

MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE



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The American & International Societies for Yad Vashem Annual Tribute Dinner

The American and International Societies for Yad Vashem Annual Tribute Dinner will take place November 15 at the Pierre hotel in New York City. This year's honorees are Rose and Philip Friedman. Featured speakers are CNN's lead political anchor Wolf Blitzer;

humanitarian and granddaughter of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower — Mary Jean Eisenhower; and Professor of Jewish History and Jewish Thought and Senior Scholar at the Center for the Jewish Future at Yeshiva University Rabbi Dr. Jacob J. Schacter.

FEATURED GUEST SPEAKER WOLF BLITZER

Wolf Blitzer is CNN's lead political anchor and the anchor of *The Situation Room with Wolf Blitzer*, which airs weekdays at 5 p.m. ET, providing viewers with in-depth reports about the political, international and breaking news stories of the day. In addition, he anchors *Wolf*, airing weekdays at 1 p.m. ET, focusing on the most important news from Washington and around the world. Blitzer has been with the network for more than two decades.

Most recently, Blitzer headlined CNN's 2014 midterm "Election Night in America" coverage, providing up-to-the-minute results from key races across the country. He also served as moderator for the U.S. Senatorial debate in New Hampshire, between Scott Brown (R) and incumbent Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D).

Blitzer was pivotal to CNN's election coverage throughout "America's Choice 2012," serving as lead anchor on key primary nights, caucus nights and the Emmy award-winning election night coverage. He moderated three of CNN's Republican presidential debates, including the first-of-its-kind Tea Party debate. During the 2008 presidential election, Blitzer spearheaded CNN's Peabody Award-winning coverage of the presidential primary debates and campaigns. He also led CNN's Emmy-



winning "America Votes 2006" coverage and "America Votes 2004." Furthermore, he anchored the network's coverage during the inaugurations of Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush.

Blitzer is also at the helm of the network's breaking news coverage, reporting on stories from around the country. Most recently, he reported on the shootings from at Washington Navy Yard, the devastation of the Oklahoma tornadoes, the Boston terrorist attacks, and the tragedy surrounding the mass shooting in Newtown, Connecticut.

In addition to politics, Blitzer is also known for his in-depth reporting on international news.

Over the decades, Blitzer has reported on a wide range of major breaking stories around the world that have shaped the international political landscape.

Throughout his career, Blitzer has interviewed some of history's most notable figures, including U.S. Presidents Barack Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush, Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford. Blitzer has also interviewed many foreign leaders — the Dalai Lama, Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari, former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and former

South African President Nelson Mandela among them.

In March 2014, he was awarded the Sol Taishoff Award for Excellence in Broadcast Journalism by the National Press Foundation. The previous year, he was recognized as the eighth recipient of the Urbino Press Award from the Italian Embassy for his excellence in journalism. In 2011, Blitzer received the distinguished Leonard Zeidenberg First Amendment Award from the Radio & Television Digital News Foundation, and the Panetta Institute for Public Policy's Jefferson-Lincoln Award.

Blitzer has authored two books, *Between Washington and Jerusalem: A Reporter's Notebook* and *Territory of Lies* — cited by *The New York Times Book Review* as one of the most notable books of 1989.

Blitzer earned a bachelor of arts degree in history from the State University of New York at Buffalo and a master of arts degree in international relations from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, D.C. In addition, Blitzer has numerous honorary degrees from educational institutions across the country.

HONOREES ROSE AND PHILIP FRIEDMAN

Philip Friedman was born and raised in the former Soviet Union. After spending 12 years in numerous positions in the electronics industry, he emigrated to the United States and settled in New York City.

In 1984, Mr. Friedman started Computer Generated Solutions (CGS), a diversified IT solutions and services company providing software, consulting, systems integration, training and help desk support. Today, with close to 7,000 professionals and a global presence spanning North America, South America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia, CGS maintains a leadership position delivering end-to-end, award-winning solutions in over 48 countries around the globe.

In 1996, Mr. Friedman was named Entrepreneur of the Year by Ernst & Young, Inc., *Inc.* magazine, Merrill Lynch and the City of New York. In 2007, Mr. Friedman was awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. In 2007 and 2008, he was appointed to represent the State of New York on the Presidential Business Commission and to serve as an honorary chairman on the National Business Advisory Council.

Mr. Friedman's contributions to the US economy and society were twice recognized by the United States Congress.

In 2011, Mr. Friedman received an honorary doctorate from Yeshiva University.

Mr. Friedman is the immediate past president of the American Committee of Shaare Zedek Hospital. He also serves as a trustee, member of the Executive Committee and vice chairman of Yeshiva University. In addition, he serves on the board of the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice, and is a member of the Executive Committee of the Tom Lantos Institute. Mr. Friedman recently joined the board of the American Society for Yad Vashem. He is a Fellow of the Foreign Policy Association and serves as a member of the US Chamber of Commerce International Policy Committee.



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THE SWEDISH SCHINDLER: HOW COUNT BERNADOTTE SAVED THOUSANDS OF JEWS FROM DEATH

BY SARAH HELM, NEWSWEEK

The midday ferry from Copenhagen drew up alongside the quay at the Swedish port of *Malmö* on April 28, 1945. Moments later, women — many in striped garb — began to move down the gangplank “all in thin rags, shoes made of paper and wood and odds and ends,” wrote a reporter. More women followed, carried off the boat on stretchers: French, Polish, Norwegian, Dutch and many other nationalities.

It was just over 70 years ago and 10 days before the Second World War in Europe would come to its official end. The women had come from *Ravensbrück*, a women’s concentration camp 50 miles north of Berlin. Although most camps had, by now,



Count Folke Bernadotte of *Wisborg*.

been liberated by advancing British, Russian and American troops, *Ravensbrück* was still under Nazi control. During these final, desperate weeks, more than 6,000 women had been gassed at *Ravensbrück*, others shot, starved and forced on death marches, as the German SS attempted to empty the camps and destroy the evidence of its crimes before the oncoming Russian army arrived.

The 500 or so women lining up on the *Malmö* docks that day had been snatched from this fate by a fleet of Swedish Red Cross buses and ambulances, which had driven them across bombed-out Germany to the Danish border and on to Sweden. More women followed over the next days: young and old, Jews and non-Jews.

Frieda Zetler had been imprisoned first in the *Lodz* ghetto and then at *Auschwitz* before being taken on to *Ravensbrück*. She now tasted freedom alongside Yvonne Baseden, a young British agent with Special Operations Executive (SOE), the spy and sabotage organization ordered by Winston Churchill to “set Europe ablaze,” who had been captured while helping the French resistance. Baseden leant heavily on the arm of a comrade before being ushered into a tent for delousing.

Many women carried Red Cross boxes; others carried babies. A Dutch

woman, Anne Hendrix, carried her two-month-old sleeping in a box. French ethnologist Germaine Tillion carried lists bearing the names of those murdered at the camp, including her mother, Emilie. On seeing white-coated Swedish doctors, the skeletal survivors screamed. “I don’t want to burn. I don’t want to burn,” cried one, imagining SS doctors. Swedish nurses fainted at the sight of the ravaged bodies.

As the women settled down they heard about the man who had initiated their rescue: a blue-blooded Swede called Folke Bernadotte. Sometimes Bernadotte appeared among them, tall and smartly dressed, with a gentle manner and an air of efficiency. They called him their savior. Yet, outside Scandinavia, the story of his White Bus rescue — the biggest humanitarian mission of the Second World War — is little known, perhaps because after the war Bernadotte was appointed UN mediator to the Arab-Israeli conflict and was shot dead by Jewish extremists, complicating his legacy.

TWENTY-ONE THOUSAND LIVES

Not only were at least 7,000 *Ravensbrück* women brought on Bernadotte’s buses, but up to 14,000 prisoners from other concentration camps too — men and women of many nationalities and creeds, including several thousand Jews. Postwar infighting in Scandinavia about who should take credit for the rescue, as well as Allied reluctance to acknowledge that the neutral Swedes could have pulled off such a coup, played some role in obscuring the value of Bernadotte’s mission. Despite his pedigree — he was the grandson of King Oscar II, the last monarch to reign over both Norway and Sweden, and descendant of Napoleonic marshal Jean Baptiste Bernadotte — Count Folke Bernadotte of *Wisborg* was an unlikely hero. After a failed attempt in business and a period as head of the Swedish Boy Scouts Association, Bernadotte became vice president of the Swedish Red Cross, a position that would allow him to execute his rescue mission.

By October 1944, the Count had persuaded the Germans to free Allied airmen shot down over Sweden — a coup that earned him an invitation to lunch with the most powerful man on the planet, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who had just liberated Paris and was setting up his Allied HQ at *Versailles*. Eisenhower showed Bernadotte his plans for victory in Europe, but, as the Count noted in his memoir, the American general made no mention of how to save German prisoners.

The eastern death camps, built by the Nazis in Poland to exterminate the Jews according to their “Final

Solution”, had already been liberated by the Russians, exposing the Jewish genocide to the world, but, by the autumn of 1944, at least a million prisoners were still held in camps on German soil — including *Buchenwald*, *Dachau* and *Bergen-Belsen*. Allied chiefs in London and Washington had little interest in protecting these prisoners as they pursued their military objectives, believing the only way to help inmates was to secure a total victory.

Yet that victory was still many months away and reports of atrocities were mounting — many such reaching Bernadotte’s ears while he stayed in Paris. France had already lost thousands to the camps, and families were

pleading for action. Though it was too late to halt the Jewish extermination in the east, there was still a chance to save the thousands of Jews and non-Jews held in these German-based camps. With the International Committee of the Red Cross paralyzed, pleas were increasingly directed at Bernadotte and his Swedish Red Cross.

MEETING HIMMLER AT THE LAKESIDE

To most Allied observers, the idea of a prisoner rescue was fantasy. The dangers of entering the war zone were self-evident. Intelligence on the camp locations and about who was held in them was limited, and Hitler would not permit releases — particularly of Jews. But Sweden had its own interest in the rescues, which was, to some extent, self-serving. By 1944, with Allied victory in view, neutrality felt an uncomfortable position to hold, and a rescue operation offered the chance to play a heroic role in the final days. The Swedes were also in a unique position; they had unusually good information about what was happening in the camps, and good cause to believe that prisoners might be released — not by the Führer, but on the authority of Heinrich Himmler, the Reichsführer of the SS, who ran the camps.

Though it was Hitler’s resolution to fight on until the last moment, by the end of 1944 Himmler’s aides were letting it be known that the SS chief knew the war was lost and was looking for a way out. Intermediaries said that Himmler was available for talks about a peace deal with the Allies, excluding Stalin. He would also free prisoners as bait to bring the Western Allies to the table. The problem was that London and Washington had “no truck with Himmler,” as Churchill put

it. The Swedes, on the other hand, saw no reason not to exploit his overtures.

Thousands of Norwegians, as well as Danes, were being held in the camps, and Himmler was offering up Scandinavian prisoners first. Perhaps others would follow if Sweden played its cards right? By February 1945, Himmler had asked the Swedes to



White buses taking people to safety.

send a mediator to discuss the prisoner release. Seasoned Swedish officials said Folke Bernadotte wasn’t up to the task, but others thought the Count’s royal blood and confident air would appeal to Himmler. And Bernadotte was only too willing.

The Count met the SS chief for the first time on February 10, 1945, in a secluded lakeside SS clinic at *Hohenlychen*, about 50 miles north of Berlin, and just five miles from the women’s camp of *Ravensbrück*. On arrival, Bernadotte presented his interlocutor with a rare Norwegian [Scandinavian] artefact, which delighted Himmler, always fascinated by the Nordic race. Himmler seemed at ease with Bernadotte and told him jokes. Bernadotte listened, observing Himmler’s “well-manicured hands” as he waited for a chance to nail the deal over the first Scandinavian releases.

As Bernadotte left, the outline plan agreed to, Himmler asked if he had a good driver, as there were Allied fighter planes in the air as well as tank traps and barricades. Assured about the driver, Himmler replied: “Good. Otherwise the Swedish papers will come out with headlines saying, ‘War Criminal Himmler Murders Count Bernadotte.’”

By the second week of March, a task force had left southern Sweden, driven across Denmark and crossed into Germany. The man who once led the Swedish Boy Scouts was now leading a humanitarian army — 100 vehicles mostly belonging to the Swedish military, including trucks, buses, ambulances and motorcycles, manned by 250 Swedish soldiers, doctors and nurses. Their plan — as agreed with Himmler — was to pick up Scandinavian prisoners from any camps they could reach before the Allied fronts closed up, and bring them

(Continued on page 13)

POLAND'S FRAUGHT HOLOCAUST HISTORY FUELS DEBATE OVER REMEMBERING HEROIC RESCUERS OF JEWS

BY VANESSA GERA, AP

As a Catholic Pole, Elka shouldn't even have been in the ghetto of *Czestochowa*, in southern Poland. But the nanny was so devoted to the 12-year-old Jewish boy she had raised since infancy that she refused to leave. She ended up being sent to the *Treblinka* death camp — where she was murdered with the Jews.

Today the boy, Sigmund Rolat, is an 85-year-old Polish-American businessman and philanthropist on a



Sigmund Rolat.

mission. He aims to build a memorial in the heart of Warsaw's former ghetto to his beloved Elka and the thousands of other Polish Christians who risked their lives for Jews during World War II.

While the project has the blessing of Poland's chief rabbi, it has also sparked strong opposition. Many scholars and some Jews fear that a monument to Polish rescuers at Warsaw's key site of Jewish tragedy will bolster a false historical narrative that Poles largely acted as rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust. In reality, many Poles were indifferent to the plight of Jews during the war, and some participated in their persecution.

Official Polish narratives about the Holocaust already typically highlight the Poles who risked their lives to save Jews. Poland has been actively promoting the memory of Jan Karski, a resistance fighter who brought proof to the West of the destruction of Poland's Jews.

Yet little is said about the widespread passivity that existed despite such enormous Jewish suffering, or cases where Poles used the breakdown of law and order to blackmail and murder Jews themselves, driven by greed or anti-Semitic hatred.

"Poles were victims, but at the same time they were also victimizers of the most fragile members of society," said historian Jan Grabowski, an opponent of the memorial and author of *Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied*

Poland.

The debate comes against the backdrop of a dramatic, more positive change in attitudes toward Poland's Jewish history since the country's repressive Communist era. The democratic European Union nation is increasingly celebrating the large Jewish population that flourished in Polish lands for centuries until the Holocaust — the new POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews is a key example of this efflorescence.

Under Rolat's plan, the memorial would be next to the POLIN Museum and near a monument to the Jewish fighters of the 1943 Warsaw ghetto uprising.

But there is still stiff resistance by the Polish government and mainstream society to acknowledge the uncomfortable truth that Poles — who were tortured, imprisoned and murdered in huge numbers by the Germans — also took part, willingly at times, in the murder of Jews.

Nobody questions the heroism of the Polish rescuers, who risked immediate execution along with their entire families. Israel's Holocaust memorial Yad Vashem has documented more than 6,500 such Poles.

Opponents of the memorial, however, argue that the former Warsaw ghetto should remain primarily a site of Jewish mourning, not a site of Polish national glory — given how little help actually reached Poland's 3.3 million Jews, most of whom perished. They stress that saving Jews was the rare exception and that rescuers had to fear not only the Germans but also betrayal by other Poles.

Yad Vashem says even after the war, Polish rescuers sometimes asked the Jews they had helped not to tell anybody, not wanting their neighbors to know.

"Polish anti-Semitism was ubiquitous before the war and unscrupulous," reads an open letter against the memorial project written by three Polish scholars — Bozena Keff, Helena Datner and Elzbieta Janicka — and signed by many others. "That was the context for the Righteous, who acted despite and not with the consent of the majority."

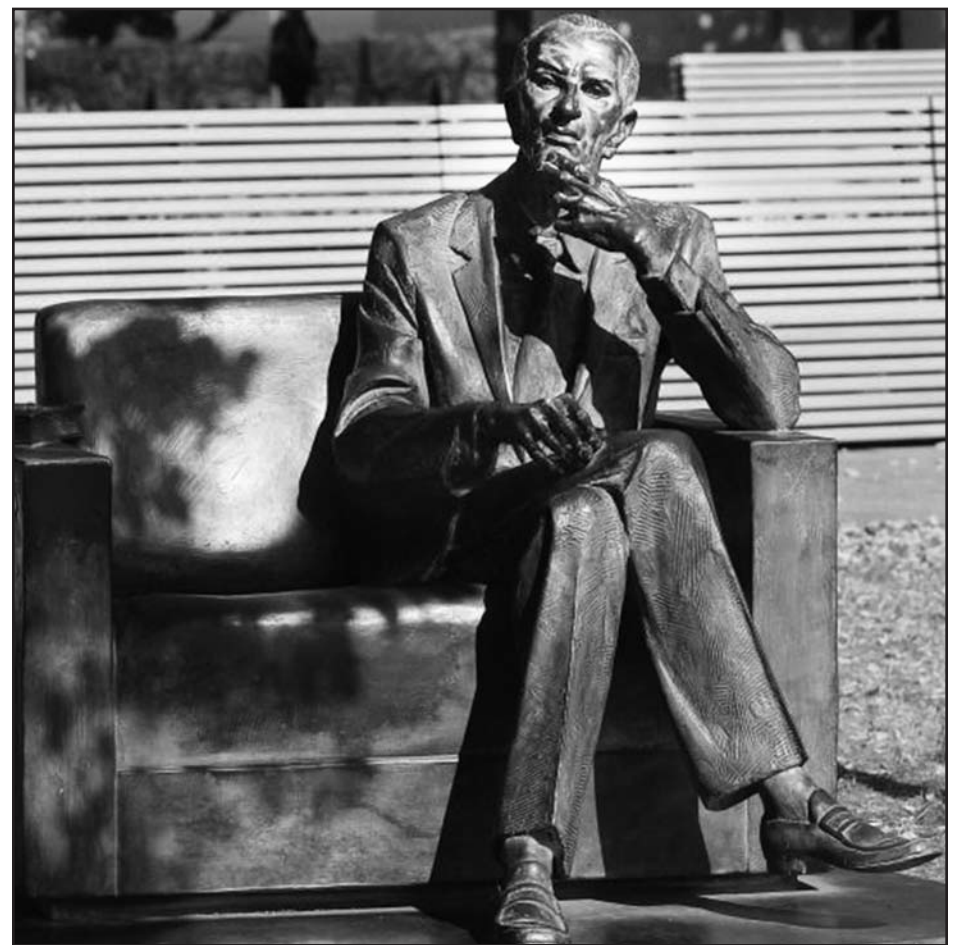
Michal Bilewicz, a psychologist who specializes in anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, describes Polish behavior toward Jews during the war as extremely complex and difficult to convey. Many assume that Poles collaborated with the Nazis, but this is wrong: Poland's underground state and army even had a unit to help Jews.

"They did not collaborate with the

Nazis. But at the same time large numbers of these people were anti-Semites," said Bilewicz, an associate professor at the Center for Research on Prejudice at Warsaw University. "They were more violently anti-Nazi than they were anti-Semitic, but they hated Jews. Sometimes they even said 'there is only one good thing about Hitler: that he resolved the Jewish issue in Poland.'"

This still-painful and unresolved relationship to the darker side of Poland's wartime history leads to frequent controversies.

When the Polish film *Ida* won an Oscar this year, Polish nationalists denounced it as "anti-Polish" for depicting Polish peasants who killed a Jewish family during the war, without any hint that the country was under German occupation or any acknowledgement of the existence of some rescuers.



A sculpture representing Jan Karski, a Polish World War II-era resistance fighter, in Warsaw.

Poles were also outraged this summer after FBI director James Comey, in a speech at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in April, listed Poles among the war's perpetrators.

"In their minds, the murderers and accomplices of Germany, and Poland, and Hungary, and so many, many other places, didn't do something evil. They convinced themselves it was the right thing to do, the thing they had to do," Comey said.

Then-president Bronislaw Komorowski called the comments "an insult to thousands of Poles who helped Jews," while Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz said: "To those who are incapable of presenting the historic truth in an honest way, I want to say that Poland was not a perpetrator but a victim of World War II."

"The (Polish) reaction was completely hysterical," said Grabowski, the historian. "What Comey said was basically and entirely true: that otherwise good people under very particular circumstances during the war started murdering Jews and felt absolutely no remorse or guilt. He mentioned the Germans, Hungarians and Poles, and he also could have mentioned the French and Italians and Ukrainians. His only sin was the sin of omission."

Bilewicz attributes what he calls Polish "hypersensitivity" in such debates to a "lack of acknowledgement of Polish suffering during the Second World War" — widespread ignorance outside of Poland to the huge civilian losses, the destruction of Warsaw, the fact that many non-Jews were also sent to concentration camps.

Rolat, the Holocaust survivor sponsoring the project, faced a recent set-

back when an international art jury picked an unusual concept from the many proposals: a forest nursery next to the Jewish history museum whose trees would later be replanted in locations linked to Jewish life.

Rolat says that project cannot be implemented because it would not be permanent and would require continuous maintenance funds. He has vowed to still build something beautiful and appropriate, insisting that one can never do enough to show gratitude to people like his nanny — a woman whose last name he doesn't even know.

"Elka was as important to me as a child as my mother was," Rolat said. "And she died only because she loved a Jewish child."



BOOK REVIEWS

SOLDIERS: GERMAN POWS ON FIGHTING, KILLING, AND DYING

Soldiers: German POWs on Fighting, Killing, and Dying.

By Sönke Neitzel and Harald Welzer. Translated by Jefferson Chase. Vintage Books, a division of Random House: New York, N.Y., 2013. 437 pp. \$16.95 Softcover.

REVIEWED BY DR. DIANE CYPKIN

"All we've achieved is that our reputation as soldiers and Germans has been completely besmirched. People say: 'You carry out all the orders when people are to be shot, whether it is right or wrong.' No one objects to the shooting of spies, but when whole villages, the entire population, including the children, is wiped out, or the people are sent away, as in POLAND or RUSSIA, then, my God, one can say it is pure murder, it is exactly what the Huns of old did. But then of course we are the most civilized people in the world, aren't we?"

Lieutenant General Friedrich von Broich (German POW — Trent Park)

The above quote is but a sampling of some of the thought-provoking material found in this exceptionally unique book by Sönke Neitzel and Harald Welzer, first published in German as *Soldaten* and now translated into English as *Soldiers: German POWs on Fighting, Killing, and Dying*. What makes this volume so unique? The material presented here was obtained covertly. In other words, German POWs held in

detention centers in America and Britain didn't realize that many of their conversations were being listened to and recorded . . . and if they did suspect it, it appears, they soon forgot! Initially, the purpose of this surveillance was, obviously, to discover anything that would help the Allied war effort. Now, however, it gives us a much more "up close" look at just what the World War II German soldier was thinking . . . the regular German soldier, not so much the SS.

Interestingly, most all their conversations were laced with violence, violence become an "everyday reality" to them. Even more interestingly, as these soldiers spoke about all the death and killing they were involved in, the words "death and kill" were "rarely used." It "was taken for granted." Instead, pilots, members of the *Luftwaffe*, for example, excitedly and "vivid[ly]" shared details about their determined "hunts" for Allied planes — military or civilian. Indeed, the authors here note how a civilian plane carrying the American actor Leslie Howard was brought down by *Luftwaffe* fighters. Pilots also talked joyfully about their impersonal strafing of ground targets — military or civilian. Daylight raids were the most fun, it seems, since pilots could actually

see what they had done "from a relatively safe distance"! In sum, all these "tales" became nothing more nor less than fun-filled "adventure stories that focus[ed] on . . . flying skill and ability to produce destructive results." German sailors, meanwhile, shared memories of the "tonnage" they sent to the bottom of the sea . . .

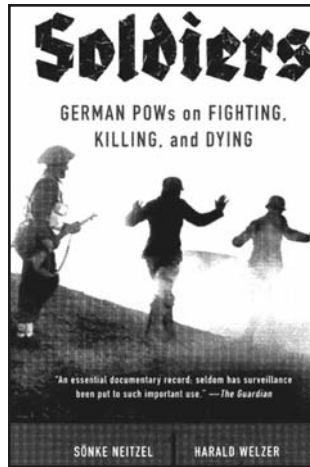
Still, what interests this reviewer and the readers of *M&R* most here is, undoubtedly, the musings of the German ground soldiers, members of the *Wehrmacht*, those who came face to face with their victims. Intriguingly, as we all know, for years the *Wehrmacht* was not implicated in any genocidal acts. Its "slate" was supposedly clean of that! Finally, though, the truth plainly came to light, and as the authors of *Soldiers* clearly state early on in their volume, "There is no doubt that the *Wehrmacht* was involved in criminal acts, from the killing of civilians to the systematic murder of Jewish men, women, and children." So, how did they feel about it?

When it came to taking the lives of civilian populations, the reasoning which placated the conscience of *Wehrmacht* soldiers was that they (these civilians) were partisans or

were helping them — hence they were paying for it . . . Thus, easily, "distinctions between military combatants as legitimate targets of attack and civilian noncombatants who should have been protected, basically dissolved." And the Jews? The "National Socialist moral codes had convinced many soldiers that Jews represented an objective problem that needed to be solved" — hence soldiers generally felt quite correct as regards the "job" they were doing. "For the soldiers, murder [was] destiny, as though some sort of higher power had preordained that select people — whether well educated, attractive and stylishly dressed or not — had to become victims." In fact, that first quote opening this review is singular and highly unusual. Then again, soldiers did, at times, wonder — if Germany were to lose the war — if retribution would follow should their present ruthless acts be discovered....

True, the *Wehrmacht* was not the out-and-out inhumane, bloodthirsty murderers the SS soldiers were . . . but they did their share of "helping" — a very sizeable share. "None of the large-scale executions such as *Babi Yar* . . . [could have taken] place without *Wehrmacht* involvement."

Dr. Diane Cypkin is a Professor of Media, Communication, and Visual Arts at Pace University.



THE FASCISTS AND THE JEWS OF ITALY

The Fascists and the Jews of Italy: Mussolini's Race Laws, 1938-1943.

By Michael A. Livingston. Cambridge University Press: New York, N.Y., 2014. 268 pp. \$90.

REVIEWED BY MARK L. BLACKMAN

A decade ago, then Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi was compelled to apologize for remarks that he made about Mussolini's "benign dictatorship": "Mussolini did not murder anyone. Mussolini sent people on holiday to internal exile." Over the years, it seems that Il Duce has largely and undeservedly benefited in the eyes of numerous historians and public perception for, well, not being Hitler. In actual fact, Mussolini was directly responsible for the deaths of many political opponents and the persecution of Italian Jews under his own comprehensive set of anti-Semitic racial laws that were a counterpart to Nazi Germany's Nuremberg Laws.

Similarly, there is a widespread view that Fascist Italy's *leggi razziali* (Race Laws), enacted in November 1938, were neither as severe nor as rigidly enforced as the Third Reich's. It is

true that the Race Laws were initially concerned with the persecution of Jews and their exclusion from Italian political, economic, educational, social and cultural life, and that the deportation of Italian Jews to Nazi extermination camps (nearly 7,000 identifiable persons, or almost 20% of the prewar total Italian Jewish population, died) didn't begin until after Mussolini was overthrown in the summer of 1943 and the Germans occupied northern Italy. Yet, by weakening the Jewish community (the oldest in Western Europe) and by gathering detailed information about them, the laws, though not inherently genocidal, helped facilitate the Italian stage of the Holocaust. So contends American legal scholar Michael A. Livingston. Livingston has a juridical emphasis, applying legal methodology, rather than following the more common political approach. He relies on both Fascist and Jewish archives, and examines the legal framework, con-

text and operation of the Italian anti-Semitic laws, from their shaping and drafting (and, in view of conversions and intermarriages, their painstaking consideration of "who is a Jew") to their day-to-day administration by the bureaucracy and their interpretation by the judicial system (which was remarkably independent), evidenced by specific cases. The work's subtitle is fitting: while Mussolini didn't originate the Race Laws, he did directly edit them.

In doing so, Livingston overturns common assumptions and beliefs, such as that anti-Semitism was uncommon in Italy (not so; indeed, the word "ghetto" is of Italian, or, more exactly, Venetian, origin), and that consequently, Italians didn't support the Race Laws and they were only half-heartedly enforced. As Livingston shows, in actuality, they were actively, rigorously enforced with regularity and applied with increasing dedication until 1943, particularly after the

war began to go badly for Italy. A month before his overthrow, Mussolini initiated plans for Jews' deportation to forced-labor camps. Furthermore, contrary to commonly held belief, these laws were as harsh as the Nuremberg Laws and, rather than being imported from, and imposed under pressure by, Germany, were distinctly Italian — and Fascist — in character, rooted in Italy's history and not an anomaly. Where they differed from the Nazis' equivalent was in the presence and influence of the Roman Catholic Church, which had reached accord with Mussolini in 1929 with the Lateran Treaties, and which, despite its own preaching of anti-Semitic doctrines, tended to regard Jewishness as primarily a matter of religion, as opposed to the Nazis' racial criteria. So the Church favored biological Jews who had converted to Catholicism, and particularly stood up for their non-Jewish spouses and children. The Italian laws, in their nominal, if superficial, legalistic structure, gave a veneer of "legitimacy" both for their administrators and even some of their victims. The main difference

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THE SECRETS OF UKRAINE'S SHAMEFUL "HOLOCAUST OF BULLETS" KILLING CENTER

BY WILL STEWART, MAILONLINE

Seventy years on from the end of the Second World War, the full, shocking scale of the Nazi-inspired Holocaust in Ukraine is finally being revealed — thanks to pioneering work by a French Catholic priest to research the truth of the industrial-scale killing.



Father Desbois is seeking to identify the sites of mass graves and erect memorials, but also to help relatives track where their ancestors were slain.

Around 2,000 mass graves of Jewish victims have been located where men, women and children were shot and buried by the Germans and their collaborators.

But there may be up to 6,000 more sites to uncover, with victims of this "Holocaust of bullets" — so called because unlike in Poland and Germany, where gas chambers were used as the means of slaughter, here most were summarily shot and buried nearby.

In many cases, the Jews were ordered to dig pits and then to strip naked before they were mown down by their murderers.

Some were buried in the unmarked plots while still alive.

Blood oozed through the soil at the sites of these graves, according to accounts assiduously collected by the French Catholic priest, Father Patrick Desbois, who began his search by seeking to trace his grandfather's experience as a prisoner of war held in a concentration camp by the Nazis in Ukraine during the Second World War.

He uncovered accounts of how Jews were killed by the Nazis "for fun," or "out of anger, boredom, drunkenness," or "to rape the girls."

Yet the Soviet Union, for its own motives, obscured the full scale of the Holocaust on its own territory.

Leading historian Mikhail Tyaglyy told *MailOnline* the number of Jewish victims in Ukraine is between 1.4 million and 1.6 million, significantly higher than the oft-quoted figure of around one million.

The priest's search took him to four sites around *Rava Ruska*, close to the Ukrainian border with Poland, where

15,000 Jews were slain, and also the site of a Nazi camp where his grandfather Claudius Desbois had been held as a prisoner of war.

Gradually, elderly locals who had kept quiet all their lives — mainly under Soviet rule — opened up to him, as hundreds more did in many other villages and towns in Ukraine.

One account from *Rava Ruska* was of a Nazi officer who spotted a young Jewish woman running out of the ghetto to buy butter at the market. He ordered her to be stripped naked, and demanded the trader smear her with the butter, after which he decreed her beaten to death with sticks.

In another case he recounted how "an unspeakably cruel German soldier grabbed a Jewish woman's child from her."

He added: "He was barely two years old, and he took him and banged his head repeatedly against the wall.... The child died in

pools of blood in front of the parent's eyes."

In separate testimony, an elderly witness called Yaroslav showed Father Desbois to a site outside the town, and told him how he witnessed the horror of mass killing as a 13-year-old boy in 1942.

He was the first of the elderly villagers to speak: many others followed him, here and in other locations.

Yaroslav described how the Jews arrived on foot and were forced to undress before being marched to "the side of a grave" in *Rava Ruska*.

"Yaroslav brought me in the forest with 50 farmers, very old people who were present at the killings," Father Desbois said.

"They described one by one what happened. One person said a German arrived alone on a motorcycle.

"He rode around the village. At the time, everyone wondered why. It turned out, he was planning the site of what would become *Rava Ruska's* Jewish mass grave."

On this occasion, some 1,500 Jews were marched to the huge pit, dug earlier by other Jews who had been killed with explosives.

The group seen by Yaroslav were then shot, their bodies layered on top of each other and covered by local youths from the village who had been requisitioned by the Germans.

Their clothes were ransacked for cash and valuables.

After the burial "the earth moved" from the helpless last struggles for life of those wounded but buried alive in this mass grave.

A week later, blood was still seeping out from this macabre site.

Elderly Olha Havrylivna — aged 12

when she witnessed the chilling atrocity here — remembered: "We saw arrests, killings, executions.

"They brought them to the edge of a pit and shot them. But you could see the pit move, because some of them were still alive. We were young and it was hard to watch. It was a tragedy, a great tragedy.

"The day we came to see they brought a lot of Jews here. There must have been 60 or 70. We looked on. We didn't go too near, we stayed over there, but we children could still see everything."

Olha told of how 15 German soldiers stood all around the pit where their captives were standing in groups.

They opened fire on the helpless Jews, who dropped back-first into the pits.

Another witness, Gregory Haven, recalled how the Germans had, before the killings, "ordered all the Jews in the village to wear an armband on their right arm with the Star of David.

"The cloth was white and the star black. The Jews had to give up the milk from their cows."

The Nazis "began by shooting old people and children, they left people between the ages of 18 and 45 to make them work."

"Three kilometers away, they killed them, people fell like flies. I didn't see them but I heard the shots. I saw a young Jew who brought corpses in a cart to the Jewish cemetery. It was during the winter of 1942, there was blood and the ground was red."

After one of the mass killings, in the evening, he recalled: "We began to smell an odor and then, as it smelled of death, they forced people who had carts and horses to bring sand there.

"They also put chlorine, that allowed them to lower the level of the pit by one meter, and the blood stopped running."

Locals went there "because the Jews had undressed there and people saw the Germans taking the civilian clothes of women and men, they came to see if they could find something — money, rings, gold watches."

The priest's grandfather, a French political prisoner, went home after his internment, during which he survived eating dandelions and grass.

Desbois said: "He never spoke. He only said that outside the camp was worse than in the camp. I wanted to understand why, and I discovered that 18,000 Jews were shot in this village, *Rava Ruska*."

It became clear to him that elderly

Ukrainians like Yaroslav, witnesses to this horror, wanted to end their vow of silence on the terrible things they had seen in their youth.

"People who were present at the killings wanted to speak before they die," he said.

"Many people were requisitioned to dig the mass graves, to fill them, to bring the Jews in horse-drawn carts, to bring back their suits, to sell the suits, to put ashes on the blood. Fifty different jobs."

He explained: "Thirteen German private trucking companies came to work in *Rava Ruska*.

"The Nazi killers hired these German companies to move the bodies to mass graves. People must understand, *Rava Ruska* was a huge killing center: first for the Jews, then for political prisoners, and then for the local population and the Roma. Each person who was killed here was an individual. We cannot forget this."

Some 32,000 were buried around *Rava Ruska* and in neighboring towns like *Bakhiv*, where for years farmers



Witnesses have told of how the Nazis killed Ukrainian Jews "for fun," "out of anger, boredom, drunkenness," or "to rape the girls."

have dug up human remains — and in so doing found mass graves — as they ploughed the fields.

One veteran, Tikhon Leshchuk, now 89, recalled how his father, a priest, hid a Jewish girl in their house throughout Nazi occupation.

"On June 27, 1941, German troops came into *Rava Ruska*. The soldiers destroyed the Jewish cemetery and soon made a Jewish ghetto in the town center.

"The market square and the Jewish quarters around it became a ghetto. All the Jews from *Rava Ruska* and the nearby villages were brought there," he said.

His best friend at school — a Jew — suddenly vanished, presumably shot by the Nazis.

"One day when we were in the village, my father's friend came. She was a Jew and she brought her 10-year-old girl and asked my father to let her stay with us.

"My father agreed, and Anna, the girl, hid with us all through the years of German rule. I'm not sure what hap-

(Continued on page 11)

SURVIVORS' CORNER

SURVIVOR DEFIED DEATH IN HOLOCAUST FOR THE LOVE OF HER SISTER

BY JONAH MANDEL,
THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Suzanna Braun, who experienced the horrors of the Holocaust and defied death at least three times, believes she survived because of her determination to save her sister — and some divine intervention.

The first time she beat death was sheer luck.

Suzanna was just two weeks shy of 16 when she, her sister Agi and her parents were rounded up in their hometown of *Kosice*, in what is now Slovakia, and sent to the death camp in Poland, Auschwitz-Birkenau.

There, the women were separated from the men. As her father was taken away to the gas chambers, he shouted his last words to her: "Take care of your sister!"

Agi, four years older than her sister, was already in ill health.

Now 86 and living in a retirement home in *Shoresh*, a small village west of Jerusalem, Suzanna recalls every detail of how the women were stripped and herded into the "showers" where there was a faint odor of gas.

Locked behind a steel door with soap in their hands, some women waited for water. Others, who had heard the rumors, began panicking.

It was only when the doors opened they realized they had cheated death.

"They were out of gas," she told AFP.

Wearing dresses from Gypsies killed before them, they were loaded onto trucks and driven to Estonia to join thousands of other women on a death march aimed at killing or weakening as many as possible.

After her mother was shot dead during the march, Suzanna did not speak for a month. But it hardened her resolve to look after her only surviving relative.



Suzanna Braun, who experienced the horrors of the Holocaust, holds a photo of herself and her sister, Agi.

"I didn't think about anything, only how to save my sister. Because father asked me to take care of her."

At one point, they were forced to cross a wide river, but Agi could not swim, so Suzanna made makeshift wooden floats to carry her to the other side.

They survived the march but were taken to *Stuffhof* camp in Poland, where Agi was put into the infirmary and Suzanna would sneak in food for

her at night.

When the Nazis realized Russian forces were heading toward the camp, they attempted to kill as many inmates as possible with lethal injections containing strychnine and gasoline.

As the Nazi orderly was going from woman to woman injecting the poison, Suzanna told her sister and three other women to turn their arms over so the injection would hopefully miss a vein.

The poison took effect quickly.

"My hand stopped working," she said showing a pale, rounded scar.

Looking around, Suzanna seized a wad of hay from their bedding and began putting pressure on her arm, she recounted.

"It exploded like a geyser."

Quickly she started digging into the flesh with stalks of hay to gouge out the poison. She managed to do the same for her sister and another woman.

"It was like providence," she said.

Covered in blood, she dragged her sister to a nearby hill and rolled her down it. A Nazi officer was passing, so she played dead, and he kicked her down the same hill.

She then got her sister to an abandoned cowshed, where she nourished her with leftover milk until Russian forces arrived the next day.

Not long after, at a hospital in *Danzig*, Agi's life was once again saved by medical staff who amputated her gangrened feet.

"The whole time, not my brain but rather divine providence worked for me," Suzanna said of her survival.

"And I cooperated with that providence, with the sixth sense."

The two eventually immigrated to Israel, where Suzanna married, had a daughter and now has two grandchildren. Agi, who married but remained childless, eventually died in 2013, aged 88.

That was when Suzanna decided to go public with the sisters' story by going back to her hometown along with filmmaker Yarden Karmin to document her story. The documentary is called *In the Third Person*.

"This entire story is being told because I wanted to commemorate her," she said. "My last task is not to live well, go to the cinema and other frivolities, but to tell the story."

All along it was about saving her big sister.

"I wasn't afraid to die. It wasn't about me," she said, explaining that the film was a way of preserving her memory.

"I wanted something to remain after her."

FROM PSEUDONYM TO SPEAKING OUT: ANNE FRANK'S BEST FRIEND

BY STAV ZIV, NEWSWEEK

Jacqueline van Maarsen will never forget the sight of Anne Frank's shoes, left on the floor in front of her bed. The Franks had vanished, and the normally tidy home was in disarray. Van Maarsen, Anne's best friend, was accompanying another girl into the apartment to fetch a kitchen item that had been lent to the Franks, she recalls. Anne and Jacques had promised to leave one another a note, should either of them need to disappear, but such a message was nowhere to be found. Nor could they locate the red and beige plaid diary with a clasp on the side that Anne had received for her 13th birthday just a few weeks prior.

Van Maarsen couldn't have known then that the diary was in an attic across the city's streets and over its web of canals, and was to be Anne's companion for the next two years in what she called "the Secret Annex." She couldn't have guessed that it would eventually be read by millions of strangers or that more than seven

decades later she would be speaking about the Holocaust as the childhood friend of one of its most famous victims.

On a Friday afternoon at the end of May, an 86-year-old van Maarsen spoke about her friend, and about why it is she travels around the world to do so as an octogenarian. She and her husband Ruud Sanders had arrived in New York City to attend the Champions of Jewish Values International Awards Gala, where van Maarsen received the Champion of the Human Spirit Award "for her dedication to promoting Jewish values and keeping the memory of Anne Frank alive."

Van Maarsen settled into a spot on a small sofa in the corner of the Hotel Elysee's upstairs lounge, with her husband seated beside her. A yellow-tinged light filled the room above wooden furniture and a maroon carpet with gold patterns, contrasting with the bright daylight filtering through the windows overlooking Manhattan's East Side. Van Maarsen is slight, with a short crop of hair and glasses that seem to float unframed

on the bridge of her nose.

Born in Amsterdam after her parents moved there from Paris, van Maarsen remembers at a certain point German children began to appear in her class. She was too young at the time to understand that many of them were Jews emigrating out of Germany after Hitler and the Nazis' rise to power. "I had a little friend who was my age and she came from Germany," she says. "My father told her father, 'It's good that you came here because you're safe.' So I was puzzled; I was only 5 years old and asked the girl, 'Why were you not safe in Germany?' I was quite astonished. And she said the word 'anti-Semitism,' which I didn't understand at all."

Though she didn't know them yet, the Franks were one such family who fled Germany in the early 1930s, soon after Hitler was named chancellor on January 30, 1933. "Because we're Jewish, my father immigrated to Holland in 1933," Anne wrote in one of her first diary entries. In another entry, written just two days after she received the diary, she wrote, "I only met Jacqueline van Maarsen when I

started at the Jewish Lyceum, and now she's my best friend."

The restrictions on Jews began piling on after the German invasion of the Netherlands in May 1940. As Anne describes in her diary entry from June 20, 1942, "our freedom was severely restricted by a series of anti-Jewish decrees." Jews were to wear a yellow star, and children could attend only Jewish schools. They were prohibited from using streetcars and cars, going to the theater or movies, using swimming pools and athletic fields and visiting Christians in their homes. Anne wrote, "Jacques always said to me, 'I don't dare do anything anymore, 'cause I'm afraid it's not allowed.'"

But Anne's attitude was, "We can't go to the cinema, so we make a cinema ourselves," van Maarsen recalls. The girls would cut out pictures of film stars and sort the postcards they collected. They played Monopoly and chatted about all sorts of things; Anne especially liked talking about their classmates, van Maarsen says. Once, Anne declared that they should

(Continued on page 15)

WHY DO HOLOCAUST CEREMONIES IGNORE JEWISH RESCUERS?

BY GEDALYAH REBACK,
ARUTZ SHEVA

For those who have attended Holocaust commemoration events or have visited Yad Vashem, they are likely familiar with the Righteous Among the Nations, a long list of acknowledged non-Jews who exerted immense effort to protect and save Jews during the Holocaust. They are often heralded as examples of coexistence despite an atmosphere of unrelenting anti-Semitism. In the process, they are shown as paradigms for continued mutual tolerance.

But, what about the Jewish heroes? That is a question that Alan Schneider, director of the B'nai Brith World Center in Jerusalem, and several others have asked after reaching the conclusion that in the effort to showcase a sense of diversity and pluralism in Holocaust commemoration, the heroics and bravery of Jewish rescuers have actually been downplayed or overlooked.

"Our focus on Jewish self-rescue is

something relatively new. There had been some research and some books but it's a miniscule part of the historiography of the entire Holocaust.

"We know that thousands of Jews were involved in rescuing other Jews. There has been a focus over the years on the means of murder employed by the Nazis — the Nazi murder machine and the Nazi army. These have been issues of very intense research," says Schneider, who says that research has come at the expense of following patterns of Jewish resistance to and subversion of Nazi orders to deport or execute Jews. "Unfortunately, Jewish self-rescue has not been a great point of interest by historians."

The reasons are many, says Schneider.

"It's interesting, Patrick Henry's book dealt largely with Jewish self-rescue," referencing the Whitman College professor's *We Only Know Men*, "and this non-Jewish professor reached the conclusion that Jews did more than any other national group in

Europe to help rescue themselves. Comparing the conditions Jews tried surviving under to what others were living under, he reached that conclusion. Compare Russian prisoners of wars or Polish officers who never revolted over the whole course of the war, to Jews who were in concentration camps and ghettos and did revolt. "That's not the conclusion the average Jew today would necessarily reach."

Part of the mission of the Jewish Rescuers Citation is to reinstall the idea that Jews are not only capable, but prone to be hardened heroes.

"We are raising these stories and bringing them to attention to help Jews reach this conclusion. This notion that Jews went to their deaths like sheep to the slaughter is just not true. This phrase was very common just a few years ago. That was not actually the case, across the board, and there were many cases of resistance — armed resistance."

Jews fought in Allied armies in great numbers and as partisans, Schneider

acknowledges, but that isn't the priority of Schneider's initiative.

"We're focusing on Jews who undertook rescue activities. In most cases, it was impossible to both rescue (Jews) and fight the Nazis. If you'd fight, the Nazis would obviously try to weed them out of the forest wherever they were hiding."

Schneider points to a specific incident that pushed one Chaim Waltz to launch the initiative for the recognition in the first place.

"Chaim Waltz of Holland was rescued as a child by three men: two non-Jews and one Jew. He didn't know much about it until he heard a lecture by Yehuda Bauer that it is more typical of Jews to recognize contributions of others and not their own heroes."

He cites the mandate of Yad Vashem to recognize the Righteous Among the Nations and the thousands of names it has added to that database.

"It got Waltz thinking that his two
(Continued on page 14)

ARCHAEOLOGISTS DELICATELY DIG UP NAZI DEATH CAMP SECRETS AT TREBLINKA

BY ALAN BOYLE, NBC

Archaeologists have unearthed unprecedented physical evidence documenting the extent of the killing at the Nazis' *Treblinka* death camp in Poland — and they let filmmakers document the finds as well.

The grisly results are revealed in *Treblinka: Hitler's Killing Machine*, an hour-long documentary. But they're revealed in a way that pays respect to the estimated 900,000 Jewish victims of that killing machine.

"The ethical dimension of the work that I do is really important to me," Caroline Sturdy Colls, an archaeologist from Staffordshire University who led the excavation, told NBC News.

Treblinka is a name as infamous as Auschwitz and *Dachau* in the Holocaust list of horrors, but the site in eastern Poland is different: There were no inmates liberated by Allied troops, no photos showing disused gas chambers. The Germans finished their work at *Treblinka* in 1943 and bulldozed the camp. To cover their tracks, they went so far as to plant crops and build a farmhouse on the leveled ground.

Eyewitness accounts from survivors and captured guards brought the true story to light: One camp at *Treblinka* was primarily a forced-labor facility. Another camp was designed specifically for herding thousands of victims at a time into one side of a "bathhouse," where they were gassed to death with carbon monoxide exhaust from tank engines. The bodies were

taken out the other side for mass burial, and later cremation.

THE FIRST DIG IN DECADES

After the war, *Treblinka* was turned into a memorial. Out of respect for the victims, no excavation was allowed there. That is, until



Archaeologist Caroline Sturdy Colls and her colleagues excavate a trench at the *Treblinka* concentration camp.

Sturdy Colls and her colleagues won approval from Polish authorities as well as Jewish religious leaders to conduct a limited dig.

"There are some questions that can only be answered by archaeology," Sturdy Colls explained. "As we enter, unfortunately, an age without survivors, archaeology can provide much more new evidence."

Over the course of six years, the archaeologists developed computerized maps of the area using aerial photography, GPS technology, ground-penetrating radar and a laser-scanning technology known as lidar.

Those maps helped them zero in on a handful of sites.

"Without that technology, I never would have been able to do this work at *Treblinka*, because no one wanted excavations there," Sturdy Colls said. "Nobody wanted the ground to be disturbed unnecessarily."

pathologists for further study and final disposition. This case was different: The archaeologists' prime directive was to disturb the remains as little as possible.

"What we were doing there was closing the lid again on that grave site. ... It didn't cross my mind that it would be me reinterring the remains," she said.

GHOULISH STARS OF DAVID

At another site, the archaeologists found the first physical evidence of the brick bathhouse where hundreds of thousands were killed. They uncovered the building's foundation, as well as yellowish tiles that were stamped with six-pointed Stars of David.

That ghoulish touch, which matches witnesses' descriptions of the site, was part of the Nazis' plan to lull their Jewish prisoners into compliance before they were killed.

Sturdy Colls plans to return to the site this year for further investigation, with the aim of documenting *Treblinka's* history in an exhibit and a book. Following up on what she's found so far will take "at least another two years," she said.

She expects the study to counter the lingering claims of Holocaust deniers — and show that, despite its best efforts, Nazi Germany couldn't erase the evidence of a monstrous human tragedy.

"They did a very good job of hiding it, but in actual fact, they didn't 'sterilize' this landscape," Sturdy Colls said. "They weren't that efficient."

THE AMERICAN & INTERNATIONAL SOCIETIES

GUEST SPEAKER RABBI DR. JACOB J. SCHACTER

Rabbi Dr. Jacob J. Schacter is University Professor of Jewish History and Jewish Thought and Senior Scholar at the Center for the Jewish Future at Yeshiva University.



He is the son of Rabbi Herschel Schacter, an Army Chaplain during WWII, who led survivors of *Buchenwald* in prayer service after liberation of the concentration camp.

From 2000 to 2005 Rabbi Jacob J. Schacter served as dean of the Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik Institute in Boston. He was the first rabbi of the Young Israel of Sharon, MA, from 1977 to 1981, creating a new, vibrant and committed community. From 1981-2000, he served as the rabbi of The Jewish Center in New York City, moving the congregation from 180 to over 600 members over the course of his tenure.

Dr. Schacter holds a Ph.D. in Near Eastern Languages from Harvard University and received rabbinic ordination from Mesivta Torah Vodaath. He graduated from Brooklyn College in 1973, summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa with the Abraham S. Goodhart Award for Excellence in Judaic Studies. Dr. Schacter was a teaching fellow at Harvard from 1978 to 1980, director of Yeshiva University's Torah u-Madda Project from 1986 to 1997, and an adjunct assistant professor at the Stern College for Women at Yeshiva University from 1993 to 1999. In 1995, he was awarded the prestigious Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellowship from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University. He also currently serves as a member of the faculty of The Wexner Foundation and The Wexner Heritage Foundation.

Dr. Schacter is co-author of the award-winning *A Modern Heretic and a Traditional Community: Mordecai M. Kaplan, Orthodoxy, and American Judaism*, published by Columbia University Press in 1996, and he is author of close to fifty articles and reviews in Hebrew and English.

Rabbi Schacter holds a number of prominent Jewish communal positions. He was awarded several fellowships and grants to further his scholarly research.

HUMANITARIAN MARY JEAN EISENHOWER

Mary Jean Eisenhower was born in Washington, D.C. during her grandfather Dwight D. Eisenhower's first term in office as president of the United States. She was christened in the Blue Room of the White House and grew up in nearby Gettysburg, Pa, in a home with property abutting the Eisenhower farm, where President Eisenhower eventually retired. She attended several schools in Pennsylvania until her father, John, was named as US Ambassador to Belgium. She lived in Brussels with her family from shortly after her grandfather's death in 1969 through 1972. Mary Eisenhower is chairman emeritus of People to People International, which was founded September 11, 1956 by her grandfather. Mary says that she joined PTPI hoping to carry on her grandfather's dream, but that now it has become a dream of her own. President Eisenhower founded PTPI with the financial backing of his friend Joyce Hall, founder of Hallmark Cards, who insisted it be headquartered in Kansas City. Mary Eisenhower established the PTPI Friendship Fund in 1999 following an inspirational visit to an orphanage in Morocco. The fund is designed as a way for people to help the friends and facilities they visit throughout the world and to help the PTPI Chapter network assist each other. To date, the fund has provided assistance to causes



such as the Global Humanitarian Eradication of Landmines; Children's Mercy Hospital in London, England; earthquake relief in India; disaster relief to victims of September 11, 2001, and their families; support of schools for the underprivileged in China and Sri Lanka; a home for leukemia victims and their families in Cuba; Operation International Children; New Horizons (a library project in Vietnam); The survivors of Rwanda; Japan tsunami relief; Haiti; and Friends of Egypt, among others. One hundred percent of all funds received through the organization go to the efforts and projects as specified by the donors. Following September 11, 2001, Mary's focus intensified toward getting

young people from around the world together to learn about each other and conflict management. Her vision resulted in "Peace Camp 2003: An Evolution of Thought and Action" and "The Global Peace Initiative." Both efforts have brought people from diverse areas, more than 30 nationalities, together in Egypt, Jordan and Turkey, to discuss issues and reach a better understanding of their unique and individual cultures. The program remains active today.

Mary is continuing her humanitarian work as the chief development officer for Outreach International, a humanitarian organization devoted to permanently eliminating poverty throughout the world.

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REPORT FROM YAD VASHEM

THE ANGUISH OF SEPARATION: CHILDREN AND THEIR RESCUERS

BY IRENA STEINFELDT

In 1942, three-year-old Bernard Tuch of *Antwerp*, Belgium, was brought to the home of the Willems family, who lovingly sheltered and cared for him. After liberation, when they learned that his parents had not survived, Bernard's uncle came to reclaim the little boy. However, Bernard refused to leave the home of his rescuers. The uncle, who wished to be united with the only other survivor of their family, turned to the courts, and the family was forced to restore the child to his relative. Bernard later recalled how his uncle, who thought it best for the child to sever all ties with the Willemses, refused to give them access to him. Sadly, a short time later, Bernard's uncle — a young and traumatized survivor himself — found it too difficult to care for him, and regretfully brought him to an orphanage. In his testimony, Bernard Tuch laconically describes the painful transition: "From a loving Catholic Flemish home, I

arrived at an unfamiliar, French-speaking Jewish orphanage."

Bidding farewell to their rescuer families after the war exacted a high price not only from the children, but also from the rescuers who had cared for them for months and often years. In many cases, the ties between the benefactors and those they saved developed into a profoundly close relationship, with the shared experience during the Holocaust period fusing them into a cohesive family unit.

There were also cases in which rescuers and survivors cut off all ties because one side or the other could not bear to experience the excruciating pain of separation again. In certain cases, there were disputes, including legal ones, related to the continued custody of children. Some rescuers refused to return the children, believing with all their hearts that the par-

ents, due to the traumas that they had experienced, would be unable to give the children a warm home or raise them properly. When no family members survived, the rescuers could not understand why the child should be raised in an institution at a time when they themselves could offer him or her a loving family.

Even when the children were returned to the Jewish world, some children found it extremely difficult.

Sometimes, they still had a faint memory of their original family; in other cases, parents or relatives suddenly reappeared in the child's world as complete strangers. The upheaval was terrible — for a second time, children were forcibly

cut off from the life and family to which they had become accustomed. Moreover, the challenge of rebuilding a new life was enormous: Surviving parents returned from the war bruised and penniless, whereas the rescuing

family could provide warmth, love and stability. Many children ran away to return to the homes of their rescuers, viewing them as their "real" family.

The case of Jan and Wilhelmina Strating from the Netherlands is exceptional. This childless couple hid Samuel de Leeuw (b. 1941) in their home in *Heerlen*. After the war, Samuel's mother, Elizabeth, came to reclaim her child. The three adults decided that Samuel would have three parents. He would live with his mother in Amsterdam, but Jan and Wilhelmina would share all family events and enjoy Samuel's visits.

In many cases, however, it was only decades after the end of the war and the anguish of parting after liberation, that survivors revisited their past, and once again sought out contact with their rescuers. Many of them still turn today to the Department of the Righteous Among the Nations at Yad Vashem with requests to recognize their rescuers, lest their inspirational and exceptional kindness be forgotten forever.



Bernard Tuch, a child in hiding, 1943. Yad Vashem.

RETURN TO LIFE AFTER THE LIBERATION

BY PROF. DINA PORAT

On May 8, 1945, when the defeated Germans finally capitulated to the Allied Forces, great joy spread throughout the world. Throughout the European continent, barely freed from the clutches of the Nazi regime, military parades and celebrations followed one another in close succession. Yet one group of people did not take part in the general euphoria — the Jews of Europe. For them, victory had come too late.

The day of liberation, the one for which every Jew had longed throughout the years of the Holocaust, was for most a day of crisis and emptiness, a feeling of overwhelming loneliness as they grasped the sheer scale of the destruction on both the personal and communal level. Some six million Jews had been murdered — about one-third of world Jewry — and those who had survived were scattered throughout Europe. Tens of thousands of survivors of the camps and the death marches, liberated by the Allied armies on German soil and in other countries, were in a severely deteriorated physical condition and a state of emotional shock. Others emerged for the first time from various places of hiding and shed the false identities they had assumed, or surfaced from partisan units in whose ranks they had fought for the liberation of Europe. In the wake of international agreements signed at the end of the war, some 200,000 additional Jews began to make their way back

west from the Soviet Union, where they had fled and managed to survive the war years.

With the advent of liberation, piercing questions arose in the minds of the survivors: How would they be able



Moment of liberation by the US Army of a transport carrying some 2,500 prisoners from *Bergen-Belsen* to *Theresienstadt*.

to go back to living a normal life, to build homes and families? And having survived, what obligation did they bear toward those who had not? The overwhelming majority of survivors took no revenge on the Germans, but set out on a path of rehabilitation, rebuilding and creativity, while commemorating the world that was no more.

During the Holocaust, many Jews lived with the feeling that they were the last to survive. Nevertheless, after liberation, survivors went far and wide in search of

family members, friends and loved ones who might also have stayed alive, against all odds. Many decided to go back to their prewar homes, but they encountered utter destruction. In some places, especially in Eastern Europe, Jews met with severe outbreaks of anti-Semitism — more than 1,000 Jews were murdered in the initial postwar years by the locals. The most appalling episode was the *Kielce* pogrom — a violent attack in July 1946 by Polish residents against their Jewish neighbors — in which 42 Jews were murdered, some of them the sole survivors of entire families, and many others were injured.

The *Kielce* pogrom became a turning point in the history of *She'erit Hapleita*, or the surviving remnant, as Holocaust survivors began to be known. A mass migration entitled *Habricha* (The Escape) saw as many Jews as possible finding their way to territories controlled by British and US troops in Germany, as a step before leaving Europe. These refugees joined the tens of thousands of Jewish survivors liberated in Central Europe, and together they amassed in the DP camps across Germany, Austria and Italy. Oftentimes, these camps were established at the sites of former Nazi concentration camps, among them *Bergen-Belsen* and *Buchenwald*.

The activities of *She'erit Hapleita* in the DP camps were a powerful expression of the survivors' efforts to return to life after the war. They formed new families and an inde-

pendent leadership, set up educational and foster-care facilities for children and youth, published dozens of newspapers and magazines, collected testimonies on the fate of Jews during the Holocaust, and became a significant factor in the Zionist movement's international aspirations toward the establishment of a Jewish state.

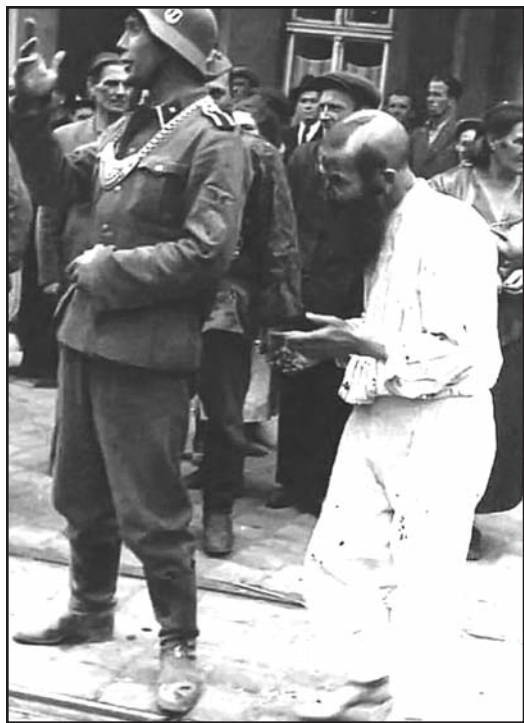
About two-thirds of the survivors who chose not to remain in Europe after the war set their sights on Eretz Israel. Yet going to Israel was a formidable struggle, in view of the policies imposed by the British Mandate that barred them from entering. As part of the effort to break through the borders and prohibitions, the illegal immigration movement — *Ha'apala* — was organized, whereby survivors boarded old vessels in various Mediterranean ports and sailed for Eretz Israel. The remaining third of the survivors emigrated to the US, Latin America, South Africa, Canada and Australia.

Ha'apala, as well as emigration to other countries, was a pivotal stage in the survivors' postwar recovery process. Holocaust survivors contributed, each in their own way, to building a better world for themselves, for their children and for future generations that would never know the horrors of the Holocaust. As survivor Riva Chirurg, who lost dozens of family members in the *Lodz* ghetto and at *Auschwitz*, said: "If more than 20 people, second and third generation, gather around my Pesach Seder table, I know I have done my share."

THE SECRETS OF UKRAINE'S SHAMEFUL "HOLOCAUST OF BULLETS" KILLING CENTER

(Continued from page 5)

pened with her mother, but Anna survived and later became a school teacher in *Rava Ruska*."



Although some "radical nationalists" helped the Nazis, they did most of the killing of local Jews in Ukraine (pictured) themselves.

A witness from *Bakhiv*, Temofis Ryzvanuk, then 14, told Father Desbois how Germans beat the Jews with whips to force them to dig the holes in which they would be buried.

"We were so afraid of the Germans. They had things on their caps, they were terrifying.

"My father's brother said: 'Don't be afraid, no one is going to kill you. They're only killing Jews. And they realized that they were going to be killed.'

"They stripped them naked, men and women. When they had killed them, they put them beside each other, head to head, to pile in as many as possible, to save space. The Germans had automatic rifles and when they got close to the pit they shot them."

Temofis described the bloody execution as a "production line" that was "so well organized" that it only took a few minutes for everyone to be killed.

"They had barely got out when they fell and were pushed in and piled together, head to head like herrings. Then the next wagonload arrived, and then the next," he said.

Desbois warned: "A whole part of the genocide has not been declared.

"The challenge is to collect the maximum amount of evidence about the killing of the Jews in these countries and find out about the mass graves.

"Tomorrow the witnesses will disappear and the deniers will overreact, saying that the Jews falsified the story.

"I always say, the Holocaust was not a tsunami. It was a crime. And when there's a crime you have evidence. It's very easy to find evidence in these villages."

In all, more than one million Ukrainian Jews were murdered by

Hitler's troops, and Father Desbois and his humanitarian organization Yahad – In Unum, are seeking to identify the sites and erect memorials, but also to help relatives track where their ancestors were slain and now lie buried.

"Twenty-five years ago, I learned that in *Rava Ruska* there was a camp where 25,000 Soviet prisoners were killed by the Germans," he said in this village, once a thriving town with 42 percent of its population Jewish.

"There was a memorial for the Soviet prisoners. But there were no memorials for the mass graves of the Jews."

He has now ensured there is a memorial here — erected in May this year — and that the graves, and the memory of what happened, are protected.

But it was his experience in *Rava Ruska* — which was also on the main railway line to the death camp of *Belzec* in Nazi-occupied Poland where up to 600,000 were exterminated in gas chambers —

that led him to expand his search across the country.

"We want to show that we will come back," he said.

"We will come back to the last grave where they killed the Jews.... We have a duty to victims because each and every one of them had a name."

He has estimated that there may be another 6,000 sites still to find, reported *Deutsche Welle*.

Elsewhere in Ukraine, he heard from Nikola Kristitch, who was aged eight in 1942, when he saw a vision of hell that haunted him for the rest of his life.

He was hiding in the trees when he saw dead children being thrown by hand into a pit — a mass grave.

Adults "were completely naked and walked with the rabbi at their head. He gave a sermon, to all those who were already there. And the cars kept coming, there were more and more people and they went into the pit in rows. They all lay down like herrings.

"They lay down and there was one submachine gun and two Germans, they had the skull and crossbones on their caps. They fired a burst at the people lying there, and then more went in and another burst.

"They kept shooting them until nightfall. And we watched. Then the Germans went back again to get the villagers to cover the grave.

"That night, the people covered it in, but the ground was still moving, for another two days. The ground heaved. I remembered one of the girls, a young girl. Her panties were around her ankles.

"A German fired at her and her hair caught fire. She screamed and he took an automatic rifle, got into the grave and fired.

"The bullet ricocheted off his knee

and he bled everywhere. He bandaged his knee, he was half undressed, and then he emptied his round. He even killed Jews who still had their clothes on, he couldn't wait, he was so crazed with rage. He fired at everybody, he was crazy."

A sign of what was to come under the Germans was seen in the *Lviv* pogrom of June 1941 immediately after the Nazis entered the city after pushing out the Red Army.

A Ukrainian mob, eagerly backed by the new occupiers, stripped and beat Jewish women in the streets who were subjected to public humiliation.

This was part of an orgy of anti-Semitic violence, including beatings and killings, which led to the deaths of 4,000 Jews in *Lviv*.

"The topic of the Holocaust was almost banned in Soviet times," Mikhail Tyaglyy, historian of the Ukrainian Center of Holocaust Studies, told *MailOnline*.

For modern Ukraine the subject is difficult, too, because it means admitting a role for nationalists in colluding with the Nazis, in part because some preferred a German occupation to Stalin's as the lesser of two evils.

Soviet history neglected the anti-Semitic aspect of the Jewish killings, lumping these deaths together with total losses in the USSR.

"We are touching the topic of Ukrainian nationalism here and it is a complicated matter. The situation in Ukraine was not so different to what was going on in other Soviet regions which were occupied by Nazis — everywhere they relied on local nationalists, who often blamed Jews for supporting the 'Moscow-Bolshevik regime,' as they said at the time.

"Such attitude easily inspired pogroms as we had in Western Ukraine.

"It is true that radical nationalists helped Nazis in guarding and performed other tasks. But Nazis did not trust mass killing of Jews to locals."

Tyaglyy added: "It is vital for all Ukrainians to keep memories of what happened in Ukraine, to come back to it, because this experience can teach us many important lessons needed nowadays."

He said: "There may be differences in calculating the number of Jewish population in Ukraine before the war; it is about including or not including the Eastern regions of Poland after Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. But in general we can say that at least a half - if not more - of all Ukrainian Jews were killed in the Holocaust in our territory."

Iosif Zisels, co-president of Association of Jewish Organizations

and Societies in Ukraine, said that six million Jews were killed in the Holocaust in Europe.

"Of these, 1.5 million to 1.6 million were Ukrainian Jews," he said, "In other words, one in four were Ukrainian Jews."

He added: "There are certain stereotypes about participation of Ukrainian nationalists in pogroms in the early war years which were planted by Soviet history.

"It is true that the local population did cooperate with German Nazis in the occupied territories, but the majority of them were ethnic Russian.

"Russia makes a point about Ukrainian nationalists because it is keen to divert suspicion from itself."

The notion of Ukrainian nationalists colluding with the Nazis was a vivid horror played on by Soviet propaganda, and now seized on again by the Russian authorities in branding "Fascist" those who currently want to be outside Moscow's sphere of control.

Hitler had planned to eradicate over half of Ukraine's population so that the country's rich farmland could be repopulated with Germans in their so-called quest for *Lebensraum*.

By 1945, some three million non-Jewish Ukrainians had been mur-



The pogroms were a part of systematic anti-Semitic violence, including beatings and killings, which led to the deaths of 4,000 Jews in *Lviv*.

dered by the Germans in addition to those killed in the Holocaust.

The priest is unapologetic over his campaign in Ukraine.

"Why do we come back to Ukraine?" he asked. "Because one day we will have to go back to Iraq, because one day we will have to go back to the last mass grave in *Darfur*."

Unless the lesson is learned from the Holocaust, "tomorrow will be the same story."

Historian Mikhail Tyaglyy said the truth about the Holocaust in Ukraine must be taught to young people.

"It is important to all times and all generations. Radical extremism and anti-Semitism still exist, and this is why it must be taught.

"If we look at modern German society, we can hardly see any signs of anti-Semitism and xenophobia there, but it became possible because of long-term wise educational, cultural and historical policies of the German state within the last decades."

WHEN A DUTCH JEWISH WOMAN TAUGHT SS OFFICERS HOW TO DANCE

BY CNAAN LIPHSHIZ,
THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Even before Nazi racial laws turned her into a wanted person in her native Netherlands, Roosje Glaser had limited patience for rules.

A lighthearted and sometimes frivolous Jewish dance instructor who loved jazz music and the company of handsome men, Glaser ignored the 1940 Nazi takeover of Holland and the murderous anti-Semitism it brought. When she couldn't ignore it, she mocked it.

An amateur photographer whose Aryan looks allowed her greater mobility than other Jews, had Glaser not only flouted Nazi laws that forced Jews to wear yellow patches, but used to pose for photographs with unsuspecting German occupation soldiers next to cafe signs that read "no Jews allowed."

Her flamboyant defiance eventually got Glaser sent to Auschwitz. But at the death camp, that same trait helped her survive as a dance instructor to the SS until she staged a clever escape. The remarkable life story of Roosje Glaser, who died in 2000, was only recently documented in a new biography about her written and published in Britain this year by her Dutch nephew.

"On the one hand, it seems that at times she didn't understand the severity of her situation," said Paul Glaser, the son of Roosje Glaser's brother and author of *Dancing with the Enemy*. "On the other hand, she survived by seizing a series of opportunities that show she knew what she was doing."

Roosje Glaser's first act of defiance was to remove from her passport, the

letter J, which authorities stamped on the documents of Jews after the Nazi takeover, Paul Glaser said at a lecture he delivered about the biography at the Limmud FSU Jewish learning conference in Moscow earlier this year.



Roosje Glaser, left, with her dance students during an excursion in 1942.

In violation of Nazi racial laws, Roosje Glaser continued to run her successful dance school. She even made it into the cinema reel in 1941, as part of a Nazi-era item that was meant to show that Amsterdam's cultural scene was unhampered by the occupation. But her jealous ex-husband, who had turned into an ardent Nazi, informed the Nazis of her Jewish roots.

Summoned and marked by authorities, Glaser was unable to find a venue for the graduation ball of her dance class of 1942. So she had the graduation in a barn in the countryside. Pictures of her dancing with her students are the last taken of her as a free person before she was sent to Auschwitz.

Ignoring the summons, she stole another woman's passport and moved to a different city, living under a false identity in a boardinghouse run by a German woman who was married to a Dutch Nazi. Then a former lover betrayed her to the authorities — this time for payment — and she was deported to Poland.

As a fluent speaker of German and accomplished administrator, Glaser landed a position as an assistant to a German officer at Auschwitz. But before she did, she underwent medical experiments that rendered her unable to bear children.

"She had charm and she spoke to the Germans like she was one of them, like a classmate. She lacked that victim mentality," said Paul Glaser, who interviewed his aunt for the book close to her death and has spent the past 15 years gathering additional materials about her extraordinary life story.

Using what he called "natural charm," Roosje Glaser began giving her German bosses dance lessons after hours, sometimes together with their girlfriends or the dreaded *Aufseherinnen* — female guards. "By night she was giving dancing lessons to people whose day job it was to kill her and her people," Glaser said.

In 1944, Roosje Glaser heard that the Swedish Red Cross was working out a deal to exchange Danish nationals at Auschwitz for three

German prisoners of war captured by the Allied forces. "So of course Roosje pretended to be Danish" to camp officials who didn't know her, to get on the list, Paul Glaser said.

At the refugee camp in Sweden, where she ended up after the exchange, Roosje Glaser began giving dancing lessons to other displaced persons like herself.

Feeling betrayed by the Dutch nation, she settled in Sweden until her death. She ignored Dutch officials' requests that she report for inclusion in the postwar census and be repatriated to the Netherlands. Glaser fought to stay in Sweden, where she lived to her dying day.

Glaser's brother, Paul Glaser's father, who survived the Holocaust in hiding, never told his family about Roosje Glaser or about his Jewish roots. It was through a chance encounter with a person who turned out to be his second cousin that Paul Glaser learned the truth about his family and of his aunt's existence.

"When I confronted my father about it, he admitted but asked me not to tell anyone about this story because sooner or later, he said, it would be used against all of us," Glaser recalled.

It was a common reaction in a country where Nazis and their local collaborators killed 75 percent of the pre-Holocaust Jewish population of 140,000 — the highest death rate in occupied Western Europe.

Roosje Glaser and her brother had a tense relationship. Though they met a few times after the Holocaust, they fought each time. Her brother blamed her for the capture of their mother because of her flamboyant life style, which he thought drew attention to the rest of the family.

ID CARDS OF THOUSANDS OF JEWS DISCOVERED IN LITHUANIA

BY YORI YALON

Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Museum archivists found some 26,000 previously unknown identification cards belonging to Jewish citizens in the national archives in *Kaunas* (*Kovno*), Lithuania.



Poet and author Leah Goldberg ID card from *Kaunas*

The cards represent about two thirds of the Jewish population in the city before the Second World War. They were found as part of a wide-ranging effort to locate any and all

documentation of Jewish heritage in the former Soviet Union and Baltic region.

Found among the ID cards in *Kaunas* was that of poet and author Leah Goldberg, who moved to Israel in 1935.

The cards were kept with a collection of all ID cards issued by the local population authority in *Kaunas*, to Jews and non-Jews, from 1920 to 1940.

Each resident received a copy of their card, while the original was kept by the local authorities for internal use.

The identification cards contain personal information, including first and last name, father's name, date of birth, profession, nationality (Lithuanian or Jewish) and a photograph and signature of the resident.

The cards were moved during the war and returned to the city's archives following liberation.

These new records will provide information about Jews who were killed in the Holocaust and their stories lost.



Brocha Gdaliovicene-Polianskyte ID card — her story is not yet known.

One of the cards belonged to a woman named Brocha Gdaliovicene-Polianskyte. It was issued in the 1930s, and Yad Vashem staff do not know what happened to her in the Holocaust, but are now beginning to research her fate.

The director of Yad Vashem's Archives Division, Dr. Haim Gertner, said the finding is "a very special and rare collection. Most Eastern European

communities did not keep orderly lists of residents before the war, and the Nazis did not often list the names of the people murdered in these areas.

"For this reason, the fate of many Lithuanian Jews, including those from *Kaunas*, is unknown to us. This collection that we are now photographing, thanks to the assistance Yad Vashem receives from the Genesis Philanthropy Group, allows us to recreate the list of the city's Jewish residents before the war

and to give these victims of the Holocaust a face and a story.

"Scanning these documents, uploading them to our database and displaying them to the public will help us tell the story of this community during the Holocaust."

THE SWEDISH SCHINDLER: HOW COUNT BERNADOTTE SAVED THOUSANDS OF JEWS FROM DEATH

(Continued from page 2)

to a holding center at *Neuengamme* camp before transferring them across the Danish border and on to Sweden.

The Allies had been alerted to the operation by Stockholm and no objections were raised. No safe passage was granted to the Swedes either, though the British had requested that the buses be painted white with red crosses on their roofs, so RAF fighter pilots might identify them. Bernadotte's task force was nevertheless strafed by Allied planes, and his own car was hit, though the Count made a dive safely into a ditch. It soon emerged that German trucks were also being painted white, with red crosses, in an attempt to fool the Allies.

THE BLACK COMPROMISE

There were terrible moral dilemmas too. Himmler's terms for agreeing to the rescue — particularly the rule that for now only Scandinavians be saved — had meant leaving desperate wretches behind. Bernadotte had not, at first, been allowed by Himmler to rescue Scandinavian Jews — mostly Danish and some Norwegians. If Hitler got to hear that Jews were being released, he said, Himmler would be obliged to call off the entire operation. Bernadotte apparently submitted to his orders, and yet Swedish historian Sune Persson cites Swedish documents showing that from the start of the operation Bernadotte “was actively working on the Jewish cause” and had soon secured the release of more than 400 Danish Jews from *Theresienstadt* camp.

Himmler had banned Bernadotte from rescuing women held at *Ravensbrück*. There was gassing under way at the women's camp — a fact Himmler didn't want discovered. Whether Bernadotte knew this was the reason we don't know, but, yet again, he took the view that his rescue had to be conducted on Himmler's terms or not at all. Compromises — painful though they were — had to be made if men and women were to be saved. Over the Easter weekend Bernadotte flew back to Berlin to try to improve those terms, but his plane stalled in thick black smoke as the Allies launched a daylight raid over the capital. As soon as the all clear sounded he landed and made contact with Walter Schellenberg, Himmler's right-hand man, and another meeting at *Hohenlychen* was soon arranged. This time, Bernadotte found Himmler “not only grave but nervy,” as he wrote in his memoir. While he was out of the room, Schellenberg told Bernadotte that Himmler wanted the Count to act as his intermediary directly with Eisenhower. Bernadotte refused. When Himmler returned, Bernadotte saw his chance to win more concessions and secured the

Reichsführer's agreement that he should go at last to *Ravensbrück*. By the time he reached the camp, the main gas chamber had been dismantled, though gassing was continuing in mobile trucks.

“NOW YOU WILL BE FREE”

The first prisoners taken from *Ravensbrück* were once again Scandinavian — among them Nelly Langholm, a Norwegian from *Stavanger* who had been in the camp for two years. “We couldn't believe it,” she said. “We had to walk to the gates. We saw the buses and there were these Swedish men in grey uniforms with red crosses on their arms. I think they told us, ‘Now you will go to Sweden. Now you will be free. Can you imagine?’”

Over the following days, rumors spread that more buses would come, but none appeared. *Ravensbrück* was by now almost unreachable and many of Bernadotte's drivers were heading home. But the Count wanted to bring out more prisoners. The atrocities committed at *Bergen-Belsen*, reached on April 15 by the British, had been flashed around

the world, fueling fears for the women of *Ravensbrück*. Bernadotte sought a final meeting with Himmler. Himmler did not reach *Hohenlychen* until the following morning, appearing tired and nervous and “tapping his teeth.” Bernadotte presented his latest proposal: to take more prisoners, including all the French women, from *Ravensbrück* — to which Himmler suddenly announced that Bernadotte could take all the Western Allied prisoners from the camp, as well as all the Jews. *Ravensbrück* had filled up with Jews in the last months of the war as Jewish women, marched in from Hungary and from Auschwitz — many of them Polish Jews — ahead of its evacuation, were forced into slave labor here, many of them at a Siemens electrical plant, based at the camp. Bernadotte ordered his buses to turn again towards *Ravensbrück* to carry out the most dramatic episode of the mission.

As the buses queued in the woods outside, the camp women still feared selection for death. When Jean Bommezin de Rochement, a Dutch woman, heard her name called out she was sure it was for gassing. She wrote in a diary: “We leave the camp in the direction of the gas chambers. We move forward and for many of us this is too much. They are seized by a nervous fit ... we have to drag them forward.... We move and see the back

of the camp — here are the stores, there is Siemens. Some of the inmates appear behind the windows and the barbed wire looking at us. They know that ‘transport’ usually means death.”

At last Jean found herself moving toward men who smiled “with tears in their eyes as they see us. Suddenly we are about to mount the buses and there is a scramble for places.”

Jean's convoy moved off, but amid an Allied air attack they were forced to leave the buses. “We are too slow to take cover ... and suddenly we are machine gunned. For a moment I taste the bitter irony of being killed by our own allies on the road to freedom but they are gone and I live. Looking around I see a terrible scene. Behind me a woman is bleeding to death.”



The *Ravensbrück* women's coats were marked by crosses en route to distinguish them as prisoners.

Later, reports said 17 *Ravensbrück* women died in Jean's convoy. RAF planes were said to have been responsible. The British ambassador in Stockholm voiced “regret” but reminded the Swedes of earlier warnings of no “safe-passage.” Other convoys were hit, but Bernadotte's buses continued to arrive and the women mobbed them, as reports spread that the SS would eventually blow up the camp.

“We suspected they were going to take us to the crematorium despite rumors of liberation,” said Basia Zajacziwsja, a Polish Jew who worked as a Siemens laborer. And Erna Solewicz, another Polish Jew, remembered a sudden order given in her block that “all Jewish women had to leave the camp.”

The next day, the Jewish women were taken to the gates. Guards “tore off our marks and numbers,” said Basia, referring to their yellow triangles — in *Ravensbrück* Jewish prisoners did not wear stars. This way nobody would know that Jews were being released — no word could reach Hitler's people, who, even now, might somehow halt the rescue.

The ripping off of numbers and marks — and the reluctance of Jewish survivors to say that they were Jews on arrival for fear of further horror — would also make it harder later to count the precise number of Jews who were saved from the camp on the white buses.

The commandant said, at the time, there were 3,000 “Jewesses” in *Ravensbrück*, which was almost certainly an underestimate. Others said it was more like 4,000. By early May, as victory in Europe came closer, 7,000 *Ravensbrück* women and 17,000 prisoners in total had already arrived on the *Malmö* quay. How many of the *Ravensbrück* women would still have lived to see the Russians arrive at the camp on April 30 is impossible to say, but women continued to die of starvation and sickness even after the camp's liberation and Russians found bodies piled all around the camp.

Those who reached *Malmö* were certain their lives had been miraculously saved. “I would not be alive without Count Bernadotte,” says Baseden, now 92 and living in London. The small British contingent — numbering about 12 — were almost left behind and only made it thanks to a Swedish driver called Sven Frykmann, who personally put them onto a bus.

A SHOT THROUGH THE WINDOW

Allied reluctance to acknowledge that the neutral Swedes could have pulled off such a coup did not prevent the UN from recognizing Bernadotte's skills by appointing him as the Security Council mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1947–48. The UN peace plan, which Bernadotte was charged with implementing, was, however, immediately considered a betrayal in Israel — largely because it did not envisage Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

In order to kill the plan, Jewish extremists — members of the Stern gang, or Lehi — killed the mediator. On the orders of Yitzhak Shamir, one of the Stern gang leaders and a future Israeli prime minister, the assassins pushed the barrel of a submachine gun through the back window of Bernadotte's car and pumped six bullets into him. Israeli press condemned the murder at the time, but, over the years, the name Bernadotte became controversial in Israel, and among some of Israel's supporters around the world. The awkward fact that the man who, as UN mediator, was killed on the streets of Jerusalem for betraying Israel, had rescued thousands of Jewish lives from the Nazis, was difficult for some to assimilate.

Certain commentators — even in Sweden — have found cause to downplay Bernadotte's courage during the rescue mission. Some have even questioned whether he ever intended to rescue Jews at all.

At a memorial ceremony, held to mark the 70th anniversary of the liberation on April 30 this year, *Ravensbrück* survivors remembered Bernadotte. Among them was Selma Van der Perre, a Jewish Dutch woman, who told me: “Without Bernadotte I would probably not have got out alive.”

GERMAN PHILOSOPHER BLAMED JEWS FOR “SELF-DESTRUCTING” IN HOLOCAUST

In a startling revelation in his so-called *Black Notebooks*, one of Germany's leading philosophers of the 20th century, Martin Heidegger, blames the Jews for the Holocaust.

According to an article in the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* by Heidegger expert Donatella Di Cesare, “The *Shoah* was an act of self-destruction by the Jews. This is the view that emerges from the new volume of Heidegger's *Black Notebooks*.”

Heidegger wrote during the Holocaust in 1942 that the “community of Jews” is “in the age of the Christian West — the age of metaphysics — the principle of destruction.” He wrote further: “Only when what is essentially ‘Jewish,’ in the metaphysical sense, combats what is Jewish, is the peak of self-destruction in history reached.”

Heidegger, a towering figure in the school of continental European philosophy who died in 1976, was the rector at the University of Freiburg and summarily dismissed Jewish professors at the outset of the Nazi movement in the 1930s.

He was a member of the Nazi Party.

The German-American Jewish philosopher Hannah Arendt, a former student and lover of Heidegger, had defended him as a leading light

in modern philosophy.

Speaking with *The Jerusalem Post*, Efraim Zuroff, the chief Nazi hunter for the Simon Wiesenthal Center, said, “The latest findings regarding Heidegger's views of the mass murders of European Jews clearly reveal a total lack of under-



Martin Heidegger.

standing of the criminality of the annihilation of the Jews by the Third Reich.”

Zuroff, who heads the Jerusalem office of the Wiesenthal Center, added, “It also makes one wonder to what degree Hannah Arendt was influenced by him in the Eichmann trial. It makes research by Bettina Stangneth in her book *Eichmann*

before Jerusalem: The Unexamined Life of a Mass Murderer all the more important.

“She conclusively proves that Arendt misread Eichmann.”

Arendt (1906–1975) wrote in her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem* that the Nazi official was merely a faceless bureaucrat.

According to her critics, she failed to grasp the lethal anti-Semitism that animated his behavior and world outlook.

The Auschwitz survivor and Austrian-Jewish journalist Jean Améry slammed Arendt for her work.

Di Cesare wrote that the *Shoah* for Heidegger is “presented as playing a decisive role” in a main tenet of Heidegger's philosophy of the history of being.

After analyzing Heidegger's newly discovered writings, she found that “In this sense, the extermination of the Jews represents the apocalyptic moment when that which destroys ends up destroying itself. As the peak of ‘self-destruction in history,’ the *Shoah* makes possible the purification of being.”

Heidegger, as an anti-technology proponent, saw the Jews as the embodiment of a technological world that he loathed. He plays down the Holocaust and at times denies the existence of extermination camps in his notebooks.

THE FASCISTS AND THE JEWS OF ITALY

(Continued from page 4)

from Germany was institutional, rather than attitudinal, in the absence of a large-scale agency obsessed with targeting Jews; the “Department of Demography and Race,” or *Demorazza*, was composed of fewer than 70 career bureaucrats rather than hundreds of ideological anti-Semites like the SS. It was not that the Fascists were softer toward the Jews but that anti-Semitism simply wasn't a preoccupation for them.

While nominally racial, the *leggi razziali* considered both “race” and religion in “borderline” cases, a number of which are cited by Livingston, pertaining to employment, property and marriage, and he devotes a chapter to the wide and complex spectrum of Jewish response to the Race Laws, from setting up their own schools and providing charity to forging documents to challenging interpretations of the laws provisions. While there was no hope of overturning the unjust laws, there were some attempts by Jews and jurists to restrain or limit their application. However, despite exemption provisions (*discriminazione*), which were limited and temporary, the laws were not easy to evade or get around, and, over time, fewer and fewer cases were decided in favor of the Jews.

WHY DO HOLOCAUST CEREMONIES IGNORE JEWISH RESCUERS?

(Continued from page 7)

non-Jewish rescuers were recognized, and while the Jewish rescuer came to the ceremony, that he was not even mentioned — let alone receiving recognition! Years later when hearing this speech, he realized this was exactly his case. He brought together some survivors and rescuers to form a committee to raise this issue.

“We've also been lobbying the Knesset and Yad Vashem to do more on this issue. Yad Vashem last year published its first book wholly dedicated to the subject of Jewish rescue.”

Schneider admits Yad Vashem has been making more of an effort to refocus on this aspect of history. While the book does not bring any new material to light aside from some newly translated material already published in other languages, he says that the book takes a new look at that previous research through the freshly minted lens of this overlooked aspect of Jewish history.

“The important part of this book is that the editor broke stories up into 10 chapters in a very good academic fashion. He determined 10 different types of rescue, because in each country, over the course of the war the situation changed and there were different opportunities for rescue.

“In Hungary, for example, the Holocaust only started at the end of the war. They watched from afar at

events in other countries and were able to prepare themselves ahead of time in case the Nazis extended their policies to Hungarians. They were well organized.

“Many Jews were fleeing from other Eastern European countries into Hungary, where Jews were being persecuted but not murdered. They were able to take advantage of that and rescue Jews in Hungary.

“We think there's a very important lesson here about Jewish solidarity that should be learned through these illustrated stories of people who engaged in rescuing fellow Jews.”

For its part, Yad Vashem has defended its position and noted it does in fact go to great lengths to detail the many stories of Jewish courage and defiance during the Holocaust — including those who saved lives.

“Jewish defiance and resistance during the Holocaust took many forms and Holocaust history is laden with stories of Jewish heroism, solidarity and self-help,” including “helping someone to evade forced labor or deportation, setting up a rescue network, assisting in escape attempts, passing letters and information, giving a fellow inmate a piece of bread, providing encouragement, smuggling food or false papers, etc.,” Yad Vashem said in a statement.

“Almost all survivor testimonies

describe instances of help extended by one Jew to another.

“These awe-inspiring expressions of courage, self-sacrifice and solidarity deserve to be documented, researched and imparted, and Yad Vashem is committed to dealing with this topic in all its manifold activities, including on our website.

“However it is practically impossible to define criteria which will enable us to decide what act of help deserves special distinction or a medal.”

In that, there is a key difference between Jewish and non-Jewish rescuers.

“With non-Jews the basic criterion is the element of risk to the rescuer: i.e. a person who knowingly chose to put himself or herself in danger and chose to leave the safety of the bystander's position and identify with the victims to the extent of being willing to share their fate.

“In what concerns Jews, this distinction cannot be made, since all Jews were destined for extermination and therefore were in mortal danger no matter what they did. Helping fellow Jews could have augmented that danger in a particular instance, but evading danger altogether was not an option.”

Schneider feels that Jews have forgotten not only how their own kind has been heroic in the past, but also the notion that people should still feel a sense of comradeship against com-

mon threats.

Schneider refers to one incident where historian Professor Saul Friedländer argued before a crowd that “Jewish solidarity died in the Holocaust.” It apparently caused a heated uproar with those in attendance, particularly from Professor Dina Porat, the current chief historian at Yad Vashem.

When asked if he thought there was a certain sentiment that non-Jews should be recognized more for any reason, Schneider continued that Jews have given him and other organizers a number of reactions or excuses for the trend to recognize gentile saviors but not Jewish ones.

“We've gotten reactions like, ‘Jews were bound to rescue fellow Jews,’ based on ideas like ‘*kol Yisrael eravim zeh b'zeh*’ (‘All Israel is responsible for one another’) or ‘*al ta'amod b'dam re'ekha*’ (‘Don't stand on the blood of your brother’). But of course our answer has been, ‘Then why present any citations to policemen, soldiers or anyone who has a certain responsibility or was trained or paid to do something? Why recognize anything outstanding?’

“And that's exactly the point. I think people who do the outstanding or take the brave step that is counterintuitive instead of rescuing themselves” deserve recognition, for “recognizing that, ‘If I can cross the border, maybe others can, too!’”

FROM PSEUDONYM TO SPEAKING OUT: ANNE FRANK'S BEST FRIEND

(Continued from page 6)

exchange help learning German and arithmetic, though nothing much came of it.

As van Maarsen recalls, Anne was the more boisterous of the two, and unlike her introverted best friend, always wanted to be surrounded by people. "I said, 'We are so different, how is it possible that we are such good friends.' And she said, 'That's just the thing why we are good friends,'" van Maarsen recalls.



Jacqueline van Maarsen.

Anne was one of the first classmates to disappear, before the situation became dire. Her parents, Otto and Edith Frank, had already been making arrangements to go into hiding, but a call-up notice for her sister Margot from the SS hastened their departure by several days. Their partners in hiding, the van Pels family (called the van Daans in Anne's diary), also arrived earlier than planned, as "the Germans were sending out call-up notices right and left and causing a lot of unrest."

Van Maarsen found herself in a unique situation among her classmates at the Jewish Lyceum. Her father came from an observant Jewish family, but he was not as religious, and married a Roman Catholic woman, van Maarsen and Sanders explained at the Hotel Elysee. At first, her mother became Jewish for the purposes of the congregation in Amsterdam, and when the Nazis arrived, the family was entered into their list of Jews. But as it became increasingly clear just how grim the future was for Jews in occupied Holland, van Maarsen's mother managed a feat that would save all of their lives. She convinced the German authorities that she wasn't Jewish (which was true) and was able to get the names of her husband and daughters off the list as well.

"I never knew how it exactly went," van Maarsen says, though she recently found out her mother may have spoken to Hans Calmeyer, a German lawyer who headed the interior administration office in occupied Holland that dealt with cases of doubtful ancestry. Calmeyer is said to have saved a few thousand people by approving applications unusually often, even when documentation was

clearly fictitious. She says she writes about this revelation in her most recent book, *Your Best Friend, Anne Frank*, which is published in Dutch and German.

"I had two lives during the war," says van Maarsen, who went from wearing a yellow star and attending the Jewish Lyceum to being a non-Jew in the eyes of the Nazis before they could be called up and sent to the camps. "It was very weird and I felt awful, and after that," she recalls, "I went to a non-Jewish school and nobody talked about the Jews and I didn't tell the people what had happened to my family."

After the war, Otto Frank appeared at the van Maarsens' door. Van Maarsen had been certain Anne and her family were in Switzerland, based on a rumor the Franks themselves had started

before going into hiding to cover their tracks. Otto knew already that his wife had perished at Auschwitz, van Maarsen recalls, and soon found out that his two daughters, Anne and Margot, had died at *Bergen-Belsen*.

"He was very sad and wanted to talk to me all the time about Anne. And I didn't like that. I didn't want to remember these bad times, it was so sad," says van Maarsen, who was just 16 at the time. "He was crying quite a lot. It was very difficult for me," she adds. She was finally able to read the promised but never sent goodbye letter that Anne had written to her and copied into her diary. After Otto learned of Anne's death, he began reading her diary, which two of their helpers in hiding, Miep Gies and Bep Voskuijl, had gathered and put in a drawer after Anne and the others were arrested on August 4, 1944.

"I was astonished that he — at a certain moment I don't know — he wanted to publish the diary. And I thought, 'Who can be interested in this writings of a young girl and about the war,' nobody wanted to think about the war anymore," van Maarsen says. "But I wrote a letter to him and I said maybe Anne's diary will one day be famous, which I didn't think, but I just wrote it for him to be friendly."

Indeed, on June 25, 1947 — just over 68 years ago and a couple weeks after what would have been Anne's 18th birthday—the first version of Anne Frank's diary was published in Dutch. Translations in German and French followed in 1950, and an English translation was published in the United States in 1952, with a preface by Eleanor Roosevelt. The diary has been translated into 70 languages and sold more than 30 mil-

lion copies.

For many years, van Maarsen preferred the anonymity of the pseudonym Anne had assigned her in the diary, Jopie. "I didn't want to talk about it," she says. "I didn't want to lose my own identity, because people are interested in me because of this friendship." She studied in Paris to become a designer bookbinder — a profession that allowed her to work alone in her workshop — and married Sanders, whom she knew as a neighbor when she was a child.

She remained quiet about her identity as Anne's best friend, "but at a certain moment I felt...it was necessary because things happen around her [memory] that I didn't like," she says. "I had the idea that some people were taking too much profit off of her celebrity. So I started to write about it. I knew that it would start but I thought I have to do this because Anne would have been furious if she had known, that she would be misused."

For the last several years, she has been writing books, traveling to speak — particularly with students and young people — about Anne and the Holocaust, and giving interviews to the media. "I do it to show what can happen when racism and anti-Semitism is pushed too far, and I hope it helps," she says. "I know that it has impact when I tell my story and it has all to do with Anne," she adds. "That's why people get interested." In other words, her friend Anne sparks interest all over the world and allows her to speak about

the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and prejudice.

"People love Anne, I found out.... This little girl, the whole world knows her now, and I know she would have loved it," van Maarsen says. "Everything I do is in memory of Anne, because I'm not the kind of woman, and never was the kind of girl, that wanted to have attention," she adds, remembering the extrovert and introvert that became friends seven and a half decades ago. "We were so different, I know that Anne would have loved it, but I didn't like it."

Van Maarsen explained that the frequent travel and list of commitments are worth it if she can reach a younger generation and help them grasp the often unfathomable events of the Holocaust.

Nowadays, that work often takes her to Germany. In the Netherlands, she says, the Jewish community is not particularly interested in Anne Frank. "They think, 'We have our story, it's the same story, why Anne Frank?'" she says. "And I try to tell them it's the diary that reaches people, and because of the diary I can talk about it. Because of Anne — everybody knows Anne — I can use her for my speeches."

"I always have a full house, not because I'm Jacqueline van Maarsen, but because of Anne. I know quite well Anne attracts people," she adds, and "it's very important I can talk about the Holocaust again and again."



The American Society for Yad Vashem mourns the passing of lifelong friend and supporter Barbara Arfa, beloved wife of Harvey and devoted mother of Executive Board member and Founding Chairperson of our Young Leadership Associates Caroline Arfa Massel.

Barbara was born in 1947 in Munich, Germany. She was the only child of Regina and Salo Gutfreund, z"l, survivors of the Holocaust and early supporters of the American Society for Yad Vashem. Barbara always marveled that in spite of the horrors her parents had faced during the Holocaust, they created a world of happiness, love and Yiddishkeit. Throughout her life, Barbara showed her beloved parents the utmost respect.

Barbara was trained as a journalist at Columbia Graduate School of Journalism. She eventually made her career as president of men's underwear company Gruner & Co., Inc., which had been founded by Barbara's father, Salo Gutfreund, z"l in 1949 when he purchased a vacated British government raincoat and parachute factory in Israel. Barbara went on to run the company and was joined by her husband Harvey, a real estate attorney, in 1992. Their daughter, Caroline, joined the company in 1994.

Barbara dedicated herself to Holocaust remembrance and education. In addition to her work for Yad Vashem, Barbara and Harvey supported Holocaust education at The Ramaz School in New York City. They also supported many other Jewish causes. The family has set up the American Society for Yad Vashem – Barbara Arfa Holocaust Education Fund to continue her commitment.

Barbara was respected and admired by all who knew her. She was meticulous in everything — in her integrity in business, in her desire to help others, in the way in which she set up her home, and most of all, in her love and caring for family and friends. She always carried herself with dignity and elegance.

I WANTED RECONCILIATION, SAYS HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR WHOSE BIOPIC LED TO SS GUARD INVESTIGATION

BY HENRY MCDONALD,
THE GUARDIAN

A Holocaust survivor whose biopic documentary has led to an investigation into an elderly woman alleged to be a member of the SS has revealed that his intention was only to reach out and reconcile with the woman who guarded him in *Belsen* concentration camp.

Tomi Reichental's story *Close to Evil* has prompted German federal prosecutors to question 93-year-old Hilde Michnia about her alleged role as an



Tomi Reichental.

SS guard at *Belsen*. She is also suspected of forcing prisoners on an evacuation/death march in 1945 on which 1,400 women perished.

But Reichental, who lives in Dublin, told the *Guardian* that he took part in the Irish documentary directed by Gerry Gregg principally to seek out some sign of atonement from Michnia. Reichental said he even wanted to shake the hand of his jailer in the Nazi camp if they ever met.

In the film, Reichental, Gregg and a German television producer contact Michnia at her home near *Hamburg* but she declines to meet the former Jewish child prisoner who was sent to *Belsen* at the age of nine.

"In my film *Close to Evil* I reached out to reconcile with one of my jailers in *Bergen-Belsen*. I started out being open to the idea that the SS guard Hilde Lisiewitz (later Michnia) must be a different person to the young woman that was convicted of war crimes in 1945.

"I was prepared to meet Hilde, who had been a perpetrator and who I thought had seen the light and changed her values. I was prepared to reconcile with her and shake her

hand, because in my naive thinking she was also a victim of her own time.

"That I did not meet Hilde was not the big letdown, but rather the fact that Hilde is still stuck in the 1940s: this is what disappointed me."

He continued: "As Jews we have a tradition of atonement; it is a rich and noble concept. I am not a rabbi, nor am I a very observant Jew. But I am a product of my background, and for me I understand atonement as a person's effort to acquire a new heart and a new spirit.

"Atonement as I see it is about repentance and reparation. Hilde had no interest in any of this. By her action of not meeting, in denying the murder of inmates in *Bergen-Belsen*, she has chosen to justify and distort her own role during the Third Reich."

Hamburg social worker Hans-Jürgen Brennecke confirmed that he had filed charges through the federal prosecutor after seeing the RTÉ documentary in

the German city of *Lüneburg* in January this year. He approached Gregg at the screening of the film in a local cinema as part of events to mark Holocaust Memorial Day.

"After the screening, Hans-Jürgen Brennecke, a man whose father was also a Nazi criminal and who speaks about him honestly in our film, sent a letter to the German state prosecutors outlining why Hilde Michnia still has a case to answer. That letter has now had a response and Michnia is being investigated," Gregg said.

A Slovakian Jew, Tomi Reichental lost 35 members of his wider family circle in Nazi concentration camps. He was one of the minority of Slovak Jews to survive the *Shoah*: 80% of the country's Jewish population was murdered during the Second World

War.

However, during filming across Germany and Slovakia, relatives of senior SS officers — including those of Hans Ludin, one of Hitler's inner circle and a convicted war criminal — contacted Reichental. Ludin signed off the deportations of Slovakia's Jews, including Reichental's family.

As the documentary progressed last year, Reichental developed a warm friendship with Ludin's granddaughter Alexandra Senfft. She belongs to a group in Germany of descendants of SS and senior Nazi functionaries who are seeking to come to terms with the wartime sins of their fathers and grandfathers. They had learned in the German media in 2014 that Reichental was traveling across Europe filming about his life's journey from *Belsen* to the leafy suburbs of south Dublin.

"Embracing Alexandra Senfft, the granddaughter of the Nazi war criminal Hans Ludin who was implicated in sending 35 members of my family to death in the gas chambers, was not an act of forgiveness. Instead it was an embrace of a 'kindred spirit.' Alexandra sought me out in order to demonstrate our common humanity. She wants to proclaim the truth and



Hilde Michnia.

urge people not to forget. My mission is the same, we must remember. She now has also met my brother, she is now a good friend and a new member of our larger family."

In the film there is a poignant scene where Reichental agrees to go with Senfft to the spot in Bratislava where her grandfather was buried after being hanged for war crimes in December 1947.

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