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ACTUALITIES

Roof Organization

Our association was accepted as a member of the Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel. This is a roof organization founded in 1989, whose aims are to further the rights of holocaust survivors, to support them in dealings with the governments of Germany, Israel and other countries and to ensure, that at least in old age their elementary needs are seen to. The chairman of the center is Mr. Moshe Sanbar, the former governor of the Bank of Israel, a holocaust survivor, too.

Sweden and the Holocaust

Thanks to the initiative of the premier minister Goran Parsson an information center about the holocaust was founded in Sweden, called "The Living History Project". In 1998 this center organized a number of events, among them a memorial meeting in the Swedish Parliament on January 27, (the day Auschwitz was liberated), an internet site "Counterweight to Dark Forces" and undertook the financing of the computerization of the Auschwitz card files. It also published an illustrated brochure "Tell your Children" about the history of the holocaust, aimed mainly at students and their parents. It includes a chapter about ghetto Terezin. 820.000 copies were printed - in Swedish and English and in the 5 main languages of foreign laborers in Sweden, including Arabic and Turkish.

Legacy of Karel Schwenk

"L'hayey hahayim" (Long Live Life) is the name of a show based on cabaret chansons from Terezin - Kobi Luria wrote the text. The premiere was on October 6, 1998 at the theatre festival in Akko. The scenes and songs, staged by Israel Gurion, music by Hana Cohen, illustrate one of the characteristics of the ghetto, as expressed by Schwenk too (who was one of the best known cabaretists in the ghetto): to be able to smile at the bitter reality around, even if only ironically. The reviewers praised the high level of the performance and the professional actors - Tal Amir, Israel Treistmann and Lilach Caspi. It also got a commendation from the jury. Starting January 1999 there will be further performances at the "Tsavta" hall in Tel Aviv. The humor may contribute to better acquaint a generation born in freedom with the dark past.

Theater in the Castle

“Bye, Bye Butterfly” is the title of a performance about life of youth in ghetto Terezin, staged by the Swiss director Dominique Caillat with a group of high school students at the “Theater an der Vorburg”, Narny castle, Andernach, Germany. After performing in Germany, Terezin and Prague the young actors arrived in Israel in October 1998 and played (in German) in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Kibbutz Hazorea, supported by the Tel Aviv municipality and the Konrad Adenauer foundation, under the patronage of the Organization of Central European immigrants and Beit Theresienstadt. The play is about a Jewish family from the Sudetenland deported to Terezin and the romance of a young Jew with a German girl, who went to the ghetto with him. A few songs and chansons written in Theresienstadt enliven the performance. The mostly German speaking audience responded emotionally, to the play and also to the meeting with young Germans facing the holocaust.

Music from the Ghetto

60 years after the “Night of the Broken Glass” (Kristallnacht) on November 9, 1938 a memorial evening was held in Hamburg, Germany, by the Academy for Music and Theater in cooperation with the “Initiative Hans Krasa”. Sonatas for piano composed in the ghetto by Gideon Klein and Viktor Ullmann were played. The senate of the Free City of Hamburg takes part in the financing of the publication of a booklet about music in ghetto Theresienstadt and also undertook to finance - together with the German-Czech “Future Fund” and contributors of “Initiative Hans Krasa” a series of concerts on the occasion of the birthdays of Hans Krasa, Pavel Haas and Viktor Ullmann. They are planned to take place in November 1999 in Dresden, Hamburg and Prague.

Romance

Michal Bar (Maud Steckelmacher) is the central figure of the film “Nipagesh” (We’ll meet again), premiered on August 28, 1998 at the cinematheque in Tel Aviv in the framework of a festival of documentaries. In the picture - script by Lena Makarova, directed by Simion Vinoker - Michal tells the story of her first love in her hometown Prostejov (Prossnitz) and in ghetto Terezin at the age of 13. The student Hermann, aged 24, had to discontinue his studies. Before his deportation “to the East” he gave Michal an address in Berlin, Germany, through which they would be able to make contact after the war. Hermann did not return and Michal (now a grandmother of 69) was left with the memories: 12 by now yellowed letters written to her by Hermann in Theresienstadt and a few small presents. On Yom Kippur eve, September 30, 1998, the film was shown on Isr. TV.

Terezin Instead of Florence

In a series “True Story”, on November 17, 1998, the Isr. television broadcast a program by the British TV about the looting of art treasures and antique silver from the Dutch bankers Gutmann. Some of the art, including paintings by Degas and Renoir, were sent by Fritz Gutmann at the start of WWII from the Netherlands to France, where they fell into the hands of the Nazis, when they occupied the country. They transferred them to Switzerland, where many of the treasures looted by the Nazis landed. After the Netherlands were occupied the Nazis tried to sequester the precious collection of Renaissance silver and in return they promised Fritz Gutmann (whose father was baptized at the end of the 19th century) safe conduct to Italy. But

instead to Florence F. Gutmann and his wife were deported in April 1943 to ghetto Terezin. There he worked at the distribution of coals and his wife at auxiliary services. Out of principle both refrained from speaking German. Twice Gutmann was ordered to present himself at the German commander's office, to sign over his collection to the Nazis, but he refused. After an intervention of the Italian foreign minister, who was Mussolini's son-in-law, the Gutmanns were told, that they may leave the ghetto and travel to Italy. On the day of their departure F.Gutmann was brought to the "Small Fortress", the Terezin Gestapo prison, and murdered there. His wife was deported to Auschwitz.

"Brundibar" Today

Gentile students, mostly children of immigrants from all over the world, at the Queen Victoria Public School in Parkdale, Toronto, learned about the holocaust through the children's opera "Brundibar" by Hofmeister and Krasa, which was performed in the ghetto 55 times. The lesson helped them to come to terms with racial hate.

"Brundibar" is being performed in Toronto schools since 1996. The initiative was started by the educator Helena Fine, helped by John Freund, one of the boys who survived Birkenau. He explained to the students (who between them speak some 50 languages), how it was to be a Jewish child in the holocaust.

Ghetto Art

An exhibition about music life in the ghetto is located in the former "Magdeburger" barracks, now in part attached to the Terezin ghetto museum. A detailed exhibition about art in the ghetto was now added. There are more than 1000 works by over 40 artists, mainly from the collections of "Pamatnik Terezin", the Jewish Museum in Prague and from the private collection of Tomas Haas-Fritta. In addition to works by well known artists like Haas, Fritta, Unger, Kien and Salkova those of less famous artists and amateurs are exhibited, too - since their works often show a different aspect of life in the ghetto. The typical motifs recur: funeral coaches as means of transport, blind and old people, railway tracks, the town square, transports, the view from the ramparts. The exhibition was installed in the rooms of the technical department of the ghetto, where some of the outstanding Theresienstadt painters worked and painted, what their eyes saw.

A Girl's Life

On February 1945 some 1000 women prisoners began the death march from Gross Rosen, not many survived. Eva Loewidt (now Erben), aged 14, escaped with her last ounce of strength. The Jahn family in the village of Postrekov in the Bohemian Forest took her in, hid her and cared for her till the end of the war. The Czech director Pavel Stingl is making a film about Eva's life, based on her autobiographical book "I was Left Behind" (German, Belz Verlag, Mannheim 1997). In July 1998 the scenes in Postrekov were filmed with Eva present, the villagers taking part - among them "auntie" Jahn.

On the occasion of the opening of an exhibition on the 60th anniversary of the "Night of the Broken Glass" (Kristallnacht) on November 16, 1998, in the central library of Hasfurt am Main the library director Kordula Kappner invited Eva Erben. Through this one example she wanted to demonstrate the fate of millions of Jews during the

holocaust. In the course of her stay in Germany Eva met young people - for many of them the first meeting with a holocaust survivor. Eva read from her book and answered many questions.

Prize for Professor Kulka

On December 9, 1998 Yad Vashem bestowed the Yaakov Buchman prize on Prof. Dov Kulka for the first volume of his book "German Jewry under National Socialism - Documents to the History of the Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden 1933-1939". Professor Kulka was deported from ghetto Terezin to the Birkenau family camp and was there one of the boys in the children's barracks. This prize was also given to Aaron Appelfeld for his book "Mikhre kerakh" (Ice Mine).

The publication of the Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic "Ros Chodes" brought in November 1998 an item about the unveiling of a memorial plaque for the Jews of Vsetin and vicinity, who perished in the holocaust. The initiator of this plaque was the holocaust researcher Erich Kulka, born there, who included this project in his last will and his son Prof. D. Kulka, Jerusalem who attended the festive ceremony on October 23, 1998. Today there are no Jews in Vsetin.

"Kamarad"

In the framework of an inter-disciplinary workshop at Bar Ilan university on December 8, 1998 Ruth Bondy gave a lecture about the children's newspaper "Kamarad" and other children's newspapers in ghetto Terezin. The occasion was the publication of the book "Kar'u lo Haver" about "Kamarad", translated and edited by her. The publishers: Yad Vashem and Beit Theresienstadt. The director of the institute for holocaust research at Bar Ilan university Dan Michman opened the session. According to Ruth Bondy many problems dealt with in the children's paper - e.g. education to values, mutual help - are still actual today.

"Kamarad" was written in the children's home Q-609, which is less well known than the more centrally located homes on L-4 street in the ghetto. The photo-copied material brought by the director of Beit Terezin Anita Tarsi from her visit to Terezin includes the copy of a small copybook. On the first page appear the letters K J and the date 19.4.44, on the last the sentence: "The Children of Q-609 congratulate cordially" (in German). It was probably a birthday present for the home leader or one of the educators. The copybook includes poems, drawings and essays on life in the home, mentioning Franta the critic, auntie Anni, the English teacher Timchen and the physician Dr. Schmeidler. Does anybody know the identity of K J ?

Between London and Kolin

The connection between the stage director and lecturer Judi Herman and the Czech town Kolin started through one of the nearly 1500 unclaimed torah scrolls in Prague. These were redeemed in 1964 by English Jews from the ruling Communists and distributed, from London, to Jewish communities the world over. One scroll from Kolin was given to the Northwood and Pinner Liberal Synagogue (in a suburb of London). Under the impression of a visit to the old Jewish cemetery in Kolin Judi Herman wrote "Stones of Kolin - a Bohemian Jewish Rhapsody", dealing with over 600 years of Jewish life in the town. In 100 minutes many characters appear on the stage, among them Kaiser Franz Josef, Kafka's sister, rabbis of Kolin from different

epochs and, most important, the last rabbi Richard Feder. The premiere was in September 1998 at "Sadler's Wells" in London.

Winton's Children

Sir Nicolas Winton, who - prior to WWII - played a major role organizing the emigration of 664 mostly Jewish children from Czechoslovakia to England, visited Prague as guest of the Jewish Museum in March 1998. Among "Winton's children" he met there was also Vera Gissing from England, author of the book "Pearls of Childhood" (Robson - Books, London 1988), describing her leave-taking from the parents and acclimatization in an English boarding school. She also deals with the children's conflicts at war's end, when most found out about the death of their parents. To return to Czechoslovakia or not? Beit Terezin now received a copy of the book.

IN BEIT TEREZIN

Visitors

Following new connections with various departments of the Isr. Ministry of Education the chief inspector for the teaching of history Mr. M. Yaron, the department head for art instruction in religious schools Ms. Nira Kramer, the director of the department for the teaching of the holocaust Ms. Lawrence Rosengarth and the representative of the pedagogic department Mr. Hagai Yehudai (who is also responsible for educational associations and boarding school frameworks) visited Beit Terezin. We hope that these visits will contribute to the deepening of our cooperation with the Isr. Ministry of Education.

In November 1998 the historian Mr. Miroslav Karny and Mr. Michal Frankl of the "Terezinska iniciativa" foundation in Prague visited Beit Terezin. They are preparing the publication of a memorial book of prisoners of ghetto Theresienstadt of German extraction. The main reason for their visit was to complete their data - before going to print. They discussed with the team of Beit Terezin many important questions, to mutual advantage.

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We receive many requests through e-mail from all over the world, regarding relatives who were in ghetto Terezin. In most cases we are able to answer with the help of our computerized data base, in special cases we approach institutions in the Czech Republic, Germany and Austria - they all were always very helpful.

The team of Beit Terezin and mainly Alisah Schiller, who manages this project, continue to update and correct the data base with information from various archives abroad. So we are sometimes able to add the last address before deportation, the maiden name of a woman and other missing data. We plan to send out a special questionnaire to our members, former Terezin prisoners, with the aim to collect additional details.

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A meeting in appreciation of the volunteers among our members and those active in the educational framework took place on December 16, 1998 (4th Hanukka candle), in the Edelstein hall of Beit Terezin. Many of our members of all generations

attended. Tsvi Cohen, a Terezin "child" lit the candles, Shmuel (Jirka) Bloch accompanied the communal singing with his accordion, our chairman M. Livni, the director of Beit Terezin Anita Tarsi and Shosh Sade from the second generation greeted the assembly.

Then Chava Groag-Linden, an art teacher, gave a talk about her doctoral thesis at the Lesley College, Boston, titled "Days of Hope and Despair - Facilitating Concentration Camp Visits Through Art". The idea is to use various ways of artistic expression, to make students understand the subject of ghetto Terezin. Chava was born in ghetto Terezin and the paper is an attempt to face her past, which she suppressed for many years.

Hana Drori reported about the preparations for a book with memoirs (in Czech and German) of the "girls" of room 28 at the children's home L-414 in the ghetto - together with her surviving friends, now in their seventies, dispersed in many countries.

Hana Weingarten, a witness of those times, related her experiences from a trip to Terezin and Auschwitz, accompanying an Israeli youth group.

As a sign of appreciation each volunteer received a copy of the book "Tommy" by the painter Fritta, which he made for his 3 year old son in the ghetto (see book review).

New Members

29 new members joined our association last year - 16 Israelis (of these: 5 of the first generation, 9 of the second and 2 without family connection to the ghetto). The remaining 13 live in the USA, England, Australia and Brazil. (Of these: 6 of the first generation, 3 of the second and 4 with no connection).

Trip to Terezin

The trip by Anita Tarsi to Terezin helped to deepen the connection between "Pamatnik Terezin" and Beit Theresienstadt. There were discussions about possibilities in education and of common commemorative projects, among others also the idea of a joint Israeli-Czech seminary for the second generation. We hope to continue this cooperation.

Exhibition in Lyon

The "Centre de Histoire de la Resistance et de la Deportation" in Lyon, France, is active in education and exhibitions on the subject of the holocaust and of the resistance movement in France and Europe. On November 27,1998, an exhibition was opened about art in ghetto Theresienstadt. It includes 9 original exhibits and many photographic copies of paintings and documents from our collection. On this occasion the "Centre" in Lyon published a book with essays about the ghetto history.

Edelstein Hall to be an Exhibition Room

After getting the final plans by the architects Nili Bar-On and Idith Shlomi and receiving bids by building firms we are now about to decide, who is going to do the work. We hope to start in January and the work to be finished within two months. We did not yet succeed to secure all the necessary funds for this purpose.

Therefore we would appreciate, if our members and friends, who did not yet

contribute to this project - or those who are in the position and willing to contribute again - could find their way to do so.

Schwerin and Terezin

In the framework of the project "Dialogue of Generations" a concert was given on October 19, 1998, in the Remembrance Room of Beit Terezin. There was "Kol Nidre" (Cello and piano) by Max Brod, which was played in the ghetto and a part of the Fifth Sonata by Victor Ullmann, composed in the ghetto. The performers were students and teachers from the Johann Wilhelm Conservatory in Schwerin, Germany, under the baton of its director Volker Ahmels, who initiated this project.

On the occasion of Holocaust Day in Germany on January 27, 1998, the president of the Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Rainer Prachtl initiated a performance at Schwerin castle, centered around ghetto Theresienstadt and its victims. The author Jiri Grusa, then ambassador of the Czech Republic in Germany, spoke about the importance of Terezin in his country and Dr. Ingo Schulz lectured on propaganda projects of the SS in Terezin concentration camp. There was a concert given by students of the Schwerin conservatory - works by Ullmann and Krasa from Terezin - under the baton of Volker Ahmels.

The evening ended with a collection among the guests for the benefit of Beit Terezin. The proceeds, DM 1000.-, were presented to our chairman by the German ambassador to Israel Mr. Theodor Wallau and the Cultural Attache of the embassy Mr. Ronald Muench. They visited Beit Terezin on July 27, 1998. We also received a copy of the book "In braunen Feuern brennen weisse Tauben" (In Brown Fires White Doves Burn), poems and prose by Rainer Prachtl, published in 1995. It was inspired by a journey of atonement by citizens of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to Auschwitz and Ravensbrueck. Rainer Prachtl wrote in a letter to Beit Terezin, that Germany today has to confront its past, to prevent a recurrence of such crimes.

SECOND GENERATION - 1998, THE YEAR THAT WAS

Our members of the second generation strive to continue their way, in spite of internal differences. Some of the founders have expressed their reservations about our commitment and our ability to do our part and this brought some of our members to a crossroads. There are questions - should we act in the framework of the activities of the first generation or chose other, separate fields.

In any case we hope, that all members of the younger generation will continue to further the existence of our association. We also want to approach the older members and ask them to be aware of the generation gap - we all, together, have the responsibility, the duty and the abilities to bridge it.

As before, we are looking for ways to add new members, so as "not to let the flame die". It seems that the hour has come for every one of the founder generation to turn to his children and grandchildren, to interest them in joining the association, each to his personal depth of involvement. In this vein we have contacted by telephone all "children" of members and hope that we succeeded to spread the message, that our association has body and soul - and not only written words, arriving in the newsletter. In 1999 we will concentrate our activities on the subject of art in ghetto Terezin. We already had an interesting meeting with Kobi Luria, on October 31, 1998. He shared with us the process of creating the cabaret performance of "L'hayey Hahayim" (Long

Live Life), as a “sabre” (native Israeli), whose parents were not in the holocaust. There was another meeting of the second generation on December 6, 1998 with a lecture by Tally Yaron about music life in ghetto Terezin.

Towards 1999 I want to express my hope, that all members of the second generation will join us in our activities. We want - together with the founders - to mobilize the right spirit and the right emotions to overcome differences and continue this undertaking, dear to all of us!

(Narda Kuczinski)

OUR EDUCATIONAL CENTER

Study Days and Student Instruction

In 1998 we had 120 study days about subjects connected to ghetto Theresienstadt. The participants were high school students, teachers and others from Israel and abroad, a total of about 4800.

The team of Beit Terezin thanks all our members who cooperated at the study days and share - mainly with youth - their personal experiences, devotedly and with great emotional effort.

25 students, preparing papers on the subject of the ghetto, were assisted in Beit Theresienstadt in 1998.

Special Study Days

In September 1998 Beit Terezin organized a study day for the educational team of “Beit Lohame Hagetaot”. It included a discussion about the position of ghetto Terezin in the Israeli holocaust memory and the problems arising. The erroneous perception of Theresienstadt as a “model ghetto” was dealt with and the different meanings, this concept has for historians and the media. A polylogue about conditions in the ghetto at various times, the testimony of a survivor and perusal of original documents brought new understanding. In the near future there will be a reciprocal visit.

“Being in Terezin” - Database on Ghetto Terezin

Groups of history teachers (9th grade) from 9 Isr. schools, who are interested to teach history with the help of modern technology are now studying at Beit Theresienstadt. We cooperate in this project with the “Center of Educational Technology”. During the instruction “on-line” by our team the “internet” is also used - the teachers make contact with the computerized site. This is a model of planned activities by high school students, who take part in a teaching program through the computer, over a network - led by teachers and the team of Beit Terezin. The project is due to last about 3 months and will conclude with the presentation of papers by the participants.

The address is: www.cet.ac.il/history/terezin

We invite everybody to visit the site and to take part in the “conversation” of the discussion groups.

Touring Guide for Ghetto Theresienstadt

Prior to publishing this booklet - in cooperation with the Youth Department of the Isr. Ministry of Education - there was a pilot try-out on the occasion of an excursion of

instructors to the former ghetto. Before that there were study days intended to familiarize the instructors with the booklet. The study days started as usual: a lecture about the history of the ghetto, the film "Theresienstadt 1941-1945", a discussion about ghetto life and an oral personal testimony. The second half of the day was dedicated to the booklet and the use of it.

Our member Hana Drori, who wrote part of the guide, led a group in September 1998. In October a second trial took place, with two Israeli youth groups, organized by the Isr. Ministry of Education. With the instructors was also Ms Yael Bernholz from the Youth Department of the Ministry of Education and the director of Beit Terezin Anita Tarsi. They spent 4 days in Terezin and toured the sites and the new exhibitions. The "Touring Guide" (in Hebrew) will come out at the start of 1999.

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OUR ARCHIVES

Spoon of Life

In the concentration camps a spoon was very precious: in Kaufering, a camp infamous for its "extermination through labor", Dr. Avraham (Dolfa) Benes received from his friend Dr. Hanus Kafka a present - not an ordinary spoon, but one engraved with the initials E B and the date 19.1.1945. Now Dolfa Benes donated it to our collection. Further Dr. Benes - one of the founders of Beit Terezin - gave us a copy of his testimony in Yad Vashem (1996). This is his biography, starting with the "Blau Weiss" movement and the Zionist organisation in Brno, through the Palestine Office in Prague and Ghetto Theresienstadt to the deportation to Birkenau. Dr. Leo Baeck gave him his special blessing - looking back Dr. Benes is sure, that rabbi Baeck knew what awaited the prisoners. Dolfa's life was spared because he had no important position in Terezin - he worked as a construction worker. When the transport left for the East in October 1944, he was not in the railway car of the "VIP's" (Prominente) - these were immediately after arrival sent to the gas chambers. He was in one of the other, overcrowded cattle freight cars, together with Dr. Kafka.

Dov Barnea

After the death of Dov Barnea (Honza Bramer) on July 2, 1998, in Omer near Beer Sheba we received the transcript of an interview with him given in 1976. It deals with his activity as group leader and member of the leadership of the Czech-Jewish youth movement "El-Al" and as director of the Department for Youth Work in ghetto Terezin. Dov, born 1916, relates that he tried in the ghetto to find work places for young people, where they would learn a trade or get more food (agriculture, bakery etc.). Later he was an educator in the children's block of the Birkenau family camp. After his immigration to Israel in 1949 Dov continued doing, what he saw as his calling - education. For many years he was the director of the Education Department of the Beer Sheba municipality and also consultant of the Education Network of the Negev Beduin. Dov, who was an enthusiastic photographer since his youth, whose pictures were shown again and again in various exhibitions and received many prizes, was also very active for Beit Terezin throughout the years.

Graffiti from Terezin

The curator of our art collection and widow of one of the initiators of Beit Terezin Zeev Sheck, Alisa, donated through the years many precious artifacts to our collection. 20 years after Zeev, then the Israeli ambassador in Rome, died at the age of 59 in October 1978, we received from Alisa a very special document: rhymes, written on the latrine walls of the barracks and children's homes in ghetto Terezin, as Zeev jotted them down during his imprisonment there (July 1943 - October 1944). As is to be expected, most of these "creations" are humorous, but deal often with genitalia and excrement, in very vulgar language. Among the more "civil" ones: "He, who loves order in his life, shits in the hole and not around", "After the war all the Z (Zionists) will go to P (Palestine) and all the idiots in the arse - and that is the same".

Sign of Life

The punitive transport AAh after Heydrich was murdered, left Prague with 1000 persons on June 20, 1942 and went directly to Poland - only one man survived, who escaped on the way by jumping from the railway car. Frank (Franta) Weiss and his daughter Jane Silverstone from Sidney, Australia, sent us the copy of an illegal letter, written by Frank's first wife Vera Weiss (nee Kronberger) on July 6, 1942 in Sobibor. She had arrived there by AAh, even though her husband was in Terezin ghetto from the beginning. In the letter, addressed to her parents in Sobeslav, Bohemia, Vera writes that the trip in the cattle freight car was very hard and lasted 80 hours. "I immediately volunteered for work and that was right", she wrote and advised her parents, to do the same when, God forbid, their turn comes. From her luggage only the sleeping bag and some food remained and what she wore on her body. She works at the excavation of drainage ditches and is one of the lucky ones, who sleep in a bed. "I have enough to eat, mainly from what I brought with me... don't worry about me". That was the last sign of life from her.

Resistance in Theresienstadt

The electronics engineer Frank (Franta) Weiss, now aged 83, worked in the ghetto at the repair and maintenance of combustion engines. Secretly he built in his workshop a radio receiver, with which he listened to BBC broadcasts from London. For reasons of security he related the news only to a few, mainly to his friends and comrades from "Maccabi" Brno - but often they returned to him as rumors. On June 20, 1944 he learned in such a broadcast from the BBC about the forthcoming extermination in gas chambers of 3000 prisoners in the Birkenau family camp and about the murder of 4000 former Terezin prisoners, deported to Birkenau in September 1943.

The memoirs of Frank Weiss include a chapter, called "Pruser" (vulgar Czech: bad luck) - in 1944 members of the small resistance cell decided, in case the Nazis wanted to liquidate the ghetto at war's end, to defend themselves, at least with knuckle-dusters. Weiss had the task to procure them. In one of the magazines he found a steel plate and requested Mr. Langsfeld, who operated the sole oxygen cutter in the ghetto, to cut the plate into 20 rectangles. Through bad luck a ghetto policeman found a knuckle-duster with another prisoner, handed him over to his commanding officer Karl Loewenstein (who was suspected of collaborating with the SS), who reported to the SS commander. There began a feverish search for resistance cells in the ghetto and all the prisoners connected with the knuckle-duster - plan trembled, discovery meant death. They were lucky: the SS wanted to know, who cut up a 10 mm thick

steel plate - but theirs was 12 mm. Frank Weiss was deported in autumn 1944 with the majority of men in the ghetto to Auschwitz and from there to Blechhammer.

Letters

Rita Muenzer (Bejkovska) from Tel Aviv gave us copies of many letters and notes she had exchanged with members of the "Kadima" group of "Maccabi Hatzair", Plzen, during her time in ghetto Terezin, 1942 -1944. These friends lived in various barracks and homes, most - like all over 14 - worked, sometimes they were in hospital, often there was a curfew - the letters were the only way to maintain contact. The content of the letters, written in German and Czech, show worry about parents, a critical view on ghetto life ("...people here care about themselves and only about themselves"), belief in Zionism. Then there is a description of an exercise hour with Fredy Hirsch, conversations with educators and - naturally - hints of young love.

Bad News

"In this letter I have to bring you horrible news" wrote Arye Amit, soldier in the Jewish Brigade, in October 1945 from the Netherlands to Shmuel Freund in Kibbutz Kfar Ruppin, "your father and your sister were brought on March 2, 1944 to the Auschwitz gas chambers, your mother died from typhoid fever in Theresienstadt". The writer was aware how hard it is to receive such news suddenly, but he thought, that it is better to know the truth than to live with false hopes. We got the letter from Shmuel Freund's daughter Hana Gavish, Gilon.

One of Many

The high school student Mor Ephraim from kibbutz Givat Hayim - Meuhad at the Shaha school, Ein Hahoresh, dedicated her paper in history to the biography of a holocaust survivor: Mihal Ephrat (Eva Slachet), a member of her kibbutz. Under the title "It is Still With Me..." Mor combines historical facts with fragments of Mihal's memories from ghetto Terezin, Birkenau, Hamburg and Bergen Belsen, the return to her home town and acclimatization in Israel. Mihal, an illustrator of children's books, is shown in Mor's eyes as a strong and optimistic woman with a pronounced will to live.

History of a Jewish School

We received a copy of the "Chronic of the Grade School of the Jewish Community in Maehrisch Ostrau" (today Ostrava) from Peter Erben, Askalon. In the preface the director of the school J. Kohn wrote in 1899, in neat gothic script, that the school was founded in 1863, recognized officially by the Ministry of Education in 1884 and now has 7 classes. The booklet includes orderly annual reports starting with the school year 1899/1900 in German and since 1936 in Czech. It ends 1938/39, the year of the Munich accord and the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia. In that year, so in the booklet, the number of pupils fell from 187 at the start of the school year to 151 at its end. The chronic concludes with a list of diseases that befell the pupils in 1939: flu, tonsillitis, measles, whooping cough and ear infection. One of the teachers died - a natural death.

Bombs on Schwarzheide

About 1000 men of working age, who had survived the selection at the Birkenau family camp, arrived on July 3, 1944, at the concentration camp Schwarzheide near Dresden. They were sent there for the re-building of the BRABAG-Ruhland enterprises for synthetic fuel, which had been repeatedly bombed by the allied air forces. 814 bombs were released on the plant during an attack of August 24, 1944. In this instance 16 prisoners were killed and 56 wounded.

There is a museum in Kovarska (Schmiedeberg) in north Bohemia in memory of the air fight between British and American aircraft on their way to Ruhland and German fighters, which took place on September 11, 1944 over the Krušnohori (Erzgebirge, Ore Mountains). In this battle 12 "Flying Fortresses" B-17 and 31 German Messerschmidt craft were downed. This information is based on material we received from Yaakov Tsur, one of the Schwarzheide prisoners - less than a third of them survived the war.

Our Connection with Sidney

The Jewish Museum in Sidney, Australia, is in continuous contact with Beit Terezin through Edith Sheldon, one of the "girls" in L-410. Our archives contributed various exhibits about ghetto Terezin to an exhibition to be opened in the beginning of 1999. As quid pro quo we received from E.Sheldon i.a. instructions by the Jewish Community offices in Prague, dated September 22, 1939, regarding the obligatory filling-out of a registration card for Jews, which had to be returned the day after, the order of the day of the ghetto police of February 13, 1942 and an English translation of essays by girls in the home L-410, poems and explanations of the ghetto plan.

Opera

"An Opera for Terezin" is the title of a work by Lilian Atlan, in a version created after a performance in the framework of the Festival of Montpellier, France, in 1989. We now received it in an English translation by John Clifford and with a Hebrew translation by Emanuel Pinto. The opera is dedicated to the Theresienstadt artists and includes testimonies of former ghetto prisoners (Lisa Gidron - Kummermann, Ota Kraus, Yehuda Bakon and many others) and songs and music from the ghetto. According to Atlan's instructions it is really a ceremony, where - around tables in a huge hall - the master of ceremonies, actors, musicians, singers and the audience sit together. The happening is planned to last the whole night.

Bonn, Theresienstadt, Bonn

Following a visit to Beit Theresienstadt the historian Astrid Mehmel from Bonn university sent us the memoirs of Dora Philippson, the daughter of the geographer Richard Philippson. Thanks to the intervention of his Swedish colleague Sven Hedin he was accorded in the ghetto the distinction of VIP ("Prominenter") and as such remained in the ghetto and survived, together with his wife and daughter. Dora Philippson, born and deceased in Bonn (1886 - 1980) was in the ghetto deputy of the house-elder Bernstein at Q-704. Contrary to memoirs by other prisoners from Germany she not only praises Bernstein, but also other Czech prisoners for their civility and dutiful work. She wrote the memoirs, which include very realistic

descriptions of the sufferings in life and death of the old people from Germany, immediately after her liberation. At that time the former citizens of Bonn had to wait for 3 months, until one of them - who had volunteered to work in the laundry - was released by the local commander of the Red Army, and only then a bus from the Bonn municipality arrived to return them to their home town.

Greetings from Father

Copies of post cards written in 1943 in the ghetto by Jakob Daniel to his son Rudi were given to us by his grandson in Aachen, Germany, through Shimon Weisbecker, Haifa. Rudi was not deported to Theresienstadt because he had a gentile wife. In the cards Jakob Daniel acknowledges the receipt of parcels and writes that he works for the Health Authority (possibly he had to oversee the cleanliness and the orderly queues at the water taps and latrines). Shortly after he wished his dear ones Happy Christmas Jakob Daniel died on December 19, 1943.

Illusion of a Parent's Home

Bern Bernat from Farrer, Australia, sent us the memoirs of his father Otto Bernstein (born 1873), who describes the efforts of old people in his hometown Berlin to be sent to Theresienstadt. This was presented to them as a resort for old people, with good care and satisfactory living conditions. Bernstein came to Theresienstadt thanks to his activities for a German relief organization in Moscow during WWI ("...then we were still patriots"), but reality was different. Though - as a house elder - he lived in slightly better conditions and also received parcels with sardines from Portugal, he was very aware of the mental and physical suffering of the old people from the Reich, he saw them picking the trash in search for food and witnessed the heartrending parting scenes when transports were leaving.

MEMOIRS, RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS

One Righteous in Sodom

The backpack of Heda Kaufmanova, member of the Czech resistance movement PVVZ (Petičný výbor Verní Zůstaneme), was already packed for transport to ghetto Terezín when she decided at the last moment not to report. In her gripping memoirs "Leta 1938 - 1945" (The Years 1938 - 1945) which she started writing in 1947, Heda, who had worked at the Institute for Public Health in Prague, describes the nerve-shattering activities in the resistance movement and the manifold help she got from Czech members of the "underground" - very often endangering their lives. She specifically mentions Hana and Eva Malkova, mother and daughter, in whose apartment she hid together with her sister-in-law for 22 months, until liberation. Heda Kaufmanova relates, what happened to acquaintances of her friend: On a sudden impulse they put calling cards with their Prague address into the luggage already packed for transport. After a time their relatives, who lived there, received a large parcel from Germany. It contained a suitcase of her relatives sent to the East and a letter: "...I received this suitcase from the 'Winterhilfe' (Nazi relief organization), including the keys. When I found inside the calling card, I repacked everything, so as to return it to its rightful owner. I do not want to take part in robbery. Excuse me for not signing this letter".

Another Theresienstadt

There is much known about cultural life in ghetto Terezin, but the technical achievements necessary to build up a town destined for 7000 citizens and soldiers - water supply, sewage system etc. - are usually not mentioned. Hans H. Sladky, Hamburg, born 1921, wrote at the beginning of 1988 "Episodes from the Life of a Survivor", published in the collection "Terezinske studie a dokumenty" - we received a copy of the German original. He survived in the ghetto until the liberation thanks to a decision in 1938: when the Jewish pupils in his German school in Prague were ordered to sit in the last row, he preferred an apprenticeship with a plumber. Eng. Jirka Vogel, a sleeping partner at a plumbing enterprise where Honza worked, was made responsible for water supply and canalization in ghetto Terezin from the beginning. He brought Honza with him. Work in the ghetto demanded continuous improvisations: in the harsh winter of 1942 the latrines froze which caused a blockage in the connection to the sewers - and this at a time when thousands of ghetto inmates suffered from diarrhea. The solution found: baskets with glowing coals were placed under the openings and covered with sheet metal and so the freezing was stopped. In one case Honza was called urgently - an old man's dentures fell into a latrine, without them he could not eat at all. Honza, in a special suit, descended into the sewer, from above he was directed to the exact location of the dentures with the help of a flashlight and succeeded to retrieve them. Honza Sladky intended to continue his memoirs, but died after surgery on November 17, 1988 in Hamburg.

Seder Eve in the Ghetto

Klara Caro, a rabbi's wife from Cologne Germany, was active in the ghetto among women. She organized meetings and lectures for former WIZO members. In 1946 she wrote her memories of a "Unforgettable Seder Eve". 3000 ghetto prisoners, who declared before the Pessah holidays in 1943, that they would not eat hametz (leavened food) received 3 matzot for each day and that meant being even more hungry than usual. The Seder ceremony, led by her husband, was attended by 25 people, crowded into a small room. On the Seder plate there was only a single carrot, some inedible greens and salt water. Suddenly the lights went out (that happened in the ghetto quite often), but the ceremony was not interrupted. Rabbi Caro knew the "Haggada" text by heart, a cantor from Prague sang Hebrew and Yiddish hymns and so - like in ancient times the sages in Bnei Brak - they sat till morning. Klara Caro wrote her memoirs "Staerker als das Schwert" (Stronger than the Sword) and dedicated them to the victims of ghetto Theresienstadt. We received the Seder story from Hava Agmon, Tsahala.

Forgotten Painter

"A Name Nobody Knows - the Art Collector, Sculptress and Painter Amalie Seckbach" is the title of an article by Gabriele Reber from Usingen, Germany. Amalie S., aged 72, was deported in September 1942 to ghetto Theresienstadt and died there 2 years later. She came from Frankfurt and was the owner of one of the most important collections of Chinese woodcuts (17th - 19th century) in the world. Only in old age, after the death of her husband, she became a painter and sculptor. Her works were exhibited in various German cities, Florence, Madrid and Brussels. Amalie Seckbach

painted in the ghetto, too, mainly portraits of women whose suffering is clearly visible. Her collection was hidden in a Frankfurt cellar and bombed out, most of her works were lost, her name is forgotten in Germany. Beit Terezin owns 8 paintings made by her, which she had given to Trude Groag, who - as a nurse - cared for her in the ghetto. (Trude Groag was a poet and artist in her own right).

With his Last Strength

Pavel Uri Bass, who was chairman of our association for many years, decided that now, in his seventies, the time has come to write his memoirs, mainly for his family. He was the oldest son of a well-off textile merchant in Brno (Bruenn), who lost his possessions because of the Nazi occupation. The family was deported in one of the first transports to the newly erected ghetto Terezin. As a former officer of the Czechoslovak army the father was in the ghetto police and lived in a chamber allocated to him at the "Magdeburger" barracks. Pavel, then aged 17, volunteered and worked with a group of carpenters there and stayed with this work for his almost 3 years in the ghetto. Because of his position the father succeeded to keep his family in the ghetto until autumn 1944, but then the 16 year old Uri was sent alone to Auschwitz. One of the "old" prisoners saved his life, whispering to him on the railway ramp (in Yiddish), to pretend at the selection, that his age is 18 and he is an artisan. The memoirs describe Pavel's hardships in Auschwitz, Monowitz, during the death march and how he survived with the last ounce of strength.

Dutch Jews in Theresienstadt

In the yearbook 1998 of the State Institute for War Documentation 1940 - 1945 in Amsterdam is a detailed essay by Ab Caransa titled "Theresienstadt, Schizophrenia in Stone". Ab, aged 16, was deported with his family in April 1944 from the concentration camp for Dutch Jews Westerbork to Theresienstadt. In autumn 1944 he was deported from there to Birkenau. Ab Caransa researches for many years now the fate of the 4800 Jews of the Netherlands, who were brought to Theresienstadt and also the history of the ghetto.

Jazz

"Report", published by the "Imperial War Museum Holocaust Exhibition" (now in preparation) brought in summer 1998 the story of the two Dutch-Jewish jazz musicians Johnny and Jones, with their real names Simon van Wezel and Max Kannewasser. In Holland they were very popular before the war and performed even at the time of the German occupation, since 1942 before Jewish audiences only. The commander of Westerbork camp, where Dutch Jews were concentrated before deportation to the East, even let them travel to Amsterdam to record music composed in the camp - including a serenade for Westerbork. In September 1944 they were brought to Theresienstadt and from there to Auschwitz. They perished in Bergen Belsen, Johnny in March 1945, Jones on April 15 - the day the British army liberated the camp.

Commemoration Through Research

“Terezinske Listy”, published by “Pamatnik Terezin”, brought in issue 26/98 an article by Ludmila Chladkova on the history of a house, L-415, in ghetto Terezin, based on a diary by Margarete Pedde from Duesseldorf, Germany. She was the deputy house elder and later the house elder and recorded painstakingly all details about the occupants, most of them old people from Germany, of whom two thirds died in the ghetto. Only 32 of the 449 recorded people survived.

Vojtech Blodig writes the history of the “Magdeburger” barracks, built in 1780 for the Imperial cavalry, where at the time of the ghetto the offices of the ghetto administration were located and are now part of the ghetto museum (see separate item).

Anna Hyndrakova brings an extract from 9 diaries written by ghetto inmates, which exist because their authors survived. (Those sent to the East usually took their precious diaries with them - they were destroyed as were their owners). The subjects common to all the diaries - the overcrowding, insects, shortage of water, standing in line, hunger, black market, diseases, dread of transports and also hope - reflect the life of the ghetto prisoners.

Iлона Smekalova quotes a list of 150 names of children who died in the ghetto (as opposed to the majority killed in extermination camps), of these 37 babies born in the ghetto.

There is also a lecture by Vera Hajkova on babies, toddlers and their nurses - which she gave in 1996 at the historian’s meeting in Terezin. The publishing of this lecture became the reason for emotional meetings of orphans who knew nothing of their past in the ghetto and of the people who nursed them.

Profits of the Ghetto

The “Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies” at the “United States Holocaust Memorial Museum” in Washington finances annually independent research on various aspects of the holocaust, organizes lectures and publishes them. In the framework of the annual J.B. and Maurice C. Shapiro lecture Peter B. Hayes spoke about “Profits and Persecution - German Big Business and the Holocaust”. He detailed the connection between the huge German industrial companies and the holocaust. According to Hayes the “Deutsche Bank”, then and today the biggest financial institution in Germany, made no small profits from loans to ghetto Theresienstadt and from moneys the ghetto deposited with the bank. Hayes believes, that large companies like I.G.Farben, BRABAG and many others did not cooperate with the extermination machine out of ideology or hate, but for reasons of profit.

In Word and Color

“Man is Not a Number” is the title of a booklet with selected drawings and essays from a students competition in Czech schools, published in autumn 1998 by “Pamatnik Terezin” in Czech, German and English. The initiative of this annual competition on holocaust subjects came from Hana Greenfield (Hanka Lustig) from Kolin, who - as a girl - spent 4 years in Terezin, Auschwitz and other concentration camps. The chosen essays and drawings deal with themes like “The right to live”, “Memories”, “Roma child”, “Tree of wishes”. The participants are aged 14 to 18.

The Jews of Zamberk

Frantisek and Vlasta Pirko from Zamberk in Eastern Bohemia prepared in 1997 a list of all names from the local Jewish cemetery and described the 235 tombstones, the oldest from 1731. During the Nazi and Communist regimes the cemetery deteriorated steadily, marble gravestones and brass letters were stolen, the cemetery became a passage to the nearby bus station. Through the initiative of the citizens it was cleaned up and restored in 1994 and became part of the town museum. The Pirkos also made a list of the Zamberk Jews since 1666, whose number declined throughout the years and reached zero after the holocaust.

Nightmares

In her paper "Dreams of Four Holocaust Survivors", presented in November 1998 in the framework of the Faculty for Philosophy and Education of the Open University in Tel Aviv by Keren Ben Yehuda, she examines the influence of holocaust childhood trauma on nightmares of survivors. One of the interviewees, "Uriel" (pseudonym), born 1935, was the son of a Jewish father and a Christian mother who converted before her marriage, but left under pressure by the Gestapo. After the Communist father was arrested in Prague (where they escaped from the Sudetes), the 9 year old "Uriel" was left alone, slept in parks and with children whom he met incidentally, until he was - alone - brought finally to ghetto Terezin and there to a children's home. He met there his father, but after a short time the father was deported to Auschwitz and "Uriel" was again on his own. In the ghetto he was caught by an SS man stealing fruit from the SS orchard and after trying to escape, brutally beaten and locked up for days in a cell, where he was only able to crouch. In his recurring dream he tries to flee from his pursuers, he does not succeed, dogs attack and kill him - but he is aware, that he lives and wakes up in cold sweat and panic. According to Keren's interpretation (whose mother was born in ghetto Terezin) the dream manifests not only "Uriel's" childhood experiences, but also the unfinished episode of his mother's disappearance, whom he never saw again and from whom he did not hear anymore. After coming to Israel "Uriel" saw the founding of a family as his most important aim in life.

My Battle Against the Final Solution

is the title of the memoirs of a survivor of Auschwitz and Dachau, Heinz Herrmann, born in 1921 in Troppau (Opava), Czech Republic. They were published in 1994 in the series "Eyewitnesses Report" by the Institute for History of the Jews in Austria, in St. Poelten. We received a copy from Peter Erben, Askalon. Heinz Herrmann arrived in Auschwitz already in October 1942 and survived in the nearby "Buna" plant until the camp was evacuated - in spite of being wounded while unloading coal, the amputation of one finger and phlegmona - mainly thanks to the help of his comrades.

TEREZIN IN BOOKS

Naivety

"Tommy" is the name of an album with pictures made by the painter Bedrich Fritta in ghetto Terezin for the third birthday of his son on January 22, 1944. It was now published in Hebrew translation by Yad Vashem, Jerusalem with support by the Fritta foundation. In the charming drawings the proud father describes Tommy's pranks. He also describes in a series of pictures, what occupation Tommy could chose in the

future: detective or wrestler, or painter? But not in business please! Fritta concludes with a promise to Tommy: "This is the first book in a long row of books I intend to draw for you". But it was not to be. Tommy's parents were arrested in August 1944 (after drawings smuggled out of the ghetto were discovered) and murdered. Little Tommy survived and was adopted after the war by Leo Haas and his wife, who also belonged to the group of arrested artists. Tomas Fritta, by now grown up, added an epilogue addressed to youth today and relates what happened to his family - in the hope, that they may never experience such a fate. The album is available in Beit Terezin (NIS 42.-).

Prisoner's University

"Research and Documents about Terezin" is published in Prague in Czech and German by "Terezinska iniciativa". The Czech issue for 1998 includes interesting scientific essays. Karl Margry, Utrecht, writes about the film made in the ghetto one year before the infamous one "The Fuehrer Gives the Jews a Town". Anita Tarsi describes the suffering of old women from Germany, based on diaries and memoirs written by them. Miroslav Karny reports about the attempt, to declare a few Jews in the Protectorate as "Ehrenarier" (honorary Aryans). The German authorities thwarted this attempt. Jaroslava Milotova deals with the first transports from Prague to ghetto Lodz in October 1941 and Richard Seemann writes about the Czech Jews and their fate in ghetto Lodz. Anita Frankova quotes the full text of 9 essays on education in the ghetto, written there by educators a year after the boy's home L-417 was founded. Among them: Fredy Hirsch, Ota Klein, Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, Hans Krasa and others.

Each of these articles deserves a detailed review - but we chose Lena Makarova's "Academy of Survival", dealing with the lectures given in the ghetto on diverse subjects: Judaism, Christianity, Zionism, philosophy, history, art, music, sociology, education, medicine, law, economy, technology and more. There were 2290 lectures - 516 lecturers between September 1942 to September 1944. One of the lecturers on Judaism was Jakob Edelstein, the first ghetto elder (about the Jewish question), Paul Epstein, the second ghetto elder (Jewish demography, modern sociology), rabbi Leo Baeck and the sole female rabbi in the ghetto Regina Jonas. The list of lecturers includes the names of famous researchers and scientists from Central Europe - Prof. Maximilian Adler ("The Ideal of Stoicism and we" and "Was Philon of Alexandria a Philosopher?"), Prof. Woskin-Nahartabi (Life and Work of Hayim Nahman Bialik, Romanticism in Modern Hebrew Literature), Viktor Frankl, after the war famous for his book "Man's Search for Meaning" ("Exhaustion and Courage in Theresienstadt" and about psychotherapy). The number of subjects and their content are an impressive testimony to the spirit of man. The lecturers were not paid, the audience stood crowded, in winter in unheated and in summer in stuffy rooms, with an half-empty stomach.

Childhood in the Holocaust

"Dark Shadows, Bright Life" is the title of the second book of poems by Ruth Gabriele Silton, (Fithian Press, Santa Barbara, California, 1998). Gaby tries through her poetry to get over the memories of her past - they are always with her... She also writes about her memories in prose, in her book "Between Two Worlds - Autobiography of a Child Survivor of the Holocaust", which she sent to Beit Terezin

in July 1998. She describes reality in the holocaust, seen through a child's eyes. Gaby was just 5 years old, when her father escaped from Berlin to Holland and she and her mother followed. But there the Nazis caught up with them, too. Both grandmothers and a grandfather committed suicide - to avoid the transport. Gaby learned, that at home you have to be truthful - but to the German soldiers you have to lie. In June 1943 the family was sent to Westerbork and from there in January 1944 to ghetto Theresienstadt. Gaby relates, that in the ghetto she was often left on her own, when her parents had to work. Children over the age of 10 had to work too (this obviously relates to the time after the transports in autumn 1944), she was an errand girl for an infirmary. The Silton's were fortunate - they stayed in the ghetto until the liberation, probably thanks to the fact that Gaby's mother worked at mica-splitting (Glimmerspalten). Gabriele Silton, today professor for foreign languages at the university of Pasadena, California, could only now - 50 years later - muster the strength to face her past.

Pain of the Stars

Otto Weiss, born 1898 in Pardubice, Bohemia, composed poetry at the time of the German occupation - but he wrote it down only after coming to ghetto Terezin. There he also added new poems - all of them speak of disappointed hopes and helplessness... Otto Weiss was deported in October 1944 to Birkenau and murdered. His daughter, Helga Weissova-Hoskova, a well-known artist in the Czech Republic and abroad, brought out a book of Otto Weiss' poems with an introduction written by her. The book "As the Stars Suffer" (So leiden die Sterne) - the title of one of the poems - was published by "Terezinska iniciativa" in 1998. The poems, Helga's drawings (she already drew as a child in the ghetto) and Helga's diary were left in the care of Josef Polak (one of the authors of the book "Town Behind Bars") before the family was sent to the East. J. Polak hid everything in a wall in the "Magdeburger" barracks, there the things stayed till the war ended.

Peter Kien Saved his Life...

"No Name, No Number - Story of a Holocaust Survivor" Fred Klein from Hollywood, California, named his memoirs. The book - written in a clear and realistic style - was published by the author in 1997 in a second edition. Fred, born in Plzen as son of well-to-do parents, relates that his father, a dermatologist, was convinced of the superiority of German culture, he could not understand what was happening when the Nazis came to power and so he did not escape in time, though he would have had the means and ways to do it. Dr. Klein was one of the hostages taken after a German was murdered. He was deported to Buchenwald and from there to his death in Auschwitz. Fred Klein studied at a private art school in Prague where the young painter Peter Kien was teaching. This fact saved Fred's life - after he arrived in ghetto Terezin Kien employed him in the Technical Department, where he made statistics for the Germans. Only in autumn 1944 he was sent to Auschwitz and from there to camp Friedland, where he worked in a propeller factory and at the building of underground constructions. Fred remembers another instance that saved him: in Auschwitz, when a Polish Kapo demanded his good boots, he had the presence of mind not to refuse. And he managed to hold on to his two pairs of spectacles, essential to his survival.

Spiritual Estate of H.G.Adler

Jeremy Adler, the son of H.G. Adler, author of "Theresienstadt 1941 - 1945", the most extensive book about ghetto Theresienstadt published till now, is the editor of an anthology of essays and poems by his father, titled "Die Wahrheit verpflichtet" (Truth Obliges) - Bleicher Verlag, Gerlingen 1988. It turns out, that H.G. Adler, born in Prague, was not only an historian, but also an author whose works were published only in part. In an article "Why I Wrote my Book 'Theresienstadt 1941 - 1945'" Adler tells, that he decided to write this book while in the ghetto. When he was deported to Auschwitz in 1944 and later to Buchenwald, this was a test of strength for him. The book also contains a detailed interview, which the 75 year old gave, an essay "The Spiritual Face", "Thoughts to a Sociology of Concentration Camps", 3 series of poems from camps, among them "Theresienstadt Picture Sheet" and an epilog by Jeremy, professor for German Literature at Kings College in London.

READERS REACT TO OUR ISSUE OF JULY 1998

They Knew About the Gas Chambers

In our issue of July 1998 we asked our readers in the name of the holocaust historian M. Karny, if anyone knew in Terezin about what was happening in Auschwitz, especially about the gas chambers.

Lisa Laufer, Haifa, was a nurse at the Jewish Community in Prague, her husband was a physician. Both arrived in March 1943 in Terezin. Shortly after her arrival her cousin gave her a note written by her father, who was deported to the East in December 1942 together with her mother and sister. The note said: Aussig, Dresden, the names of two other stations and finally Mislowitz - Auschwitz. Always the same set of railway cars was used for the journey from Terezin to the East and returned afterwards. Her cousin had arranged with her father to hide a message about the final destination of the transport in the lamp of a certain car.

In August 1943 Lisa Laufer contracted hepatitis and was hospitalized in L-317, whose director was Dr. Salus. In her room was a patient, who was brought to Terezin two days earlier alone, in a special transport from Berlin. She told Lisa, that in Auschwitz were mass gassings and that old people and children were led directly from the railway ramp to the gas chambers. She wanted to tell more, but the shocked Lisa could not take any more. After this conversation she got high fever and was transferred to another room. She does not remember the woman's name.

During her stay in the ghetto she never talked with her husband about the conversation, also because Lisa did not want to believe it. Only in October 1944, in the waggon to Auschwitz her husband said: "The woman said the truth". She asked, how he knew that and he replied, that Dr. Salus heard it a short time ago from the second Jewish elder Dr. Epstein (who was executed a few days before).

Franta Kraus, Prague, notes in regard to the video-interview recorded during his visit in Beit Terezin:

1. "Buchty" were not baked in the central kitchen, but in the "white bakery".
2. The list of those working in the hospital barracks at the Birkenau family camp, excepted by Dr. Mengele in March 1944 from the extermination of the September transport, was vetted by the Viennese physician Dr. Hellmann and not by Dr. Heller.

INFORMATION REQUESTED

Catherina Mueller, Switzerland, was adopted in 1947 by a family in Lausanne and forbidden to ask about her past. But her curiosity to know about her biological parents, her birthdate and where she came from became stronger and stronger. During the last years she has recurring visions of crowded barracks, memories of hunger, cold, thirst and shouting. After reading Ruth Klueger's autobiography she thought, that "children's home L-414 in Theresienstadt" was somehow ringing a bell. After the war she was in a children's home and remembers a building and a park - an acquaintance of her said, it was in Cracow. When she arrived in Switzerland without any identification, a physician determined that she was about 5 years old. When asked her name, she answered "Kleine" (little one) and maybe that is why she was called Catherina. All who are able to help Catherina Mueller to solve the mystery of her identity are requested to contact Beit Terezin - or: Anna Lorencova, Subrtova 6, 12000, Prague 2, Czech Republic, who deals with the matter.

* * *

Edith Sheldon nee Drucker, Australia, is looking for Dida (Edit) Lederer, born December 23, 1927, who was with her in room 15 in the children's home L-410 in Terezin. After the liberation Dida married Mirek Valenta, in 1949 she was - on her way to Costa Rica - in Paris. Information please to:
Edith Sheldon, 14 Alan Str., Roseville 2069, Australia, Phone: 61-2-94176514, 61-2-98821068.

* * *

I need any and all information about Holocaust victims and/or survivors with the surname JOACHIM.

Am particularly in need of information about children with this surname born between 1942-1945 who were sent to a concentration camp or a death camp. Am also interested in names of mothers of victims, or survivors with this surname who were expecting during the same time frame. Most interested in, but not limited to, a child whose entire name could have been Salo (or Salomon) Reyen (or Reyes) JOACHIM. With any information, please contact:

Dr. Joseph G. R. Martinez, College of Education, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque,
New Mexico 87131, USA, Phone: (505) 277-4980 /work/, (505)243-5733 /home/
e-mail: jomart@unm.edu

* * *

Jitka Smelikova is studying at the Pedagogic university in Ceske Budejovice and chose as the subject of her final paper the life of Jews in Cheb (Eger) in the 19th and 20th century. She requests all former citizens of the town, including those who lived there after WWII and also members of "Hehalutz" who were active there in 1945, to tell their stories. Please contact:

Jitka Chmelikova, Jakubska 6, 35006 Cheb, Czech Republic, e-mail:
Jitka.chmelikova@iol.cz

* * *

Jack Koch from Yardley, USA, is looking for people who knew his family, deported to ghetto Terezin from Vienna: Sigmund Koch, sent on September 28, 1944, to Auschwitz (there are rumors that he was alive shortly before liberation), his wife Margarethe nee Kaldeck, deported on October 4, 1944 to Auschwitz, their daughter

Sylvia, aged ten, who probably went with her mother to the gas chamber and Moritz Kaldeck, Margarethe's father, a general (ret.) who died in ghetto Terezin on February 17, 1943. Even the smallest bit of information will be appreciated. Please write to: Jack Koch, P.O.Box 428, Yardley, PA 19067, USA

* * *

Frank Bright from Ipswich, England, wants to find people who knew him in Terezin - his name was then Frantisek Hanan Brichta. He came in 1938 from Berlin to Prague and studied there at the Jewish school in Jachymova street. After the school was closed he was an apprentice gardener at the Jewish cemetery in Olsany. On July 13, 1943, he was sent to Terezin and lived in L-418, with the brothers Kling (both survived) and with Jiri (surname forgotten), who worked in the central carpentry. Brichta was a locksmith, making keys and locks and helped in the smithy. On October 12, 1944, he was deported to Auschwitz, then to camp Friedland, where he worked in a propeller factory. Frank is also looking for persons who knew Dr. Jiri (Georg) Glanzberg, teacher at the Prague Jewish school, 1938-1942. Glanzberg - in 1939 aged about 26 - taught religion, Hebrew and German, played the violin and organized chess competitions. After the school closed he worked at the Jewish Community offices, in July 1943 he was deported to Terezin, from there in May 1944 to Auschwitz - he did not survive.

Please write: Frank Bright, 29 Warren Lane, Martlesham Heath, Ipswich, AP5 3 SH, England

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Kobi Luria, author of "L'hayey Hahayim", the performance about Terezin cabarets (review on page 1) asks all those, with information about Schwenk and his team - written material, texts or fragments of texts, sketches, material on the actors etc. and also material about the German language cabarets by Leo Strauss, Kurt Geron or other cabarets performed in ghetto Terezin, to contact him: Kobi Luria, 4, Sirkin, Tel Aviv 63562, Israel, Phone: +972-3-6200627, +972-3-6293410, +972-52-533150 (mobile)

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Advice for our Members

Various funds were established for help to holocaust survivors and also many organizations dealing with these matters. Our member Hanna Weingarten took it upon herself, to assist members as far as possible, to find answers to their questions or to locate the relevant addresses. At the same time we ask all our members, who have information about such funds and/or support organizations for holocaust survivors, to contact Hanna.

Phone: 03-6415185 Mondays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., letters: to Beit Terezin.

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Membership Dues

Dear members -
the new membership dues for 1999 are:

Israel Abroad
Singles NIS 100.- US \$ 50.-

Couples NIS 150.- US \$ 70.-
2nd generation - singles NIS 60.-
2nd generation - couples NIS 90.-

We would like to stress, that we have not raised our dues for years now. Please remit the dues for 1999 as soon as possible, to enable us to continue our work. Thanks in advance!

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