cooper’s writings at these stops. The walk also crossed the newly created ‘William Cooper Footbridge’ at Footscray station.

Uncle Boydie, Aubrey Schwartz – one of the event organisers – and I subsequently drove to the East Melbourne Synagogue, where we met another group of supporters, including a few survivors of Kristallnacht. After an impassioned speech by Aubrey Schwartz about William Cooper and some words from Uncle Boydie, this group embarked on a walk into the city, capably led by octogenarian Uncle Boydie, who had a determined look in his eye and a spring in his step. It was a challenge for some to keep up with him.

The march into the city took us down Lonsdale Street to the corner of William Street where we met up with the Footscray group and many more. We all squeezed into the recently opened William Cooper Justice Centre, a most appropriate venue that demonstrates the revival of interest in this proud and dignified activist. After a few poignant words from the Centre manager, the group – by now well over a hundred supporters – made its way down William Street to Collins Street, still trying to keep up with Uncle Boydie, whose energy had grown from the support of so many on his important journey.

As I walked alongside Uncle Boydie, I could see how determined he was to finish the job on which his grandfather had set out 74 years ago. The letter of
protest had not reached its intended audience on that day, but today it would! It made me reflect on why, when his people are still treated unfairly in this country and struggling for a better deal, this mattered so much to him and his family.

As we neared our destination, we paused for a few minutes to wait for the rest of the group to catch up. Uncle Boydie was serious and solemn, graciously accepting heartfelt thanks from survivors and their descendants, posing for photos with supporters from his clan and taking in the significance of what he was about to do.

When we crossed the street to the site of the former German Consulate, the current Honorary German Consul, Michael Pearce SC was there to accept the letter. In front of the assembled throng, including Holocaust survivors and their descendants, Pearce graciously accepted the letter of protest. He said:

Uncle Boydie, Ms Pauline Rockman, President of the Jewish Holocaust Centre, Holocaust survivors, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we stand, the Kulin nation, and pay my respects to their elders past and present. I also acknowledge the presence here today of members of the Yorta Yorta people.

I am very pleased on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany to receive from Uncle Boydie this replica letter and the resolution of the Australian Aborigines League passed in December 1938.

I am pleased thereby to right the wrong committed by the German Consul on this spot exactly 74 years ago, when he refused to accept the original from Uncle Boydie’s grandfather, William Cooper.

In the context of the horrific crimes that were then being committed against the Jews in Germany and were yet to be committed in Germany and in German-occupied Europe, the wrong committed here by the German Consul in 1938 may seem small and insignificant.

Yet the Consul’s refusal to accept the letter and the resolution was undoubtedly wrong.

It was wrong because it denied the German Government’s responsibility for the crimes being committed against the Jews.

It was also wrong because it failed to acknowledge the courageous gesture of a people whose freedom and rights in their own land were heavily circumscribed and whose survival remained precarious.

Of course not every wrong can be righted. For some wrongs no amount of compensation can ever be enough. Some things too are beyond forgiveness and beyond reconciliation.

However, it is very important for the government and the people of Germany to take every opportunity to correct past wrongs. It is therefore with deep gratitude on their behalf that I receive this letter from Uncle Boydie.

I will pass it on to the German Foreign Office in Berlin and do my best to see that it receives a prompt and sufficient response. In that I will have the support of the German Embassy in Canberra.

While Pearce spoke I felt strong emotions, reflecting that in 1938 the Holocaust had not yet occurred and all those millions of Jews who subsequently died were still alive. I wondered whether people protesting really have the ability to change the course of history. William Cooper and his group had the historical insight of their own life experiences to understand where such blatant flaunting of people’s civil and human rights could end. Sadly no one wanted to hear what they had to say in 1938.

In front of me stood a group of survivors – guides from the Jewish Holocaust Centre, including Willy Lermer, Abram Goldberg, Halina Zylberman and Rosa Krakowski. They were all wearing t-shirts with the JHC logo. Willy had managed to put his t-shirt on over the top of his suit. On the back was written ‘REMEMBER the past, CHANGE the future’.
The 2013 commemoration of the United Nations International Holocaust Memorial Day was held at the St Kilda Town Hall on 27 January under the auspices of the Jewish Holocaust Centre. The audience included representatives of non-government organisations, Jewish community organisations, Federal, State and local government and members of the diplomatic corps.

‘Why were there so few?’ Elie Wiesel has asked, when speaking of rescuers during the Shoah. I would ask a different question: ‘How is it that there were so many?’ In the face of losing your life and risking the lives of the people you love, would you have the courage to save a stranger? Would I? In the depths of the night, when truth is not easily avoided, I cannot truly answer that question.

We all like to think that we would do the right thing, the ethical thing, the noble thing. ‘I could not possibly remain silent in the face of such barbarity, such inhumanity; I would act,’ we self-righteously say to ourselves. But would I? Would you? The reality is that we do not know. We just do not know.

There is little doubt that statistically, Elie Wiesel is correct. The number of rescuers is minute. Fewer than 25,000 have been recognised by Yad Vashem. And although that is not an exhaustive number, although there were many who were un-named and unknown, even if we were to double that number, there would still perhaps be fewer than 50,000 who were prepared to help. As a percentage of the millions who stood by and did nothing, this is indeed miniscule.

So, we must draw the conclusion that what happened during the Shoah to the Jews, to the Roma, to protesting intellectuals, to homosexuals and to the infirm, was not something that touched the conscience of the population of the countries where the atrocities took place. People went on with their daily lives, indifferent to what was happening to ‘the other’. Many survivors and historians have since asserted that often there was not just indifference – that indeed there was animosity and there was hatred.

When my uncle Shaul escaped from Treblinka and came back to his home town to look for his younger brother, a former neighbour saw him and immediately turned him in to the Gestapo. That was clearly not indifference. That was not an action of a mere bystander. That was a deliberate act of murder. So, many years later, I am still at a loss to understand what motivated that man.

Was it hatred? Was it malice? Was it a deep-seated antisemitism?

And yet, and yet – we cannot forget there were nearly 25,000 who risked all to save someone. Someone whom they may have known, or a total stranger. Someone who came knocking on their door and they felt unable to turn away, or someone whose horrific plight they witnessed, and from which they were unable to turn away. Some rescuers helped right from the beginning; for others, the tipping point, the line in the sand, was the realisation that the ultimate plan was annihilation. Those 25,000 cared, and cared enough to act in the face of enormous danger.

Inevitably, we try to understand what distinguished them from those who did nothing. What allowed some to sleep peacefully at night, ignoring the tragedy and chaos around them, whilst others could not? Was it the country in which they lived? Was it their religious or moral conviction? Their background or education? What motivated the rescuers? Was it political ideology or an instinctive humanity? And if it was the latter, why did some people act, whilst others did not?

When you study the known rescuers, there seems no commonality of background or ideology. They come from many countries; across a spectrum of religious belief, and sometimes with none; from across socio-economic and educational barriers.

Many academics have been driven to examine the essence of the rescuers’ courage. Countless interviews and studies have been done to try to find characteristics common to rescuers, and it would seem that there are some.

Samuel Oliner and Pearl Oliner write of ‘the altruistic
personality’, which they define as ‘a relatively enduring predisposition to act selflessly on behalf of others, which develops early in life.’ The altruistic personality, according to the Oliners, includes empathy and a sense of connection to others.

In her book *When Light Pierced the Darkness*, Nehama Tec also speaks of altruism and, additionally, highlights individuality, independence, and ‘separateness’ as being some common qualities. Despite external pressure, it was these qualities, she states, that enabled rescuers to act differently, according to their own beliefs and their long-standing commitment to aiding the helpless. Tec stresses that most rescuers perceived the act of rescue as a necessary response to circumstances, and not an act of heroism.

It is interesting, in that context, to note the response in interviews with people who have done heroic acts. It is amazing how frequently recurs the phrase, ‘I only did what anyone in my circumstances would have done. It was the natural thing to do’. In other words, when it comes to the altruistic personality, what to others is the impossible, to them appears to be the norm. One could almost say that they cannot comprehend acting otherwise than taking morally appropriate decisions.

‘Take your child and disappear.’ Five words spoken to my mother by an anonymous German soldier as I stood in line, together with my grandmother, ready for deportation to Belzec. Those five words may have been that soldier’s only act of humanity and courage, or they may have been part of a pattern. We will never know. But empathy and compassion were clearly at the forefront of his action. For whatever reason, in that split second he was prepared to make a decision of which the effect still continues, so many years later, and which can surely be characterised as the courage to care.

When my mother conscientiously pointed out to Marysia Mandzhuk that if she agreed to hide us, she was risking not only her life, but also that of her sons and of her husband, Marysia’s response was: ‘I am not afraid of them.’ Was this courage, was it recklessness or was it an act of grace? I do not know, but whatever it was, it gave her the strength to keep us safe for a long fifteen months.

In his study of the heroism of rescuers, Ervin Staub lists some characteristics which predispose people to act courageously. Again, he speaks of ‘empathy… a feeling of responsibility for others’ welfare; a belief in justice or in the sanctity of human life;… caring that expands beyond one’s immediate circle.’ He goes on to say that contributing factors which can motivate a person with such characteristics to act are the ability to make fast decisions; feelings of belief in one’s competence; and a pro-active personality.

Interestingly, Staub states that by socialising children in certain ways, we can encourage them to act heroically. Some of the methods which he proposes are including children in discussions and decision-making about values and rules, at home and in schools; encouraging children to express their values in action, by being active bystanders when appropriate; and fostering judgment and decision-making capacity, and a feeling of confidence about one’s ability to influence events.

Staub states that his studies indicate that when people have an altruistic predisposition, courageous characteristics can be developed by encouraging feelings of warmth, affection and nurturing, as well as by guiding children using positive values and standards, and by providing positive contact with people belonging to other groups.

These conclusions are incredibly encouraging. If, by developing and nurturing qualities of empathy, inclusiveness and an understanding of the perspective of others, we can help to create morally robust people, then we can indeed hope for a vision of a better world.

The Talmud tells us, ‘Who can protest and does not, is an accomplice in the act.’ It is the classic indictment of the bystander, and whether knowingly or not, it is the philosophy of not being an accomplice to which rescuers seem to have subscribed.

Whilst the vast bulk of the population was able to see itself as helpless and unable to protest, the critical minority whom we honour on United Nations Holocaust Memorial Day was not. For them, to do nothing was indeed to be an accomplice, and that was a position which they clearly found untenable.

If the altruist within us can indeed be nurtured and strengthened, then it may well be that mankind will reach a point where the many will be empowered to protest, and not just the few, and where the accomplices will be the exception and the rescuers will be the accepted norm.

There are few things as humbling as walking through the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. This avenue of trees, which has been planted in honour of non-Jews who risked their lives and those of their families to save Jews during the Shoah, is striking, not just in the beauty and sense of tranquility of the trees, but also in that it exemplifies ‘the power of one’. Each one represents an individual, but in total, they are a critical mass.

Elie Wiesel of course is right. The number of those who had the courage to care is abysmally small. But if we are to retain even a vestige of hope, if we are to believe in the power of good over evil, if we are to keep our faith in the altruism of mankind, then we cannot afford to bemoan the vast number who did nothing. We must instead celebrate those who, at the risk of their own lives, did show the courage to care. Although their number is small, their very existence is of immense value, for they symbolise that spark of humanity in which we all need to believe.

There is no better way of summing up the courage to care than in the words of Primo Levi, speaking about his rescuer, Lorenzo Perrone:

*I believe that it was really due to Lorenzo that I am alive today; and not so much for his material aid, as for his having constantly reminded me by his presence... that there still existed a just world outside our own, something and someone still pure and whole... for which it was worth surviving.*

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Nina Bassat is President of the Jewish Community Council of Victoria. This is an edited version of her keynote address to the 2013 Jewish Holocaust Centre International Holocaust Memorial day commemoration.
Bunhom (Hom) Chhorn is a child survivor of the Cambodian genocide who told his story publicly for the first time at this year’s United Nations Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January. Before speaking, Hom joined Gennady Vilkhov, president of the Former Inmates of Nazi Concentration Camps and Ghetto Survivors, Colin Krycer of Aleph Melbourne, Zoe Bell of Access Inc, Lee Fuhler, president of the Romani Association of Australia, and Moshe Fiszman, a Polish-born Holocaust survivor, to light candles in memory of those groups who were victims of the Holocaust, and of contemporary genocides – Bosnia, Cambodia, Chechnya, the tribes of Darfur, Rwanda, Sudan and others – and in recognition of the inordinate bravery of those who performed acts of courage to save others.

I was born in Cambodia in the early seventies. According to my passport, I was born in May 1973, but I am not really sure of the exact year, as this was a date my mother made up in the refugee camp before we migrated to Australia. My mother could not remember when I was born. She had experienced too much trauma.

In 1975, the Khmer Rouge rose to power in Cambodia. They forced people in Phnom Penh and other cities to evacuate to the countryside to undertake agricultural work. This was just the beginning of the Cambodian genocide. Over the next four years it is estimated that up to two million people were brutally killed and many thousands of people tortured by the Khmer Rouge. They killed intellectuals, city-dwellers, members of minority groups, and many of their own party members and soldiers who were suspected of being traitors. Anyone who did not follow their ideology was executed.

When the Khmer Rouge came to power my family was stripped of their possessions and dignity, and housed in a large textile factory with around 5,000 other people. During the day my mother, father and elder siblings were sent to work doing hard labour. My siblings and I were told to say that Dad was a farmer. If the Khmer Rouge had found out that he was a civil engineer, he would have been killed. I was sent to a children’s group and went to school where I was taught Khmer Rouge propaganda and revolutionary songs.

Many terrible things happened while we were at the textile factory. People were starved, overworked and beaten to death. After a few years the Khmer Rouge realised that they had killed too many people. There were not enough people left to work the land or defend the country, so the Khmer Rouge embarked on a forced marriage campaign. Two of my older sisters were forced to marry men they did not know.

One of my elder brothers was taken away and executed. Thankfully, I was too young to remember much of this. A few years later, when I was about five or six years old, I was sent to a labour camp in the north-west of Cambodia. Many people were herded onto a train to travel from the textile factory in Battambang to a place called Moung Ruessei. There was not enough room on the trains for me and my family so we boarded trucks to Moung Ruessei and then walked for three days before arriving at Camp 32. Camp 32 was where the real horror began.
I was separated from my family and placed into a children’s group to work in the rice fields. I made some friends in the children’s group. We were all aged between five and nine years old. We worked very long hours in the hot sun. Sometimes, when there was a full moon, we would be made to work all through the night.

If we were lucky we would be fed rice soup after work. This was literally a watery mixture with a couple of grains of rice floating around in it. It was not enough to sustain human life, so we were always foraging for bugs, insects, frogs and plants – whatever we could find to eat.

At Camp 32 many people were clubbed to death with hoes in mass executions, many died from disease and malnutrition, and many babies were brutally killed with bayonets. The Khmer Rouge did not like to waste bullets. During that time I witnessed atrocities that no adult should have to see, let alone a child.

I became weak and sick. Another one of my brothers was killed.

Then the Khmer Rouge sent me and about 150 other children up into the mountains. Luckily for me, my friends were in this group. We walked for weeks and weeks with the Khmer Rouge guards keeping a close eye on us. Many children died along the way. Some just did not wake up in the morning and others were taken by tigers.

I remember my friend whom we called Pigsy because he would eat everything and anything. He went to sleep one night next me. When I woke up Pigsy was not awake. The Khmer Rouge guard had ordered us to move. I kicked Pigsy to wake him because I did not want him to be punished by the guards for waking up late. Two of my other friends tried to wake him up as well, but then we realised that he was not asleep. He was dead.

One morning a group of us decided to escape. This move saved my life, as none of the other 150 children returned from the mountains.

We trekked for weeks through dense jungle before finally arriving back near Camp 32. The Vietnamese were invading and killing the Khmer Rouge. I was reunited with my mother and three of my siblings. I found out that my father had passed away.

My family then walked to Thailand where we spent about four years in a refugee camp before coming to Australia.

The survivors I have spoken with believe that up to 30,000 people perished at Camp 32. However, to this day there is no official record of the existence of Camp 32.

How can there be no official record of such a place?

My mother who fought so hard to keep her children alive, and witnessed the death of two of her sons and her husband, is now 82 years old. She is unwell and we do not know how much longer she will be with us. I now care for her at home. Her strength inspires me. She once said to me that no one cares about what happened to us at Camp 32. This statement has haunted me ever since. I wanted to show her that people do care, and that what happened to us will not go unrecorded in the history of humanity.

In 2011, I set out to prove that my mother was wrong. I boarded a flight to Cambodia to find Camp 32, and other survivors.

I was not alone. Three other people armed with video cameras and microphones were traveling with me. They had heard the story of my family and wanted to document my journey. Despite not being able to obtain any film funding, they still came with me, at their own expense. This was the first bit of proof to my mother that people do care about what happened to us at Camp 32.

We spent five weeks meeting with government officials, historians, mental health experts, ex-Khmer Rouge soldiers and survivors. Our journey lead us deep into rural Cambodia where we ultimately found the former site of Camp 32. There I was able to reconnect with some of the people I had known as a child, and I was finally able to reconcile with my past.

We hope to finish the film soon, and are currently searching for some funding so we can complete it. The film will prove the existence of Camp 32. I hope that it will also lead to the relevant authorities officially recording Camp 32 in the annals of history, as it is part of the history of Pol Pot’s Khmer Rouge. It will also assist in the healing process for my family and me.

I thank you all for taking the time to listen to me. This is the first time I have stood in front of an audience of this size and told my story. It is important that we, the survivors of genocide, continue to tell our stories. We owe it to those who did not survive, we owe it to those who survived but continue to struggle day-to-day, and we owe it to humanity to speak out.

This is an edited version of Hom Chhorn’s address to the 2013 Jewish Holocaust Centre International Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration.

If you would like to find out more about the documentary In Search of Camp 32: a journey back to the year zero … please visit the website www.com32.com.
Maria Lewit was born in Lodz, Poland in 1924. Her father was beaten to death by the Nazis at the beginning of the Second World War. Maria, her mother Lidia and her sister Eugenia (Genia) survived the war on false papers, and because of their ‘Aryan’ looks, although Lidia refused to change her surname, adamant that she would keep her husband’s surname for as long as she lived.

Maria, who has written about her experiences in prose and poetry, has been a volunteer guide at the Jewish Holocaust Centre since 1996. In 2011 Maria was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for ‘service to the Jewish Holocaust Museum and Research Centre, and to literature as a writer and educator’.

My father is dead. We are going to his funeral. All of us dressed in black. My mother’s face is hidden by a veil, her hands in black gloves lay lifeless on her lap. The only sound the rhythmic clip-clop of horses’ hooves and my sister’s restrained sobs.

The carriage is going slowly. The coachman hits the horses, urging them to trot. Why is he hitting them? My father is dead. They hit him too till he lost consciousness and died. My father is dead and the sky is blue, the sun is shining, and I wish I had a black veil to deaden a day too bright and too beautiful for a funeral.

I look around: people walk, trams pass by. The sound of the city hits me, grows in volume, reaches a piercing, intolerable crescendo. My city is real and alive, my conquered home town, coming back to reality, learning how to live under German rule. People mingle together, brushing up against the uniformed conquerors. Is my father’s killer among them?

It all happened so quickly. Our holiday had been cut short by the war. My father left home to defend Warsaw and we were left alone. He returned home less than two weeks ago. He came at night, dirty, thin and strangely silent. Sick with exhaustion, full of unexplained worries, his eyes still blue but dull and sad.

He bathed and he ate, he asked questions and listened to us. The three of us stayed up very late, keeping our voices as low as our excitement allowed. My father was back home, home with us, home to stay. Could there be happiness in war, joy in war? He was home and we almost forgot that outside, German flags hung from every house, German soldiers marched through our streets, and every day brought some new decrees.

The next day I went to school, ignoring the flags, the army and the queues. As long as we were together it didn’t matter so much any more. When I arrived home my father was in bed, my mother frantic, trying to get a doctor. In the evening he was feeling better.

The next day, during the maths lesson, I was called to see our headmistress. My mother was waiting for me. I sat next to her.

‘Your father is gravely ill.’

It couldn’t be, I thought. He was better last night. What was she saying? My father beaten up. No, no. An SS man came to take my father away, accused him of being a lazy, dirty Jew? No, no, I must have been dreaming. What was my mother doing at school? She should have been at home and I should have been in my class because schooling was important. Why is she turning her face towards the window? Yes, she was crying.

‘I told him your father was sick. “I know Jewish sickness; all Jews are sick when asked to work,” he said. And he kept kicking your father, methodically, coldly. He asked me if I was Jewish. “I am his wife,” I said. “You shouldn’t be living with a Jew,” he said. I tried to stop him but he laughed and pushed me away and left only when your father collapsed.’ She waved her hand as if she wanted to chase something away.

My father died the following morning.

My father is dead and I didn’t cry. My father is dead and the world is alive. Our carriage turned towards the Jewish cemetery. Once upon a time, the entrance had led through an avenue lined on both sides with old trees, their branches meeting, forming a green canopy. Now the branches were chopped down, the trunks stripped and naked. And young people were gathered, calling, ‘Down with Jews!’ The stones hit our carriage. My mother lifted her black-gloved hand to her face.

My father was dead, the sky was blue. Merciless bright sun.

The sky should be black with the threat of a downpour to make the stone-throwers stand still, to wash away their sardonic grins and leave their faces wet, as a sign of sorrow for a man who had died.

This is an edited excerpt from Maria Lewit’s autobiographical novel, Come Spring, Scribe Publications, first published in 1980 (still in print).
Maria (Marysia) Censor was born in Warsaw in 1925. She had a happy childhood, indulged by her adoring family. Sadly, when she was eight her mother developed meningitis, followed by crippling osteoarthritis. Maria was fourteen years old when the Second World War broke out. Life became increasingly more difficult and she was faced with the disappearance of her father and the loss of her siblings. At first Maria devoted herself to looking after her sick mother, but they were later forced to separate. In 1940, as the Warsaw Ghetto walls were being built, Maria and her mother took on false identities as Catholics and were able to stay outside the ghetto. Maria studied at kindergarten teachers college, where she met Tatiana (Tania), a friend who would later save her life. In 1942 she began working at a children’s home in Radość, outside Warsaw. In 1943 she was arrested, but bribed her way to freedom, finding safety with Tania and working as a weapons courier.

After the war, Maria left Poland to start a new life in Australia. She has worked as a volunteer in the archives department of the Jewish Holocaust Centre for 22 years and has made a major contribution to research about Dr Janusz Korczak.

A fateful day in autumn 1943

Maria Censor

Warszawa. I was in the middle of breakfast. I remember the bright yellow of the hot mamalyga, the cornmeal cereal I was eating. I followed the two men without a word. My work mates sat very quietly, fearful of the sense of danger that hung in the air. On the way out, I managed to throw on my warm coat, and grab my ‘papers’. We walked through the forest, three kilometers to the railway station. It was a cold, beautiful morning. As we walked, the thugs told me that they knew I was Jewish. They were taking me to Avenue Szucha Gestapo Headquarters in Warszawa.

All the way, I kept denying their ‘preposterous’ accusation. I did not cry. Nearing our destination, I told them I had a gold watch on a chain. Would they let me go if I gave it to them?

They snatched the watch from around my neck and tore the little gold ring with its ruby teardrop off my frostbitten finger, leaving a gaping bleeding hole. Then, they just let me go.

I ran and ran. Hungry, homeless, penniless, one hour to curfew – where to go, what to do? Cut my hair, change my appearance!

I found myself on Karcelak Square, a place where I had never been before, a market square, where only ‘other people’ went and you could have your pocket picked. Windswept, dirty, unfriendly. In the dusk I found a little hairdresser’s shop with one chair: “Please cut my hair and accept it as payment,” I said. This was a very dangerous move to make. The barber could have been suspicious. A Jew on the run, call the informers! They would strip this kid clean and throw her to the Germans. The barber cut my hair gently, a thick plait about seventy-five centimeters long, then straightened the line at the back of my neck. I felt cold as I emerged, a shorthaired Marysia and I felt different. Did I say Marysia? What a lapse, deadly dangerous. There was no Marysia in 1943. My name was Urszula, Ula, never to be forgotten, even in my sleep.

The curfew was approaching. Where to go, what to do? I, Ula with the short hair, with just what I was standing in: a skirt, a jumper, a coat, still a good coat from home. Shoes with holes in the soles, stuffed with paper, socks darned so many times and with so many colours that the original heels and toes were non-existent. The darns rubbed and blistered my frostbitten feet and made every step difficult, but they were steps I had to take to survive.

That cold evening, alone, lost, hungry, I started walking in the direction of Tatiana’s address. By some miracle I had memorized it when some time ago, we had bumped into each other after having lost touch for two years. As in a dream I walked and found the place. Warmth enveloped me, a safe house, at last. No questions were asked.

This story was first published in Maria Censor’s autobiography, Letters to my mother, Makor Jewish Community Library, 2000.
In June 2013, the Jewish Holocaust Centre Foundation celebrates its tenth anniversary. Centre News editor, Ruth Mushin, speaks with Foundation chairperson, Helen Mahemoff, about the Foundation and its work in supporting the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC).

What is the JHC Foundation?
The Foundation is a stand-alone entity with the sole purpose of ensuring that the JHC will have appropriate levels of funding to fulfil its very important charter: to keep alive the memory of the six million Jews who were murdered during the Holocaust and to help combat anti-semitism, racism and prejudice in the community through education.

The survivor generation that created the JHC in 1984 has done an outstanding job in providing leadership and a volunteer base. Unfortunately, with the passage of time, their number has diminished, and they have been unable to sustain the same level of involvement. That impending reality was the motivation for the establishment of the Foundation.

The Foundation was established in June 2003 with the approval and encouragement of the JHC Board. Its charter is to raise funds to be used in two specific areas of the Centre’s operations: to assist in providing salaries for staff in roles that are critical to the Centre’s operations and to fund the updating of the Centre’s technical facilities.

The decision to establish an endowment was made so that the funds raised would form the corpus, and distributions would be made annually to provide an on-going source of income for the Centre. The plan was that this endowment would provide financial back-up for the JHC for many years into the future.

The Foundation’s only purpose is to raise funds from donors and administer these funds. The Centre’s wonderful staff and volunteers run a myriad of programs, visits and events, and the Foundation obviously supports and encourages this work. Through my own role on the Centre Board and Executive I am happy to be involved in these activities, and the Foundation’s donors are invited and are welcome to be part of any relevant JHC activities.

Can you explain what you mean by an ‘endowment fund’?
The Foundation is a perpetual fund where the proceeds of all the gifts are held by the fund and invested on a long-term basis, while the distributions are made primarily from the interest and investment income of the fund. We retain some of the income, plus additional funds raised, to allow the fund to grow so that even with inflation the real value of the fund and distributions will be maintained.

Our continuing fundraising efforts both protect the Foundation’s current mandate and provide for new initiatives for the Centre.

What is your connection with the Holocaust?
I am a second-generation Holocaust survivor. Both my parents were Polish – my mother, Stefa (nee Bialylew) was born in Warsaw and my father, Rubin Rutman (z’l) in Radom. Although my parents never burdened my sister or me with their memories, I was somehow always aware of their background and loss. My father was one of the most positive, warm and enthusiastic people possible, and it was hard to imagine that he had lost his whole immediate family and almost all of his huge extended family in the Holocaust. After his passing, I felt that I needed to honour his memory and that of his lost family by committing myself to Holocaust remembrance.

How did you become involved in the JHC?
My father passed away in May 2001, and I came to volunteer at the Centre later that year. At that time, Shmuel Rosenkranz was the JHC president, and he and the Board realised the time was coming when the Centre would need to increase the number of paid staff, and that costs relating to technology were about to rise dramatically. After discussion with Shmuel, I proposed and began plans to establish a Foundation that would ensure the financial security of the Centre. Shortly after the Foundation was established, I was invited to join the Board and, later, the Executive of the JHC in my capacity as Foundation chair. Over the past few years, in addition to my involvement in the Foundation, I have participated in several JHC sub-committees, co-convened some major events, and have been involved in fundraising for the Centre directly.

How and when was the Foundation established?
The Foundation was established in June 2003, by a steering committee that included myself (as Chair), Joey Borenztajn, Judy Rogers, Michael Krape, Shmuel Rosenkranz, Allen Brostek (then JHC Treasurer) and Jonathan Morris (then CEO of the JHC). Joey, Judy and Michael’s participation and assistance was invaluable, and the Foundation could not have been as successful as it has been without them. Joey’s ongoing commitment and advice has been particularly important to me and the Foundation.
The Foundation appointed a Board of Trustees, and together we look after the Foundation’s investment strategy and the distribution of funds to the JHC. The Trustees are Nina Bassat AM, Joey Borensztajn, Jeffrey Mahemoff AO, Alan Brostek and David Cohen (who replaced Silvana Layton in 2012).

When we established the Foundation, we sought the endorsement of a number of patrons. We were so thrilled that Professor Yehuda Bauer, Eva Besen AO, Marc Besen AO, Sir William Deane AC CBE, Sir Gustav Nossal AC CBE, Diane Shteinman AM, and Steven Spielberg all agreed. Their patronage underlines the importance of our work.

Reaching out to the community is the priority of the Foundation and during its first 18 months, 17 drawing room meetings were held at the JHC, attracting more than 1,400 attendees – ranging from the survivor generation to the third generation age group. I was very lucky that I was able to attract many enthusiastic partners to ‘host’ these evenings and so, was able to reach many different social and age groups within our community. This took a lot of effort and perseverance, and I could not have done it without all these fantastic helpers!

These evenings consisted of a tour of the museum with some of our survivor volunteers, and addresses by Associate Professor Mark Baker (who very generously made himself available for all 17 evenings), and a survivor guide (either Kitia Altmann or Willy Lermer). Each meeting presented a unique insight into the work of the Centre and the concept of the Foundation.

These evenings were a great success – the majority of people who attended had not been to the Centre before and were not aware of its activities and achievements.

At the outset, the Foundation launched ‘Partners in Remembrance’. This is a tiered donor program of Gold ($18,000), Silver ($10,000) and Bronze ($5,000). The entry level for Foundation membership is $1,800. All these commitments are payable over three to five years and are tax deductible. The Partners in Remembrance program continues and new members are joining regularly. In addition there is a Major Donors Program, as well as project-funding sponsorships that offer naming rights opportunities or dedications on permanent displays at the Centre.

**What is your role as Foundation chairperson?**

After our first ten years, I am happy to still be running the Foundation and am very proud of the results achieved. We have passed our initial target of $7M and feel satisfied that we have, as hoped, ensured the financial stability and security of the Centre into the future.

I handle all the ongoing fundraising and administration, approach new donors for support and update donors annually with the achievements of the JHC. We are still actively pursuing new subscribers for the Partners in Remembrance and Major Donors programs and I am always available to meet with anyone interested in hearing more about us! The Foundation is also involved

**Nina Bassat AM**

I was invited to become a Trustee at the inception of the Foundation in 2003.

The Jewish Holocaust Centre must be put in context of the life of the Melbourne Jewish community. We are largely a Shoah survivor community and the Centre is integral to it. It is not an overstatement to say that for many years, the Centre has been part of our soul.

In addition to its meaning to Shoah survivors and to the second and third generations, the Centre reaches so many outside our community, predominantly a vast number of students, teaching the lessons not only of the Shoah, but of the power of survival and the power of tolerance and understanding.

Helen Mahemoff has been amazing in her dedication to making the Foundation a success, and we have an extremely collegiate group of Trustees, all of whom are committed to the Centre and who see the Foundation as facilitating the ongoing wonderful work which is done by the Centre and by everyone associated with it.

JHC Foundation Steering Committee 2003, (l-r) Joey Borensztajn, Helen Mahemoff, Michael Krape and Judy Rogers
in raising awareness of bequests to the JHC and is deeply appreciative of the legacies that have been entrusted to it.

**What has the Foundation achieved in ten years?**

To me, the best achievement is having reached our initial target of $7M. It is so gratifying to know that our aspirations have been achieved, that we have had the support, interest and encouragement of so many donors, and that we have played a part in promoting the fantastic work done by the JHC. The Foundation has distributed over $1.5M to the Centre, and in 2010 funded almost half the cost of installing our new museum display.

We have been very fortunate that over 40 ‘lifecycle’ occasions have been recognised by donations to the Foundation in lieu of gifts – ranging from ‘special’ birthdays and bar/batmitzvahs to pre-wedding and wedding celebrations.

In 2010, we installed an Electronic Donor Recognition Kiosk in the foyer of the JHC. This impressive and user-friendly initiative not only records the generosity of Foundation donors, but offers Foundation members the opportunity to include their family backgrounds, histories, photos and comments on their own donor page. So, while recognising the generosity of donors, the kiosk is also a valuable community and historical resource. We are continually updating the information on the Recognition Kiosk, so I would like to hear from any donors who have not yet included their family history.

Our work is ongoing – the huge increase of student and other visitors since the upgrade of the museum, the mandatory Holocaust unit now included in the secondary curriculum, the ever-changing technological services on offer, all create the need for additional staffing. The call on

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**Willy Lermer**

My involvement in the JHC as a volunteer guide for the past 20 years has been for one reason – to pass on my experiences to students.

My parents and sister were murdered in Belzec in 1942 and they have no graves. By donating to the Foundation, I was able to inscribe their names in the JHC museum, thus creating a permanent memorial for my family and everyone else to see.

I believe that Helen Mahemoff’s idea of establishing a foundation was outstanding, and that by only donating the income and retaining the capital, the JHC Foundation has ensured that the Centre has funding for the long term.

Helen is the heart of the Foundation, and her ongoing work keeps the Foundation alive. I believe that the Foundation has been critical for the future of the JHC, and I hope that the next generations will be as generous in supporting it as ours has been.

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**Joey Borensztajn**

Both of my parents, Roman Borensztajn (OBM) and Mania Borensztajn (nee Migdalek) (OBM) were born in Radom, Poland although they did not know each other before the Second World War. They had both been married and lost their partners during the war. Miraculously they both survived the Holocaust after being interned in various camps. They met in a displaced persons camp after the war, married in Germany in 1946 and emigrated to Australia in 1948.

I am a partner of Arnold Bloch Leibler and have for years represented a diverse group of charitable and not for profit organisations, advising on all aspects of their establishment, access to available tax concessions and general ongoing operations.

Helen Mahemoff originally approached me in this capacity to attend a meeting of the steering committee to advise on the most appropriate type of entity for the proposed foundation, to ensure it could collect funds and offer donors deductible gift recipient (DGR) status, retain endowment funds in a tax effective manner and generally ensure that it was possible to fulfil the Foundation’s aims. My role soon extended to participating on the steering committee, then taking part in fundraising activities, and ultimately becoming a trustee.

I attended every drawing room meeting held in 2003/04, outlining the financial aims of the Foundation and pitching to donors. I was also involved in some individual face-to-face canvassing for major donors.

It is an honour and privilege to be involved in the Foundation to ensure the continuity of the JHC for our generation and generations to come. The JHC has been, and continues to be, an outstanding achievement due to the vision and dedication of the committed and passionate volunteers, and their efforts to keep alive the memory of the Jews who perished and to foster tolerance and understanding in the Australian community.
In November 2012 I had the privilege of attending the Association of Holocaust Organisations’ conference in Vienna and Berlin. I was accompanied in Vienna by Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) president, Pauline Rockman and JHC Board member and Holocaust educator, Sue Hampel.

In Vienna we were hosted by the Federal Ministry for Interior and the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, whose mission was to highlight new initiatives in Holocaust memorialisation and education. Our hosts were keen to demonstrate the Austrian Government’s change in attitude, which began in the late 1980s, towards Austrian victims and survivors of the Holocaust. This followed many decades during which the Austrian Government refused to take responsibility for Austria’s role in the Holocaust, on the grounds that Austria itself was the first victim of National Socialism. One end product of this change that has had a direct impact on the JHC has been the arrival of young Austrian interns who work at the Centre as an alternative to compulsory national military service. However, the impact is felt in other ways as well. Austrian Holocaust survivors, including those who chose to flee before the war, are now encouraged to seek restitution. Many were forced to sell their businesses, homes and property for next to nothing, and suffered for years to come as a result of the Nazi take-over. Austrian survivors are also welcomed back to visit Vienna as part of a ‘Welcome’ program.

The conference focussed on new educational initiatives that have taken on the difficult challenge of educating about mass murder in a perpetrator country. We visited the Mauthausen concentration camp, where the educational director, Yariv Lapid, explained the new pedagogical concept, which revolves around the question ‘What does it have to do with me?’ The education program aims to promote the asking of questions, rather than the supplying of answers. Its rationale is that students who leave asking questions such as ‘how could this have happened?’ are more likely to be thinking, and will continue to ask further questions.

Our next stop was Hartheim Castle, a chilling but little-known Holocaust site where part of the Nazi euthanasia program T4 was carried out. Around 30,000 people were murdered there, including 12,000 prisoners from Dachau and Mauthausen. Most harrowing was the fact that the castle is situated in a small town, and hence not out of sight.

I visited the Jewish Museum Vienna, a beautiful space containing temporary exhibitions, an interesting open storage display, and a temporary display that invites visitors to contribute their thoughts to the planning of the new permanent display. This display poses a series of questions, including: ‘Why do Jewish museums exist?’ ‘Who visits them and why?’ and ‘What is and was collected?’

In Berlin, we were hosted by Dr Thomas Lutz, Director of the Topography of Terror Museum. Our tour of that comprehensive and impressive museum display was a highlight. Our guide spent 15 minutes discussing one photo, asking us a series of thought-provoking questions, such as ‘Who took the photo? ’ ‘Why?’ and ‘What are the reactions of onlookers’. It was a fascinating exercise.

We spent a whole day at Sachsenhausen, a former concentration camp just outside Berlin, where approximately 200,000 people were imprisoned under Nazi rule. The site has been impressively redeveloped as a decentralised museum, where different buildings or huts contain displays related to the original purpose of each building. One building has a display about the period from 1945 to 1950 when it was a Soviet Special Camp; the former infirmary houses a fascinating exhibit called ‘Medical Care and Crime’; and ‘The Everyday Life of Prisoners’ is displayed in one of the former prisoner barracks.

Another interesting site was the House of the Wannsee Conference. Its densely filled museum display comprises walls of information and photos. Our guide was Dr Wolf Kaiser, the museum’s Deputy Director and Head of the Educational Department, and there was much to learn there. We were also treated to a stimulating lecture by Dr Elke Gryglewski about her research into the challenge of educating about the Holocaust to multi-cultural visitors. In Berlin, this mostly means Turkish students, but there are Palestinians as well. Dr Gryglewski spoke about educating students using the ‘pedagogy of acceptance’. This involves the educator beginning by enquiring about the students’ perspectives and demonstrating empathy to their plight. For example, students of Muslim background report that since the attack on the World Trade Centre in 2001 they have been labelled as terrorists. If these students understand from the outset that the educator is empathetic towards their own complex situation, it has been found that they will be more likely to engage with the subject matter.

The conference covered considerable ground in six days, taking in remarkable museums and historical sites, in conjunction with stimulating lectures and discussions. Like the others who attended, I returned to my desk reinvigorated about the challenges of educating the public about the Holocaust.
Kristallnacht: unheeded warnings

Saba Feniger

The Jewish Holocaust Centre presents the Betty and Shmuel Rosenkranz Oration annually to honour Shmuel Rosenkranz and his late wife, Betty. Shmuel, who is past president of the Jewish Holocaust Centre, witnessed the Kristallnacht pogrom in Vienna.

Before considering life and events during the Third Reich, let us cast our minds back to the German Jews living in the Weimar Republic. The majority led a comfortable life; many were successful business people, shop owners, doctors, lawyers, academics and artists. They were all proudly German and some even considered themselves more German than Jewish.

The Jews invested their talents and resources in the defence of the Weimar Republic. Almost 100,000 served in the Great War and a high number received medals for distinguished service. Twelve thousand Jews died in battle for their Fatherland.

Of the half a million Jews living in Germany before 1933, about 50,000 were Ostjuden who had come from Poland in search of a better life.

On 30 January 1933, the fateful day on which President Paul von Hindenburg appointed Hitler Chancellor of Germany, a tearful Hitler came out of the palace and declared: ‘We’ve done it.’ There was no sense of panic at the news of his accession, as the continuing presence of the respected President von Hindenburg as head of state was a source of confidence.

Hitler had been severely underestimated and sensible people were convinced that he could not last long. Nobody could have envisaged the drastic changes, first towards German Jews, and Europe’s darkest chapter in history that would follow.

In a letter to President von Hindenburg, a Jewish woman wrote: ‘... is incitement against Jews a sign of courage or cowardice when Jews comprise only one percent of German people?’ The presidential office acknowledged receipt and expressed the President’s decided opposition to the excesses perpetrated against the Jews.

Martin Buber hoped that no shift in the balance of power in favour of the National Socialists would be permitted. However, within days and weeks of Hitler’s appointment thousands of Jews lost their livelihood. The suicide rate soared.

After the March elections anti-Jewish violence spread. Already in April, a boycott had taken place. The SA, Storm Troopers, broke into Jewish homes, beat up the inhabitants and sent some to concentration camps. The Ostjuden were their first target.

There was no protection for Jewish businesses against Nazi hooligans. To counteract criticism from abroad, Hitler branded the Jews ‘the enemies of Germany, instigators of a worldwide campaign of lies to discredit the Reich.’ In his diary, Goebbels, Hitler’s Minister for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, stated:

‘We shall only be able to combat the falsehoods abroad if we get at those who originated them or at those Jews living in Germany who have thus far remained unmolested. We must, therefore, proceed to a large-scale boycott of all Jewish businesses in Germany.

So, in 1933, large signs appeared telling the public not to buy from Jews. Violence spread throughout Germany. The police did not interfere.

In early April, the national Socialist Students’ Association decided, as its first measure, on ‘the public burning of destructive Jewish writing’. This was the university students’ reaction to world Jewry’s ‘shameless incitement’ against Germany. On 10 May more than 20,000 Jewish books were burned in Berlin and two to three thousand in every other major German city.

In March 1935, another wave of antisemitic incidents began in Munich, the first city in which stores were sprayed nightly with acid and smeared with inscriptions such as ‘Jew, Stinking Jew’, ‘Out with the Jews’ and so on. In May, smashing of window panes began. Not only were stores attacked, but their owners and customers were also assaulted. Only days later, every identifiably Jewish business was attacked. In Berlin, elegant Jewish stores on Kurfürstendamm, still relatively active, were the targets of a second major outbreak.

Hate and violence grew during the summer. The dismissal of Jews from all positions in public life, government, the professions, and all social, educational and cultural institutions followed. Among those dismissed and persecuted was Victor Klemperer, well-known Jewish-born academic who had converted to Protestantism. Jews were prevented from going to cinemas, theatres, swimming pools and resorts. The violence was legalised and the infamous anti-Jewish Nuremberg Laws were adopted unanimously by the Reichstag.

Yet the Jews did not act as a result of these warnings. Maybe our long history of persecutions prevented the German and Austrian Jews from reading the writing on the wall, but neither did the rest of the world heed such warnings. Only a minority, including Otto Klemperer and Thomas Mann, left Germany. Albert Einstein was visiting the United States. He described the events as a ‘psychic illness of the masses’ and he never returned to Germany.
The ‘purity of German blood’ was turned into a legal category, as were the categories of ‘Jew’, ‘Mischling first degree’ and ‘Mischling second degree’. In cases of racial ambiguity, religious affiliation became decisive. The Nazi definition was simple: a Jew is a Jew is a Jew, down to the third generation. Marriages between Jews and ‘nationals of German kindred blood’ were forbidden.

As the furious propaganda concentrated on Jewish conspiracy, life became increasingly more difficult for the Jews. In 1936 the ‘Jewish issue’ took on a new dimension when there was a coordinated effort to compel Jews to leave. The Nazis wanted to get rid of the Jews, but they made sure they dispossessed them first. About 100,000 German Jews immigrated to Western Europe and Palestine, and a few to other countries. Once again, most of the 400,000 Jews who remained in Germany expected to weather the storm.

There were bans on performing the works of Jewish composers and librettists, and Jewish conductors were not allowed to perform. Julius Streicher’s newspaper Der Stürmer constantly spewed antisemitic abuse. Early in 1938, Göring initiated the expropriation of Jewish property. In the newly annexed Austria, the economic harassment and violence forced some Jews to flee.

During the summer of 1938, Dachau, Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen were enlarged and prisoners in Dachau were made to sew Stars of David on uniforms in preparation for an influx of Jewish prisoners.

The Jews of Polish nationality living in Germany became an overriding issue. In October 1938, the Polish government, fearful that the Germans would expel these Jews to Poland, proclaimed a denaturalisation decree. This was designed to annul the citizenship of Poles living abroad for more than five years, unless they had special authorisation before the end of the month. Himmler and the Gestapo immediately ordered that all Polish Jews in Germany were to be deported over the border to Poland by 29 October.

On 27 and 28 October, close to 12,000 Ostjuden were rounded up and transported across the river which marked the border between Germany and Poland. The Polish border guards refused them re-entry to Poland, and they were kept in appalling conditions, without food or shelter, in pouring rain, ending up in a camp near Zbaszyn.

The Grynszpan family, who had settled in Hanover in 1914, were among the first to be rounded up on 27 October. Not having the special authorisation required, they became stateless overnight. Their son Herschel (Hermann), who was seventeen years old, was not with them, as he had been living illegally in Paris with relatives since 1936.

On 3 November 1938, Herschel received a letter from his sister, Berta, who wrote:

> We were permitted to return to our home to get at least a few essential things. So I left with a schupo, [Schutzpolizei, the German gendarmerie] accompanying me and I packed a valise with the most necessary clothes. That is all I could save. We don’t have a cent. To be continued when I next write. Warm greetings and kisses from us all. Berta.

Herschel did not know what was happening to his family near Zbaszyn, but he could well imagine. On 7 November he wrote a note to his uncle in Paris:

> With God’s help I couldn’t do otherwise. My heart bleeds when I think of our tragedy and that of the 12,000 Jews. I have to protest in a way that the whole world hears my protest, and this I intend to do. I beg your forgiveness. Hermann.

Herschel purchased a pistol and went to the German Embassy, where he asked to see an official. He was sent to the office of First Secretary Ernst vom Rath, and shot and fatally wounded the diplomat, who died two days later.

Incitement against the Jews began on 8 November with the first news report that vom Rath has been seriously wounded. When vom Rath died, Goebbels ordered that Jewish blood was to flow. Meetings were called and the assembled mob agitated all over Germany and Austria. They went into action on Wednesday and Thursday 9 and 10 November, setting fire to synagogues, destroying Jewish businesses and homes and manhandling Jews. Goebbels’ orders also included the arrest of as many able-bodied Jews, particularly rich ones, as possible.

That night fires were ignited and plate glass shattered, giving the pogrom its name, Kristallnacht. There was an uncontrollable lust for destruction. Two hundred and sixty-seven synagogues and 7,500 businesses were destroyed throughout Germany, Austria and the Sudetenland. Between 50 and 70 synagogues and Jewish institutions were actually burnt to the ground. Contents of apartments, including sewing machines, gramophones and typewriters, were hurled through windows. Even a piano was thrown out of a second-floor window. Jewish cemeteries were desecrated.

Berlin and Vienna were particularly targeted as they had the largest Jewish communities. Nearly one hundred Jews were killed, while thousands were subjected to violence and sadistic treatment, including being forced to perform humiliating acts. About 30,000 Jewish men were incarcerated in Dachau, Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen.

Herschel Grynszpan was imprisoned by the French authorities and later by the Nazis. Although a show trial was planned, he was never brought to trial, but transferred to Sachsenhausen. His fate is unknown.

Strangely, Hitler did not utter a word publicly about vom Rath’s assassination or the events of Kristallnacht. With hindsight it is too easy to see how so many warnings went unheeded at the time. Only years later it became obvious that this event was the beginning of the unimaginable Jewish tragedy that was to engulf Europe.

Have we learned to heed warnings?

Saba Feniger was Honorary Curator of the Jewish Holocaust Centre museum from 1985 until 2001. She was instrumental in establishing, maintaining and updating the existing permanent collection, as well as curating many temporary exhibitions. She was the keynote speaker at the Betty and Shmuel Rosenkranz Oration held in November 2012. This is an edited version of her address.
What about the women? – the missing and marginalised in Holocaust film

Adam Brown

In line with the initially dismal state of historical scholarship into the experiences and behaviour of women during the Holocaust, women’s stories have frequently been marginalised in one way or another in films. Some Holocaust films highlight the experiences of women; others disguise the nature of these experiences by resorting to sexist stereotypes. Some films hide these experiences altogether. Many filmmakers have employed images of women as eroticised objects within narratives that pivot on men’s experiences. This is part of a broader trend, but a trend that has by no means disappeared.

Liliana Cavani’s controversial Italian film, The Night Porter (1974), has been strongly criticised for its portrayal of the tormented post-war sexual relationship between Max, a former Nazi officer, and Lucia, the female prisoner he raped in the camp. Steven Spielberg’s Schindler’s List (1993), among other films, has also been noted for eroticising women’s bodies in their depictions of victim experiences. On the other hand, the body of the female perpetrator has frequently been enmeshed with themes of sexual perversion, sadomasochism, rape and nymphomania, not least in the pornographic film Ilsa, She-Wolf of the SS Special Section (1975) and its series of sequels. In many films, the ‘screening’ of women’s complicity involves as much a process of concealment as one of exposure.

The problematic portrayal of women’s complicity in Nazism can be traced back to very early Nazi-related films, such as the 1940 Hollywood productions, Frank Borzage’s The Mortal Storm and Charlie Chaplin’s The Great Dictator. Borzage’s film stars James Stewart as a conscientious German civilian living in the Alps who refuses to bow to the pressure of supporting Nazism as most of the people around him do. Significantly, and with only one exception, those who avidly support Hitler’s rise to power and vocally endorse Nazi ideology throughout the film are all men. Apart from a maid who briefly announces Hitler’s rise to Chancellor as ‘something wonderful’, the women in Borzage’s film, portrayed in heavily gendered stereotypes, are either ‘non-Aryan’ victims, stalwart opponents of the oppressive system, or those who conform to the status quo out of sheer terror.

In a rarely mentioned scene of The Great Dictator, the female secretary of Chaplin’s Hitleresque ‘Adenoid Hynkel’ becomes a potential victim of rape when she is assaulted by her Führer. Fainting in Hynkel’s arms just before he is distracted and marches out of the room, the woman serves simply as a vehicle for demonising Hitler and does not even seem to remember the assault when her Führer dictates a letter to her in a later scene. The apparent anxiety on the part of filmmakers over how to grapple with women’s role(s) in the Nazi regime, seen in the simultaneous screening and shielding of their complicity, has continued for many decades since. Indeed, the depiction of Hitler’s secretary, Traudi Junge, in Oliver Hirschbiegel’s Downfall (2004) has been condemned by many for its portrayal of her naive innocence.

In other films, representations of vicious women are employed as the vehicle by which male perpetrators are, to varying degrees, ‘humanised’. In Robert Young’s Eichmann (2007), the notorious bureaucrat is seduced by the evil Lady Macbeth figure, Baroness Ingrid von Ihama, who seems to have the most influence over him. Encouraging Eichmann to deport more and more Jews in a torrid ‘sex scene’, the Baroness then ‘forces’ him to kill a Jewish baby to show his allegiance to Nazi ideology. While the need to understand persecutors as human beings is undeniably important, this is undermined when it comes at the expense of the ‘second sex’.

Over the past two years of monthly film screenings, the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) Film Club has explored a number of films (including some of those mentioned above) which represent – for better or worse – the suffering, resilience and complicity of women under Nazi rule in wartime Europe. In its last gathering of 2012, the Film Club viewed John Harrison’s 2009 portrayal of Irena Sendler’s efforts to save over 2,500 Jewish children by smuggling them out of the Warsaw Ghetto. The tragi-comedy My Mother’s Courage (1995) also focuses centrally on the suffering and survival of a woman. It is nonetheless noteworthy that so many of the films that offer more complex portrayals of women’s experiences, such as Playing for Time (1980), Out of the Ashes (2003) and A Courageous Heart (2008), are made-for-television productions with smaller budgets and fewer opportunities available to them.

There have also been a number of positive developments in recent times. From the depiction of German women’s suffering and complicity in Lore (2012) to the ongoing trauma of a female rescuer in The Door (2012), there continues to be a gradual shift in Holocaust cinema to include the stories of women, whose role(s) must be taken into account if we are to get the clearest picture possible and attempt to comprehend the ‘incomprehensible’. We look forward to welcoming new (and old) films, guest speakers and audience members in the months to come as the JHC Film Club continues.

Please contact the Jewish Holocaust Centre on 9528 1985 or visit www.jhc.org.au for full screening details. If you would like to join the JHC Film Club mailing list, please email Adam Brown, abrown@deakin.edu.au.
On 1 February 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was formalised between Deakin University and the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC). The MOU was signed at the Centre by the Vice-Chancellor of Deakin, Professor Jane den Hollander, and the President of the JHC, Ms Pauline Rockman. Also in attendance at this important event were Mr Warren Fineberg, Executive Director of the JHC; Mr Moshe Fiszman, survivor guide; Mr Michael Cohen, JHC Community Relations Coordinator; Professor Brenda Cherednichenko, Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Arts and Education; Professor David Lowe, Director, Alfred Deakin Research Institute; Dr Stephen Cooke; Dr Deborah Walker; Associate Professor Keith Beattie; and Dr Adam Brown. Warren Fineberg initiated the MOU in collaboration with Adam Brown and Keith Beattie, members of Deakin’s Processes of Signification Emerging Research Group (PSERG).

The MOU formalises a long-standing partnership between the JHC and Deakin. This mutually supportive relationship has expressed itself in several ways: collaboration between Deakin academics and Centre staff on research grants and a written history of the JHC; involvement of Deakin staff in the digitisation of, and research on, the Centre’s survivor video testimony collection; student visits to the JHC for a large Deakin undergraduate unit on the Holocaust; and the ongoing coordination of the JHC Film Club. Many thanks are due to all those involved in this productive partnership throughout years past – and in those still to come.

A new multi-purpose resource centre at the Jewish Holocaust Centre

The Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) is proud to announce that in late 2012, we received a grant from the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust to create a multi-purpose resource centre.

We currently field a large number of enquiries from visitors wanting to access the vast trove of information held in our library, archive and testimony departments, and data from on-line partnerships we have with other institutions around the world, including the Shoah Foundation at the University of Southern California. Our visitors include Holocaust survivors and their families, school and university students, academics, historians and the general public.

At the JHC, we understand the need to connect with our visitors and remain relevant to future generations. Although, with the advance of technology, our information database has grown exponentially, our ability to share information has not kept pace. This is an issue faced by museums and educational institutions everywhere, and the universally accepted solution is to create a ‘space’ where visitors can use computers to access the whole range of information.

Our plan is to convert our existing library into a multi-purpose resource centre. Our unique collection of books will be lovingly re-housed to make way for desks, seating and computer terminals. The library catalogue will be available on-line, as it is now, but the physical space the books now occupy will be transformed into a communal centre of learning.

This major endeavour, which involves collating information, making this information accessible on computer terminals and training staff, should be completed in three years. We are grateful to the trustees of the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust for enabling us to continue our work well into the future. For more information please go to www.hmstrust.org.au.
Nazi Dreamtime: Australian enthusiasts for Hitler’s Germany

Reviewed by Bernard Korbman OAM

_Nazi Dreamtime_ is the ground-breaking story of extreme-right, ultra-nationalist thought and practice in Australia in the period immediately before and during the Second World War. It focuses on those native-born Australians who were attracted to the ideology of Nazism in Germany from 1933.

A year before the Second World War broke out, Robert Menzies, who was soon to become the Australian prime minister, returned from a tour of Nazi Berlin full of enthusiasm for what he had seen. In his words: ‘It must be said that this modern abandonment by the Germans of individual liberty and of the easy and pleasant things of life has something rather magnificent about it.’ Historian Manning Clark also visited Germany and said, right up until Australia declared war, that the Nazi government must be given the benefit of the doubt.

This is not to say Menzies or Clark were fascists, but before the war many Australians had an uncritical attitude towards the dictatorships of Hitler, and Mussolini in Italy. As Louis Nowra wrote in _The Australian_ on 7 July 2012: ‘...some Australians eagerly embraced fascism and David Bird’s _Nazi Dreamtime_ tells the stories of this small group of misfits and eccentrics who interpreted Nazi ideology in such weird ways that at times it was as if _Mein Kampf_ had been rewritten by Lewis Carroll.’

The central figure in this movement, which eventually evolved into the fascist Australia First party, was Percy Stephensen, a Rhodes Scholar, former school teacher turned publisher, ultra-nationalist and right-wing ideologue. In 1936 he wrote _The Foundations of Culture in Australia_, an influential book that rejected modernism and promoted his ideas of an aggressive nationalist culture that would reinvigorate the bush ethos of the 1890s. A few years later he was instrumental in the publication of Xavier Herbert’s _Capricornia_, a prime example of what Stephenson called ‘Australianness’.

Aborigines. The Jindyworobaks thought a truly Australian culture could be created only by assimilating the spirit of Aboriginal culture and identifying with its Dreamtime. In this endeavour they baffled readers by splicing Aboriginal words and images into their poems.

The Jindyworobak ideology really fascinates me. As far as these Nazi dreamers were concerned, life originated in Australia and the Aborigines, who were the oldest Aryans, migrated to India, then on to Europe via the Caucasus, where Caucasians originated. In other words, whites and Aborigines were blood brothers and Europeans were returning to their genetic source. It was only natural that ancient and new Aryan peoples assimilated.

Poet Ian Mudie aimed to become a ‘white blackfellow’. German Nazis would have been appalled that, far from despising non-Aryan races, these Australian fascists took the then-unpopular stand of protesting against the callous treatment of Aborigines. Stephensen even became the driving force behind the famous Aboriginal ‘day of mourning and protest’ in Sydney on Australia Day 1938.

If these views of Aborigines were unique for Nazis, then the other aspects of the movement were not so. Like the Germans, they abhorred communists and Jews, generally conflating the two. Antisemitism was a dark thread that ran through literary and cultural circles of the time. Norman Lindsay wrote, ‘If the Jew had never existed, what might not mankind have gained.’ Stephensen believed in a Jewish world conspiracy, as did many of his followers.

Although Dr Bird’s book is not the first on fascist movements in Australia, it certainly is the most comprehensive published so far. This book also raises relevant issues for today by demonstrating how easy it was for some Australian writers to slip from the politics of ultra-nationalism into a far-right doctrine, how economic hard times create a hatred of migrants and refugees, and how antisemitism is still part of current attitudes, only now probably espoused more by the political left.

Dr Bird is an independent historian based in Melbourne. He has extensively researched and written about twentieth-century Australian history. _Nazi Dreamtime_ is his second major work on the period between the wars.
It is always interesting now when I meet someone for the first time and they ask, ‘So, what do you do with yourself?’ I keep my first response simple: ‘I am a German translator.’ Often people find that interesting enough and the topic changes. However, sometimes people follow with, ‘What sort of stuff do you translate?’ I then say, ‘Well, I work in the archives at the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC).’ Many people do not know what to say or think. So I reassure them the JHC is my second family. It is a place of love, learning and even humour, which brought profound new meaning to my post-wheelchair life.

I began work at the JHC in October 2006. I had just finished another stint in hospital and wanted something meaningful to fill my time. I had been interested in the Holocaust since reading the book The Endless Steppe in primary school, and The Wave in secondary school. My mother saw an article in the paper and suggested, ‘There is a Holocaust Centre in Melbourne. Why not contact them and ask if they have something?’ I applied for a position and turned up to my first interview as a well presented, but non-Jewish, German-speaking Australian girl with a nose piercing, in a wheelchair. I was welcomed with open arms and have never looked back.

I was eventually offered a position as a German translator in the Centre’s archives department. I had lived in Germany for one year as a teenager on a Rotary exchange. I had also studied German at university. Nevertheless, even though I could speak German quite well, I had never worked as a translator. Translating one language into another is very different to speaking it – it is extremely difficult! I was lucky that my then-supervisor, Ursula Flicker, a Polish Holocaust survivor and head of the archives department, guided me through the process. She was strict with her standards but still kind. She was not being nice to me because I was in a wheelchair, but she appreciated my skills, and I found this refreshing. For once I was not just ‘the girl in the wheelchair’, but rather ‘the girl who does the German translations’.

I slowly started getting to know many other people at work and they soon became friends more than colleagues. The highlight of my day is having animated discussions over a cup of tea at lunch. Most of my friends at work are Holocaust survivors. Over time I have learned some of their stories, which has given me a greater appreciation of the society I live in. Yes, life with a spinal cord injury is difficult, but I am not living in a country that wants to kill me just because of who I am. The closeness I share with my friends at work is indescribable. I like the way everyone looks out for each other. So, not only did I find a fulfilling job, but I also became part of a second family. I am valued as a member of this family for being myself, and am finally not just ‘the girl in the wheelchair’.

The documents I deal with often contain distressing content. I have therefore built up a ‘shield’, because every document translated is another victim remembered and honoured. This is very important to me. My work in theatre gives me a continuing sense of creativity and purpose. My translating work gives me a different sense of purpose. Every day brings a new challenge, but as the JHC is a place of love, learning and even humour, I would not change it for the world.
The JHC Social Club continues to gather momentum, as new faces appear each week. Our meetings are held every second Thursday at the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) from 11:15am to 1:00pm and we plan an array of exciting speakers each year. While we always meet at the JHC, in April, while the Anne Frank exhibition is being held, our meetings will be held at Kadimah, which is located at 7 Selwyn Street Elsternwick and is adjacent to the JHC.

We have had some excellent speakers over the past few months:

- Sheiny New, a member of the Jewish Task Force Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault, discussed different types of abuse and how these problems are addressed.
- Leonie Fleiszig, Director of the Lamm Jewish Library of Australia (formerly the Makor Jewish Community Library), spoke about the library and its relationship with other Jewish libraries in Melbourne, and shared stories about her recent tour of Jewish sites in Eastern Europe.
- Di Hirsch, President of the National Council of Jewish Women of Australia, gave an interesting and informative talk about her recent tour through Europe with the Council, focusing on the situation of Jews in Hungary, Poland and Germany. Her address provoked many questions and a lively discussion.
- Tom Ryan, recently retired film critic with The Age, talked about his life as a film critic and what one looks at when analysing films.
- Vera Link leads tours to Jewish sites in Europe, and she took us on an amazing journey, illustrated with slides, from her last tour of Italy. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed her travelogue and we hope to see her again after her next trip.

We were sorry to bid farewell to Max Wald, who has been such a vital part of our group since its inception, helping to coordinate our activities and driving the bus. While he continues to work as a volunteer at the Centre, his contribution to the JHC Social Club will be missed. We are happy, however, to welcome Suzie Kleid, who will be assisting us this year.

For further information about the JHC Social Club, please contact Barbara Sacks on 9596 9857.

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The Jewish Holocaust Centre has over 1,300 video testimonies as well as over 200 audio testimonies in its collection. These provide eyewitness accounts of the horrors of the Holocaust, as well as glimpses into the vibrancy of pre-war Jewish life in Europe. The collection is widely used by researchers and students of oral history, the Holocaust and a variety of other disciplines.

If you would like to give your testimony or know of someone who is interested in giving a testimony, contact Phillip Maisel.

Phone: (03) 9528 1985 or email: testimonies@jhc.org.au
In November 2012 the Friends of the Jewish Holocaust Centre held a function entitled ‘Through the Looking Glass’, featuring guest speaker Roberta Honigman, a social worker with clinical and research experience in the area of body image. A large number of women, including many new members, attended to hear Roberta’s stimulating address.

Later in November, we held a panel discussion entitled ‘Will Anyone Care: will the Holocaust matter to future Jewish generations when our survivors are no longer here?’ The panel comprised Rabbi James Kennard, Mount Scopus Memorial College principal; Justice Michael Sifris, Supreme Court judge; Saba Feniger, Holocaust survivor and Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) volunteer, Gideon Reisner, Saba Feniger’s grandson; Sue Hampel, Holocaust educator and JHC Board member; and Zvi Civins, JHC Director of Education. The evening was instigated by Friends’ committee member Barbara Sacks, together with Michael Cohen, JHC Community Relations Coordinator. Many of the guests were fifth generation Australians whose families had not been touched by the Holocaust. It was a thought-provoking and enlightening evening.

In February 2013, the Friends held a movie night to view The One That Got Away at the Classic Cinemas. This documentary, which had been a great success at the Melbourne Jewish Film Festival in November, features Holocaust survivor Thomas Beck and his ‘long lost love’, Mrs Edith Grieman, with whom he was reunited in Melbourne, some 60 years after they had last seen each other. We were privileged that Thomas Beck and Edith Grieman could attend and take part in a question and answer session following the movie. We are grateful to them for sharing their story with us, and also to Thomas’s granddaughter, Tamar Simons, who moderated the discussion.

The Friends are busy assisting with the Anne Frank exhibition currently being held at JHC. We need your support so that we can continue to support the Centre, and look forward to welcoming as many new faces as possible to our functions over the coming year.

For further information about the Friends committee and functions, please contact Goldie Birch on 0407 560 515.

The Friends of the Jewish Holocaust Centre plays an important role in providing financial support to the Centre through membership subscriptions, raffle book sales, sales of the Entertainment Book and social fundraising functions.

On presentation of their membership card, Friends of the Jewish Holocaust Centre are entitled to 10% discount at selected retail stores in Melbourne, as well as a range of discounted services or member benefits when traveling outside of Melbourne.

To become a Friend of the Jewish Holocaust Centre, simply download and complete the form from www.jhc.org.au/friends-of-the-jhc.html

For further information contact Goldie Birch on (03) 9528 1985 or email: goldiegb@bigpond.net.au
Viv Parry (2nd left) visits the Centre with members of the Galamble Men’s Recovery Centre, with survivor guides Fred Steiner and Henri Korn (3rd and 4th left)

(l-r) Warren Fineberg and Dr Taner Akcam

(l-r) Henri and Sandra Korn and Honorary German Consul Michael Pearce SC

Eva and Stan Marks OAM

(l-r) The Hon David Southwick MP, the Hon Martin Dixon MP, Avram Goldberg and Zvi Cwins

Frank Dobia and Enid Elton
(l-r) The Hon Marsha Thompson MP, Warren Fineberg, Jack Golding and the Hon David Southwick MP

(l-r) Joe Kaufman, Simon Michalowicz, Joe Szwarcberg, John Chaskiel and Yosel Baker

Halina Zylberman, Willy Lermer and Sula Rozinski

(l-r) Pauline Rockman OAM, Magda Szubanski, Ruth Mushin and Lena Fiszman

Dr Donna-Lee Frieze and Dr Taner Akcam (left) with members of the Armenian and Jewish communities
Postscript to the Bergen-Belsen photo story

Jayne Josem

In the last edition of Centre News, I wrote a story about a photo of two religious leaders praying before a mass grave at Bergen-Belsen. I then received an email from Damien Burke, assistant archivist at the Irish Jesuit Archives, correcting an error he had found in the article.

I had identified the two men in the photo as Jesuit priest Father Michael Morrison, who originally came from County Kerry in Ireland, and Jewish chaplain Reverend Leslie Hardman of Leeds. My source was the Imperial War Museum in London. However, there is a letter in the Irish Jesuit Archive dated 17 May 1945, in which Father Michael Morrison writes to the Father Provincial stating: ‘In the Universe [newspaper], there is a photograph of me saying prayers at a communal grave...in point of fact the man with me is a Polish priest who was a prisoner here.’ So the person standing next to Father Morrison in the photo was not the Jewish chaplain, Reverend Hardman. This error had never been corrected formally, so the Irish Jesuit Archives informed the Imperial War Museum at the same time as they contacted me.

Damien Burke informed me that Father Morrison’s letters from Bergen-Belsen were deeply moving and, following my request, he obtained permission to send me copies of two of them. The descriptions they contain are among the most harrowing accounts of the aftermath of the Holocaust that one could ever read. Here are some of the more palatable extracts:

11 May 1945

...I have seen some of the pictures reproduced in the papers but they fail very short of giving a proper idea of the horror of this place. What we met with in the first few days is utterly beyond description. In an earlier letter I think I mentioned that in my first cursory look around the camp, I saw fifteen hundred dead bodies. That was a very much-underestimated guess. Besides the dead bodies were not the next frightful of the sights. To see people crawl on their hands and knees because they had not got the strength to walk on, to see them drag themselves along until they fell in the gutters, to remain there was far more harrowing...

...Though typhus was rampant, starvation caused most of the deaths. The filth of the place too was beyond imagination. Huts which would normally accommodate thirty were made to hold from five to seven hundred people. Enteritis was very prevalent. In one hut two hundred and twenty had it... The majority of these people were too weak to leave their beds so perhaps you may get just a faint idea of the atmosphere. Some of the huts had three tier bunks with a narrow passage down the middle. In all bunks there were at least two and sometimes three people lying and it was not uncommon to find one or two of them dead. In the passage in some of the huts one had to be careful where one put one’s foot to avoid stepping on dead bodies. This account may seem fantastic but when you consider that sixty thousand people were crammed into an area of about half of a square mile, and the death rate when we got in was getting on to about the seven hundred mark a day. In the first twelve days I buried almost thirteen thousand, and I did not attend all funerals as I thought the dying more important. These thirteen thousand took up very little of my time as two graves took five thousand each.

...The work here has been physically the most revolting that I have been called on to do, but it has also been the most consoling.
In the Jewish Holocaust Centre collection there are items relating to Theo Wolff, an Austrian-born Jew. They include some photo albums. One small old album intrigued me from the moment I first saw it.

The album contains about a dozen or so small pages, each with one photo held in place with adhesive photo corners. Before I reveal the contents, it is important to outline the story of the man who 'curated' this small collection.

Theo Wolff was born in Austria in 1905. In 1938, Theo, his wife and child, received permits to migrate to Britain. The plan was for Theo to emigrate first, to be followed by his wife and child. War broke out and Theo’s family was caught behind enemy lines, unable to leave Austria.

Meanwhile, Theo was considered a ‘friendly enemy alien’ and imprisoned in a British internment camp called Kitchener. From there he was placed on board the ship *Dunera* and sent to Australia. Conditions on board were terrible and the Jewish internees were treated cruelly. Theo arrived on 9 September 1940 and was interned in various camps in Australia, before enlisting in the Citizens’ Military Forces (CMF). He remained in the CMF until September 1945. He then joined the United Nations Refugee Relief Association (UNRRA) and worked as a welfare officer.

By joining UNRRA, Theo was able to return to Berlin, which suited him as he desperately wanted to find his wife and child. Unfortunately he soon learnt that they had been murdered.

Theo Wolff created the intriguing photo album either during his time in Europe, or perhaps after he returned to Australia. It contains about twenty photos of landmarks and important sites in Berlin. That is not so curious, as any tourist might take such photographs during a visit to a foreign country. What is special about Theo’s album, however, is that it contains ‘before’ and ‘after’ photos of these buildings and streets: before they were bombed, and after they were bombed. Did he derive some pleasure leafing through his album, knowing that the great monuments and buildings of the so-called civilised people who murdered his wife and child were now in ruins?
New acquisitions

Claude Fromm

The following are additions to the Centre’s collection from September 2012 to January 2013:

1. Bound copy of correspondence between two correspondents in 1933.
   Donor: Ann Belinsky

2. Material taken from a German house after the Second World War and made into a bag.
   Donor: Esther Werblud

   Donor: Esther Werblud

   Donor: Esther Werblud

5. Cap worn by resistance fighter Stefan Borton.
   Donor: Chris Borton

6. Roll of film in cardboard canister recording the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp on its liberation.
   Donor: P. Coles

7. Painting of rabbi humiliated by the Nazis by the artist Chalef, a friend of the donor’s parents.
   Donor: Jack Green

8. Two sets of cups and saucers, probably manufactured by Beyer and Bock before 1931 and used during the Holocaust period.
   Donor: Don and Olive Albers

   Donor: Son of the late Heniek Bornsztejn

    Donor: Silvana Layton, with Rosetta and Colin Wise

    Donor: Lilly Enten

    Donor: Michael Hirschfeld

The Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) collection is a vital repository of Holocaust-era material. Artefacts and documents are carefully catalogued and stored in a state-of-the-art temperature-controlled facility to ensure their preservation for future generations. The JHC invites members of the public who have precious items relating to the Holocaust to consider donating them to our collection for safekeeping.

Become a Partner in Remembrance

The Jewish Holocaust Centre Foundation ensures the continued existence of the Centre and supports its important work. Funds raised through the Foundation are invested, with the earnings providing an ongoing source of income for the Centre to support its operations and programs into the future.

For more information on how you can help support the Foundation and how your support will be recognised, please contact Helen Mahemoff, Chair of the Foundation on 0417 323 595 or Email: jhcfoundation@bigpond.com.
The Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) is proud to announce that it is making ten Holocaust survivor stories easily accessible to the public via an app. One of the highlights of a visit to the Centre is the opportunity to meet survivors, so by including material related to ten survivor guides on our JHC storypod app, their stories become accessible to a wider audience.

You can download the JHC app for your iPhone or iPad from the Apple App Store. Open the application and you will instantly meet Jack, Willy, John, Paul, Danka, Abram, Kitia, Irma, Rosa and Sarah as you scroll through their picture-framed images. Further exploration will give you a taste of resources associated with each survivor, including books, photo images and video clips.

This is the newest addition to our resources for students who have engaged in our education program. Originally conceived as a development from the ‘storypod’ technology displayed in the permanent museum exhibition, the Jewish Holocaust Centre Director of Education together with the Curator and project team sought new ways to make our resources more accessible and to develop audio-visual material for students and teachers. Simply put, the JHC app is a way of extending the experience of student visitors once they have left the exhibition, perhaps on their trip home on the bus, or later when back at school and engaged in a class project. The app is also excellent preparation for a visit to the Centre.

Each storypod allows the viewer to learn more about the story of the survivor – a witness to the events of the Holocaust – through the multi-media provision of quality resources, including video testimony, artefacts and written history. A special benefit for a student who has been guided through the museum by a survivor, or perhaps has heard a survivor’s testimony, is to spend time learning about the background and history of the survivor guide through this resource-rich application.

This project was developed from the ground up by the JHC together with the IT consultancy firm Philology, and built on resources previously developed. It was generously funded by the Telematics Trust which understood the cutting-edge technology challenge and was confident that the JHC could deliver on its promises.

There is an obvious benefit to school students who visit the Centre, but to general visitors or even those unable to come to our Centre, the app is a unique and user-friendly way to learn about survivors by accessing primary source documents related to their experiences. With just a few clicks you can see photos and documents relating to one survivor and then watch a clip where they detail an interesting part of their tragic history.

We are very pleased with the production and launch of the app. Our current challenge is to extend its use to students and visitors and then to reach out to other institutions to demonstrate what we have produced. Future development will include making the app available in Android format for use on other makes of smart phones and tablets, and perhaps increasing the number of storypods available to the viewers.

The JHC app is free and available to students and the general public.
For many years, after visiting the Centre students have written to us about their thoughts and feelings relating to what they have seen and heard. They share with us what they felt was important, what they will remember, and more. These comments were received from a Melbourne secondary college in November 2012, and are indicative of the value a school visit holds for students:

Chloe: It was great meeting the survivors, especially Paul. He was very inviting and warm and I enjoyed listening to him speak.

James: It was interesting to hear exactly what happened in the concentration camps.

Georgia: It was interesting and sad and the survivors were sweet and informative.

Bahlie: I learnt how the Holocaust started and developed.

Sean: My favourite part of the visit was listening to the 88-year-old Jewish survivor, and the model of the camp was very interesting.

Sara: I feel bad for the survivors because now I know what they went through.

Ashlee: The museum was interesting and Paul, one of the survivors, was an inspiration.

Rhys: It was inspiring and emotional coming from the real survivors. I held the candle.

Tameika: I loved hearing Jack Fogel’s story and how he managed to survive the dreadful events during the Holocaust.

Emily: The survivors have to relive their pain and suffering every time they see a new group of students.

Matt: I learnt much more from this than being in class.

Jade: I am so glad I got to meet the people at the Holocaust Centre.

Tameika: The Holocaust survivors relive all their feelings every day because they believe that it is important for young people to know what happened.

Alexandra: I want to thank the teachers for taking us. It was a great experience.

Jake: I had a great experience and now I know how brave they were.

Aaron: It was interesting to hear what the survivors did after Hitler was defeated.

Mitch: The Holocaust Centre gave us a detailed idea of what the Holocaust was really like and how the Jewish people suffered.

Steve: The experience was something out of the ordinary and it was very sad.

Raj: I liked the model of the extermination camp.

Ashleigh: It was good and sad. I tried to imagine how horrible it was for the survivors. I was surprised they could talk about it so freely.

Hailey: The survivors gave me a little faith in humanity. They protected each other during the hard times.

Anton: I never knew that people managed to stay hopeful during the Holocaust. I will never forget this experience.

Vlad: Everyone should visit this museum.

Antonio: It was sad to hear Abe’s story. He had to depart from his mother and he was the only one in his family to survive.

Chauncee, Cody, Zak, Jade, Amber, Brock, Miki, Lachlan, Rachael: I learnt a great deal from the survivors of the Holocaust.
As we celebrate the Foundation’s 10th anniversary, we acknowledge the support of those who have ensured the financial security of the Jewish Holocaust Centre. We sincerely appreciate the generosity of the following individuals and families, and those who wish to remain anonymous.

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**Engagement**

To Rosa Freilich on the engagement of her grandson Mark Freilich to Leesa Shulkin
To David and Leah Schulberg on the engagement of their son Julien to Kylie Harris
Susie and Stephen Kleid on the engagement of their daughter Andrea to Elad Zohar

**Marriage**

To Kathy and Les Janovic on the marriage of their son David to Rani Ollstein
To Susan and John Onas on the marriage of her son Josh to Romi Dvash
To Alice Peer on her marriage to Benny Rosenzweig
To Judy and Michael Krape on the marriage of their daughter Talia to Jonathan Moore
To Marcia and Peter Janovic on the marriage of their son Brad to Michal Finch
To Julie and Joey Borensztajn on the marriage of their son Noah to Romy Teperman

**Births**

To Susan and John Onas on the birth of their grandson Leo Blashki
To Millie Giligich on the birth of her great-grandsons Jack Litinsky and Shem Smorgon
To Rona Zinger on the birth of her grandson Joshua Kur
To Miriam and Leon Zimet on the birth of their grandson Max Zimet

**Births (Cont)**

To Ann and Yehuda Kabillo on the birth of their grandson Asher Kabillo
To Esther and Eric Krause on the birth of their grandson Asher Kabillo
To Marieke and David Montgomery on the birth of their son Henry Montgomery
To Suzie and Gabi Nozick on the birth of their great-granddaughter Clover Rogers
To Judy and Andrew Rogers on the birth of their granddaughter Clover Rogers
To Helen and Jeffrey Mahemoff on the birth of their grandson Noam Lifszyc
To Dora and Max Zylberman on the birth of their great-grandson Jay Norich
To Esther and Simon Michalowicz on the birth of their great-granddaughter Amalia Weinberg
To Halina Zylberman on the birth of her great-grandson Judah Olian
To Carol and Harry Kamien on the birth of their grandson Jack Kamien
To Sonia Kempler on the birth of her great-granddaughter Dahlia Nowiski

**Bar Mitzvah**

To Suzanne Aladjem on the bar mitzvah of her granddaughter Noa Shenker

**Birthdays**

To Alex Hampel on his 60th birthday
To Rona Zinger on her 70th birthday

**Condolences**

To Sylvia Starr on the death of her father Max Drajer
To Freda Schweitzer on the death of her son Isaac Schweitzer
To Rebecca and David Krycer on the death of their sister and sister-in-law Lilly Zayon
To Debbie and Leon Mandel on the death of their father and father-in-law Gary Sostheim
To Ursula Flicker on the death of her sister-in-law Keila Pruzanski

**In Memoriam**

In loving memory of my father Adaś Hasman and my little brother Rysio, both of whom perished in the Holocaust.

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Lusia Haberfeld
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אים אינדיקנטים פול וולודרמקין מידי

(מייג'לצ'ל פעלתלו)

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הפיולוס הגנגייראיו פול אייסיקונה פול איסיקונה

 Förmer.
Join the JHC Film Club in 2013

- To view and discuss films about the Holocaust, other genocides and human rights’ issues.
- Monthly film screenings followed by guest speakers and informal discussion.
- Held on the last Thursday of every month from 7.00pm to approx. 9.30pm at the Jewish Holocaust Centre.
- Entry is by donation.
- Participants are welcome to submit films for consideration to the JHC Film Club Editorial Committee.
- In partnership with the Processes of Signfication Emerging Research Group (PSERG), Deakin University.

All enquiries: 9528 1985 or admin@jhc.org.au
Join the mailing list: adam.brown@deakin.edu.au
Venue: 13-15 Selwyn Street, Elsternwick
Please check our website: www.jhc.org.au for further details

Come and meet new friends at the JHC Social Club

In February 2012, the group originally established for retired guides and volunteers of the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) invited all guides and volunteers at the Centre to attend its functions. We are hoping that this bi-monthly meeting will encourage people to come together to get to know one another, as well as acting as a forum for professional development. As new volunteers begin work at the Centre the Social Club provides them with the opportunity to meet others who have been involved at the Centre for many years.

We meet every second Thursday from 11:30am to 1:00pm. Bagels and coffee are served and we have many exciting speakers lined up for the rest of the year.

For further information about the JHC Social Club, please contact Barbara Sacks on 9596 9857 or visit the Jewish Holocaust Centre website: www.jhc.org.au