



# דפי קשר

*Here the new classroom is being built!*

Photographed by Sima Shachar

■ **Tehran? Terezin!**  
Mordechai Livni

■ **Jews and Czechs**  
Ruth Bondy

■ **Impressions from the Project:  
"Israelis-Germans 2006"**  
Itai Ben-Tsvi and Sivan Cohen.

■ **"Finding Dr. Schatz". The story of Inge  
Auerbacher and Dr. Albert Schatz**  
Anita Tarsi



## To our Members,

Our newsletter in general and "FROM THE EDITOR" in particular deal mostly with matters concerning directly Beit Terezin. This stems from our view that this is its *raison d'être* - and there are enough other publications dealing with the Holocaust in general. However, in view of the Holocaust deniers and specifically the meeting held a few weeks ago in Tehran, we decided this time to make an exception and dedicate this space to expressions by our members on this topic. Though we are not able to undo Holocaust denial - our contribution to the struggle against this phenomenon lies, like that of other institutions in Israel, in the continuation of our day-to-day work, in research, remembrance and education. ■

## Tehran? Terezin!

Mordechai Livni

Diverse Holocaust deniers met in Tehran in the beginning of December 2006 at a pseudo-scientific meeting; to research and to "prove" that the Holocaust did not take place and that it is an invention of the Jews-Zionists to blackmail the world. Maybe it would not be worthwhile to react to that were we not already in the past, in our youth, witness to Josef Goebbels' words saying that, if you only repeat a lie often enough, more and more people will believe it. At that time, millions of people believed the things, which they knew not to be true. We who experienced the outcome of that incitement, we are not allowed to stay silent.

We have no illusion that a few lines in our newsletter will have an influence or even reach the public, which, through the media, is exposed to the untruths emanating from Tehran. This is a question of principle - if even one person stops and says to himself: how is it possible? How is it possible to deny the dehumanization and the murder of millions of people? The facts are documented in many testimonies and documents, not only by the victims who survived but also by the perpetrators - in their diaries from the time it happened, in surviving executive orders, in testimonies by onlookers, neighbors, in documents from that time, in protocols of the perpetrators' trials after the war and in their memoirs in their old age.

Against the tens of Israel bashers who convened in Tehran, one has to warn in all possible ways, in every forum; each of us has to talk and to write about this matter to his friends, acquaintances and correspondents, mainly abroad. The repeated lie may not take root so that in future generations nobody will be able to quote the untruths and use them as "scientific proof". We, who were there - in Terezin, Auschwitz, Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, Stutthof, Mauthausen, Neuengamme and Kaufering and in tens or hundreds of other places, we know the whole truth, because we were there! At this point we would like to express our appreciation for the decision of the Czech senate to condemn the Tehran meeting unequivocally.

Let us not underestimate this matter. There are too many people in the world looking for ways to denigrate us. The bad conscience of those whose parents or grandparents did it - or stood by and did not even try to prevent the misdeeds - motivates them to want to accept Holocaust denial as a convenient excuse to lessen the guilt feelings. And others, too - the phenomenon of the Holocaust in "cultured" Europe in the midst of the 20th century is inconvenient. Who is going to keep the memory, if not we... ? ■

## Appeal to the Vice Director-General for Communications and Information at the Foreign Ministry

Peter Erben from Ashkalon sent a letter to Mr. Aviv Shiron, Vice Director-General for Communications and Information at the Israeli Foreign Ministry with the request, to publish an official Israeli protest in the media against the Tehran meeting. Peter wrote in his letter that in many countries there are laws defining Holocaust denial as a criminal offense punishable by imprisonment. The writer of the letter requested the Foreign Ministry to support the enforcement of these laws through the publishing of a list of speakers at the Tehran meeting. In the official answer sent by the spokesperson's office, published on December 11, 2006, it says i. a.: "The declarations and actions of the president of Iran do not correspond to the facts and are in sharp contradiction with the stand of the international community. By denying the Holocaust, the most extreme form of genocide, he challenges the very basis of human rights the world over, as accepted by the international community because of and following the Holocaust" ■

Received from Peter Erben

### IN THIS ISSUE

From the Editor	2
Activities at Beit Theresienstadt	3
New Books	6
New in our Archives	8
The Young Generations	9
Commemoration & Remembrance	11
Replacing the Exhibition at our Historical Museum	12
Contributions and Membership Dues	12

### Editorial Board

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### THANKS

#### Support by the Claims Conference

For years now Beit Theresienstadt enjoys the support of the Claims Conference for special projects - this enables us to cope with new challenges. We thank the Claims Conference for its help and appreciate the understanding shown by its representatives for the specific needs of Beit Terezin.



## Jews and Arabs Study Shoah Together

This unique project brought together Jewish and Arab youth to study the Holocaust

These days the project "Studying the Holocaust Together" - with the participation of students of the ninth grade from the schools "Ramot Hefer" at kibbutz Maabarot and "Ibn Sina" at Kalansawa - is nearing its conclusion. Toward and during the project, meetings of teachers and moderators took place at Beit Theresienstadt. In the first stage of the project there were preparatory discussions of the classes, separately in each of the schools. In these talks, the aims of the project and its planned procedure were presented; the discussions were about the importance of the dialog between Jews and Arabs on the subject of the Holocaust. The conception that memory of the Holocaust is a central component of Israeli identity guides the whole initiative and therefore - tackling the subject together will contribute much to the young people of both cultures, who are interested to create a dialog and mutual understanding. Studying Holocaust history encompasses getting to know about persecutions, degradation and suffering of the Jewish nation - and on the other hand dealing with the ideology of the Nazi perpetrators and their deeds. The aim of the initiative is to develop mutual recognition, understanding and esteem and to foster humanistic

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ideals of respect and freedom.

The first meeting between the male and female students of the two schools took place at "Ramot Hefer" and was dedicated to getting acquainted and coordinating expectations. The second meeting was at Beit Terezin, learning about the Holocaust. The third time was at the community center of Kalansawa: getting to know Arab culture and meeting bereaved families from both sides of the conflict. The project will end by a final meeting at which the participants will express their impressions and conclusions.

During the meetings the participants learned to know and respect each other, overcoming the national divide; it was exciting to watch, after the third event, the spontaneous mixing of the groups waiting for the buses. The young people talked to each other enthusiastically, hugged while taking leave and exchanged phone numbers.

One of the girls from the "Ramot Hefer" school remarked that the organized meeting of Jewish and Arab youth was successful, enticing and surely bringing people together, but in fact, in day-to-day life, such meetings take place only very rarely. That is a notion worth to note. ■

## Study Day for Social Workers

On December 5, 2006, a study day was held at Beit Theresienstadt for more than 60 social workers, employed at the "Sulam" program - assistance and help for hospitalized survivors. The study day on the subject "Art in the Shadow of War - ongoing dialog with Holocaust survivors" took place with the support of the Foundation for the Benefit of Holocaust Victims in Israel. The many-faceted program included explanations about Beit Theresienstadt, its aims and activities, a visit to the historical

**In the end, most of the survivors got over their inhibitions and difficulties. They founded families and were integrated successfully in all fields of endeavor of Israeli society, whilst concealing from their surroundings what they went through in Europe**

museum and the exhibition "Drawing on the Pages of Time", which is based on the creations of members of the Groag family. The participants also listened to parts of

the CD "King of Cabaret of Ghetto Terezin - from Karl Schwenk's songs", performed by The Club of Lost Talents of Ghetto Terezin, directed by Koby Luria. Ruth Bondy lectured on the treatment of Holocaust survivors after their arrival in Israel. She described their initial absorption problems and their coping with the new reality and with prejudice prevailing among the old-timers. In the end, most of the survivors got over their inhibitions and difficulties. They founded families and were integrated successfully in all fields of endeavor of Israeli society, whilst concealing from their surroundings what they went through in Europe. During the study day, the participants received the catalog of the exhibition "Art and Medicine in Ghetto Theresienstadt, Drawings from the Years 1942-1944", initiated and edited by the late Dr. Tommy Spencer, published by the Baruch Rappoport School for Medicine together with Beit Theresienstadt. ■



## Educators Meet at Nuremberg

Dr. Margalit Shlain represented Beit Theresienstadt at a seminar for teams from Holocaust study centers, museums and memorial sites in the USA, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Israel. It took place in Nuremberg, Germany, between May 18 and 21, 2006, and dealt with ways of presenting the Holocaust and preserving its memory in the 21st century.

Dr. Shlain described to the participants the exhibition "Drawing on Pages of Time 1942-1945" which shows ghetto Theresienstadt through art creations of one family (the Groags) - as a model for the pedagogical confrontation with the subject by a center for the teaching of the Holocaust. The participants showed great interest for the original way the exhibition deals with Holocaust commemoration and transmitting its message to the youth. Members of the third generation after the Holocaust, from various centers, expressed their wish to visit the exhibition and to stay in contact with Beit Theresienstadt. ■



## Teacher's Training on: Gender and Holocaust

In October 2007, Beit Theresienstadt and Beit Berl will start a teacher's training course dealing with the subject of gender and Holocaust. The course will be focused on the fate of women and men before, during and after the Holocaust. The central point is the person as an individual in the Holocaust - his dilemmas, decisions and choices. The training will include lectures from historical and sociological viewpoints, meetings with artists and mainly with witnesses, who will relate their personal experiences from a gender-focused viewpoint. The training is intended for teachers (it will entitle the participants to receive a training subsidy from the Ministry of Education), Holocaust survivors, their families of all generations and the broad public.

The training will last a total of 56 hours, divided into 14 meetings of 4 hours each, on Tuesdays afternoon, at Beit Theresienstadt and Beit Berl, starting on October 16, 2007. The education team of Beit Theresienstadt in cooperation with the Teacher's College Beit Berl and the Program for Holocaust Studies directed by Dr. Batya Brutin initiated the training, which is supported by the Claims Conference. ■

## Volunteer's Evening - Hanukkah 2006

On Tuesday, December 19, 2006, the fourth day of Hanukkah, as every year, an event took place at Beit Theresienstadt to honor our volunteers. They are an integral part of all our activities - translation, meeting youth, research and writing, mobilizing contributions and much more.

In the spirit of the holiday, the meeting this year centered on Hanukkah menorahs, Hanukkah food and stories about them. People

**Tova Szigeti, who hails from Hungary, told about her time in Terezin and brought also a recipe from there, for Hanukkah pancakes recommended for diet freaks**

mostly talked about Hanukkah in Theresienstadt and the camps and Hanukkah food at home. Shimon Lomsky and Hanna Greenfield showed metal menorahs made in the ghetto. Both stressed that they keep these menorahs at their houses the year over at a prominent place, to remind them where they came from and under what conditions they were created.

Tsvi Cohen and Shmuel Bloch described the Hanukkah celebration at forced labor camps. Tova Szigeti, who hails from Hungary, told about her time in Terezin and brought a recipe from there, for Hanukkah pancakes - recommended to diet freaks.



## Meeting on Primo Levi in Brussels

The Auschwitz Association organized an international meeting in Brussels, Belgium, between October 12 and 14, 2006, on the acceptance of Primo Levi's work in Europe, the USA, Latin America, Canada and Israel. Dr. Margalit Shlain, the historic and pedagogic adviser of Beit Theresienstadt, the sole delegate from Israel, gave a lecture. She explained the circumstances, which caused that Primo Levi, author and Holocaust survivor (1919-1987) born in Turin, Italy, was acknowledged in Israel only toward the end of the 1990ies.

"He was an unknown author and his books were not accessible to the Hebrew reader, a bourgeois intellectual of Western European culture, quite distanced from Jewish tradition, its culture and the Zionist ethos. Primo Levi's restrained writing could not be accepted in Israel in those years. He wrote like an observing witness, projecting his universal world-view, who tries to test the experience of the extermination camp from the viewpoint of a historical process; he did not confront the two poles - Jewish and German - which do not meet, he dealt with personal responsibility in the Holocaust, so hard to understand.

It needed the distance in time and a change of perspective toward the Holocaust until Primo Levi was accepted and occupied a central position in Israeli public discourse on the Holocaust in general and particularly Auschwitz - as an author and Holocaust chronicler".

The many participants at the meeting were very interested in the special circumstances for Primo Levi's late acceptance in Israel, in the museum of Beit Terezin and its pedagogical activities. ■

Edna Amit read from her brother Meir Ben Abir's (formerly Pavel Bobasch) diary - found a short time ago by his son Yitzhak in his house in Haifa; the brother never mentioned the diary to anybody. He had come to what was then Palestine before WWII while his parents and sister remained in Czechoslovakia. He wrote the diary in Czech, during his first years here. Edna read a few fragments translated by her into Hebrew. In one emotional entry, written in 1943 after Edna's brother got a letter from his parents in Europe, he admires his father's spiritual strength in those horrible days - encouraging the son in Palestine in his struggle with the hard life.

Shmuel Bloch lighted the holiday candles and blessed them, with the participation of all those present. A group of vocalists from the Isr. Electricity company performed old songs. Everybody got a souvenir - a flowerpot with a greeting card designed by Mihal Efrat, with verse by Hana Drori. The evening concluded with a minute's silence in memory of our members who passed away. ■





## History, Music and Memory 2007

In the last week of July 2007 the 7th international seminar History, Music and Memory will be held, directed by Dr. David (Dudu) Sela, the musical director of Beit Theresienstadt. We would like to inform our members in Israel and abroad about the seminar, to enable them to forward this message to potential participants among their families and in their communities. The seminar is intended for young musicians on a high level, in advanced studies in performing, composing and research. There will be workshops for strings, piano and vocalists for performing musicians interested to get to know and to study a repertoire including music composed in ghetto Theresienstadt, music banned by the Nazis and new works inspired by music from the Holocaust. In addition to the workshops for performers there will be a composer's workshop led by Michael Wolpe; the participants will be challenged to compose, inspired by musical and literary creations written in ghetto Terezin. This year we plan a further workshop, which will deal with musicological research. The participants will discuss musical

**The participants will discuss musical works composed and performed in the ghetto from a critical research viewpoint, while examining the historical and social context in which the artists acted**

works composed and performed in the ghetto from a critical research viewpoint, while examining the historical and social context in which the artists acted. As in other fields of art, among the ghetto prisoners there were first-class professional musicians - but also amateurs who composed music as a hobby, out of the need to express their distress through music. All these are subjects to be dealt with in the research workshop. The instructors will be Prof. Mira Zakkai - voice, Eliyahu Shulman and Dr. Dudu Sela - strings and chamber music, Alan Sternfield and Prof. Matityahu Kellig - piano. The seminar is held with the support of the Isr. Ministry of Culture, the Isr. Foreign Ministry, the Gertner Fund, the Soldiers Welfare Association and the America-Israel Culture Fund. The seminar will be under the patronage of the Prime Minister of the Nordrhein-Westfalen Land in Germany. Please, address questions by mail or **e-mail: [bterezin@ghi.org.il](mailto:bterezin@ghi.org.il)** ■

## The Fourth International Meeting "Women and Holocaust": Childhood and Youth in the Third Reich - Gender Perspective

The fourth international meeting "Women and Holocaust" will be held on October 29, 30 and 31, 2007. The meeting has a tradition of "a meeting on wheels", being held on its first day at Beit Berl, on the second day at Beit Theresienstadt and on the third day at Beit Lohame Hagetaot. Invited are all our members, women and men of all generations, from Israel and abroad. Please address questions to Beit Theresienstadt by mail or e-mail: [bterezin@ghi.org.il](mailto:bterezin@ghi.org.il)

This year the meeting will focus on the subject of childhood and youth under the regime of the Third Reich from a gender perspective. It will deal with a wide range of themes connected to the fate of children and youth, both female and male, transcending differences of nationality, religion and ethnicity. In the following is a list of themes suggested to researchers in the fields of humanities and social sciences, witnesses, authors, artists from cinema and visual arts, educators, psychologists, dramaturges and others. Please submit summaries of the lectures proposed to the meeting, about 500 words, in Hebrew and English, until April 1, 2007.

### List of suggested subjects:

- Humiliation, exploitation and maltreatment suffered by minors in the Holocaust
- The psychological and sociological condition of girls/boys and teens as revealed by diaries and memoirs
- Heroic deeds by girls and boys under the Nazi regime
- Activities of teens in the framework of youth movements
- The fate of girls/boys and teens who fulfilled functions in the Nazi regime

- Artistic creativity in all its forms in the care of children and teens
- Creations of children and teens from various aspects - gender, culture and national
- Righteous Among the Nations - children and youth
- Attempts at rescue of children and youth
- The condition of minors in ghettos, camps and death marches
- Sexual violence involving children and youth in ghettos and camps
- The fate of babies and small children in the Holocaust
- Roma children and youth in the Holocaust
- The story of minors left without families: coping and rehabilitation after WWII
- Childhood and youth in Nazi ideology
- Development of the Nazi education and its influence on youth in the German Reich
- Gender-oriented occupations imposed on children and teens in Nazi Germany
- The propaganda role played by figures of children and teens in Nazi films
- Lessons from the Holocaust and their influence on the modern perception of the rights of children and youth in Western society
- Comparative research between children and youth who went through the Holocaust and children and youth who were victims of other genocide events
- Children and teens in memorialization and Holocaust remembrance in Israel and abroad ■



RUTH BONDY

## Jews and Czechs

### **The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia - Facing the Holocaust**

by Livia Rothkirchen, published (in English) in 2005 by the University of Nebraska Press and Yad Vashem, is the most comprehensive work on the subject published so far. It deals mainly with the fateful years 1939-1945, but it starts with the relations between Czechs and Jews throughout the generations and ends with the "velvet revolution" in 1989. Only two of the ten chapters of the book deal with ghetto Theresienstadt; since they do not contain anything not known before and since there is no way to review the whole book, I would like to mention some of the less known points. In spite of all the information reaching Britain since 1941 about the systematic liquidation of Jews, Eduard Benes, the second president of Czechoslovakia and the leading personality of the Czechoslovak government in exile in London, preferred not to speak out or to do anything regarding the subject.

In a conversation with Nahum Goldmann and Stephen Wise in London in May 1943, when almost all the Jews of the Protectorate had already been deported and tens of thousands murdered, Benes even expressed his view that "after the war much more of them will be alive than what we think" and "according to my information there are 50.000-60.000 Jews in ghetto Theresienstadt, thousands in hiding or living as non-Jews and, moreover, in certain small towns where the number of Jews was very small, they were not deported at all."

Contrary to the situation in Poland, there was no separate Jewish resistance movement in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, but a number of Jewish intellectuals, socialists and students were active in the Czech resistance. Most of

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them were deeply rooted in Czech society, joining the underground group Verni zustaneme (We will remain true) as Czechs. "Origin or religion were not important", wrote the sister of one of them but a group of members of the Hashomer Hatzair youth movement had contact to the communist resistance. Almost all the resistance groups were found out after being denounced by Czechs. Dr. Karel

Bondy, one of the leaders of Verni zustaneme, wrote after his arrest, before his death: "If not for a few traitors of our Czech nation, many of our friends, if not the great majority could have saved themselves from arrest, execution, from the horrors of prison and death."

The terror regime of the Protectorate notwithstanding

(especially after the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich in Prague); there were tens of Czechs who supplied to Jews "Aryan" identification papers and other forged documents, helped them before the outbreak of WWII to cross the border to Poland (among them also Kafka's friend Milena Jesenska), hid Jews who did not report for deportation and went underground - and tens of them paid for that with their life. Among them were citizens of the town Jihlava who hid Dr. Rudolf Goldmann, their beloved physician, who did not report for deportation: four Czech couples and the 82-years-old Dr. Goldmann were executed for that. Four workers of the firm 'Praga-Textil' were executed after they tried to bribe the head of Pankrac prison, in an attempt to free Gerhard Fuchs, their Jewish colleague.

The whole history of the relations between Czechs and Jews moved between these two poles: sympathy, appreciation and common fate on one hand and on the other - envy, hate and prejudice. ■

## The Death of the Lidice Children

**The book "Fates of the Children of Lidice", published in English by the Lidice Memorial, relates the tragic story of the 105 children of the destroyed village only 17 of them were located after the war**

The fate of the children of the Czech village Lidice, destroyed as reprisal for the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, the "Reichsprotector" of Bohemia and Moravia, was similar to the fate of the Jewish children in the Holocaust. The SS murdered 175 of the villages' men on June 9, 1942; the women were deported to Lodz and to Ravensbrueck concentration camp. Among the children up to the age of 16 - seven were deemed suitable for Germanizing and were given for adoption to German families. Six babies born to Lidice women after the liquidation of the village did not last out a year. The remainder of the children, numbering 81, were first brought to Lodz and murdered after a short time; probably at the extermination camp Chelmino in Poland. Only 17 of the 105 children of the village could be located after the war. The book Fates of the Children of Lidice, published in English by the Lidice Memorial, relates their tragic story. Jolana Mackova and Ivan Ulrych wrote the book based on testimonies and memoirs of surviving Lidice women (143 out of 203); it is illustrated by documents and children's photographs. ■





RUTH BONDY

## Good Bye My Dear Diary

Vera Kohnova from Plzen was 12 years old when she - in August of 1941 - started to write a diary, published by Zdenek Susa in Stredokluky, Czech Republic, in 2006. The book reproduces the original pages of the diary and the text in three languages - Czech, English and German. Most of all Vera's diary depicts her still normal life, with worries about grades in the study groups (schools were already closed for Jewish pupils), having a good time with friends, first budding loves - up to the distribution of orders for registration and transport in January of 1942.

**Most of all Vera's diary depicts her still normal life, with worries about grades in the study circles, having a good time with friends, first budding loves - up to the distribution of orders for registration and transport in January of 1942.**

"I will not forget yesterday until the day I die" Vera writes on January 12, 1942, "First: it was the last Sunday that I spent at home. And second: I had never wept in my life as much as yesterday". Three days later, the diary was full and Vera took leave: "...how much I will miss you, my diary!" ... "I have not experienced many nice things in the half year that has passed, but how gladly I would stay like that. Be with God, my diary!" The Kohn family - father, mother, the sister Hana and Vera left for Terezin on January 22 and already after 7 weeks they were sent on to Izbica, district Lublin; it is not known when and where they met their deaths. The diary had been given to a friend of the family for safeguarding, she put it in the hands of a priest of the Church of the United Brethren and only in 2005 it reached the publisher. ■



## Mission Impossible

Central to Margalit Shlain's research **Hahanhaga hayehudit b'maavaka l'hisardut** - Theresienstadt 1941-1945 (Jewish Leadership in Theresienstadt, Struggle for Survival, 1941- 1945, hebr.), written as doctoral thesis for her PhD at Tel Aviv University, are the three Jewish elders of the ghetto, Jakob Edelstein, Dr. Paul Epstein and Rabbi Dr. Benjamin Mummelstein. In spite of the differences in character, background and behavior, they had much in common. They were loyal servants of the community; their main aim was to save the Jews imprisoned in Theresienstadt; they fought the German decrees

**According to Dr. Shlain's research Mummelstein showed courage in his contacts with the third ghetto commander Karl Rahm and he is even credited for the fact that the Theresienstadt inmates who remained there after the wave of transports in autumn of 1944 were not killed at the end of the war.**

and stood before the horrible dilemma to organize - by orders of the SS - transports to the East, even if they did not know that the aim was extermination in the gas chambers. The comprehensive research contains material not published before, i. a. protocols and the testimony of Mummelstein in a Czech court after the war. Contrary to the two first Jewish elders, Edelstein and Epstein, (both were murdered by the Germans and are well thought-of in survivor's memoirs and research), Mummelstein, the only Jewish elder who survived, was a controversial figure regarding the measure of his collaboration with the Germans and his harsh relationship with the prisoners. But according to Dr. Shlain's research Mummelstein showed courage in his contacts with the third ghetto commander Karl Rahm and he is even credited for the fact that the Theresienstadt inmates who remained there

after the wave of transports in autumn of 1944 were not killed at the end of the war.

The paper, which includes much detail about life in the ghetto and its administration, is written in a clear language; with a full understanding of the impossible mission the Jewish leaders took upon themselves - to safeguard the life of the Jews under an evil and treacherous regime. Let us hope that the book will be published for the general reader, too. ■

## Ongoing Research

The volumes of research on Theresienstadt: **Theresienstadt Studies and Documents** is being published by the "Terezinska Iniciativa" in Prague for 11 years already and - as is only natural - during this time the research was broadened and includes subjects on what happened before and after. The volume for the year 2005 contains, among its 12 papers, one about the anti-Jewish policy in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia during the years 1939 - 1941, about the series of anti-Semitic broadcasts by Alois Kriz What Do You Know About the Jews and the Freemasons? over the Czech radio in 1941, a portrait of the race-researcher Hans Friedrich Gunter, and an essay on the death march from Gleiwitz - Blechhammer.

Regarding ghetto Terezin, the volume 2005 includes i. a. an article about "Hungarian Jews in Terezin" by Eleonore Lappin, one titled "The German Railways and Theresienstadt" by Alfred Gottwald, "Theresienstadt: Ghetto or Concentration Camp" by Petr Klein and an article by Ruth Bondy "Life with Insects". The volume was published in a Czech and in a German version and was edited by Dr. Jaroslava Milotova. ■



RUTH BONDY

## From Hamburg to Bergen-Belsen

The Theresienstadt women prisoners who came from Birkenau to branch camps of Neuengamme near Hamburg did not understand why they were evacuated in the beginning of April 1945 - when the war was already nearing its end - to horrible Bergen-Belsen.

**As the allied forces advanced into Germany, the SS command did not want the prisoners to fall into their hands. The evacuation, after the liquidation of the sick and dying camp inmates, was a continuation of the mechanized extermination, in other ways**

The collection of research papers

**Haftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung - die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945** (Prisoners Between Extermination and Liberation - the Dissolution of KZ Neuengamme and its branch camps by the SS in Spring of 1945) by Detlef Garbe and Carmen Lange, published in 2005 by Edition Temmen, supplies the

answers. As the allied forces advanced into Germany the SS command did not want the prisoners to fall into their hands. The evacuation, after the liquidation of the sick and dying camp inmates, was a continuation of the mechanized extermination, in other ways. The Theresienstadt prisoners at Tiefstaak, their last station

in Hamburg, were spared both the extermination and the death march. They were brought by a goods train to Bergen-Belsen, the only concentration camp, which was not evacuated; but there, in this horrible place, many died from hunger and typhus. By estimate about a third of the prisoners of Neuengamme and its branch camps died in the last weeks of the evacuation. ■



## NEW IN OUR ARCHIVES

### Documents from the collection of the Breda Family

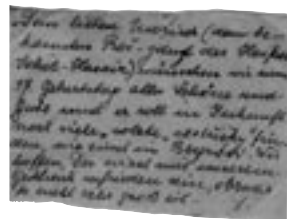
Sima Shachar

**Moshe Breda, a member of "Maccabi Hatzair" who immigrated to Palestine alone from Brno corresponded with his family until they were deported - they did not return. The collection of documents we received from his son tells his story**

Oded Breda from Raanana gave our archives letters and documents preserved by his father Moshe (Moritz) Breda, who today lives in Tel Aviv. The documents tell the life story of the young boy Moshe, born 1923, member of the youth movement "Maccabi Hatzair", who immigrated to Palestine on December 31, 1939 - all by himself. The collection of letters includes correspondence with his family, remaining in Brno: the parents Olga and Otto and his brother Pavel; letters from his comrades in the youth movement and those at a hakhsharah where he stayed before immigrating to Palestine. The collection of Moshe's personal documents contains a certificate of his clean record made out by the Brno municipality and his graduation certificates from the Technical High School of the Haifa Technion as an ironsmith.

Moshe was the head of a "Young Sokol" group in Haifa; to the love and friendship of his comrades testifies the congratulation: "To dear Moritz, for your 17th birthday we wish you all the best, keep gaining many more such 'sisters' in the future... we hope that you like our present, though it is not very large."

From the many and varied letters one learns about the divisions between the young groups of the "Maccabi Hatzair" youth movement, the names of his friends and a number of functionaries and about the way of life which continued in what was then Palestine, too. An interesting letter was written in Abbazia, Italy, on June 12, 1939, by Moshe's girlfriend who left the Czech Protectorate with her family; it reveals a circuitous route with the aim to reach the USA, the many dilemmas surrounding her wish to go to Palestine, which is stronger than her father's intentions.



This letter is the first to enumerate all places the family went through since leaving the home in Brno (through Prague, Abbazia, Paris, Toulouse, Arrachon); it documents the uncertainty will they ever be able to leave Europe and when. We learn from the documents that Moshe volunteered in the early 1940ies for the Transportation Corps of the British army and received a medal in 1946.

Prague	5.1	24.2
Abbazia	18	23
Paris	16	8

After his demobilization the Palestine (Jewish) council for the absorption of demobilized soldiers took care of his professional training. After the outbreak of

the War of Liberation he enlisted in the Isr. Army, where he served for many years.

One of the letters from his brother Pavel in Brno to Moshe in Palestine says:

"I recommend to you to write every second letter in German because I think that the censor does not relay the Czech letters"; and Pavel adds: "Regarding the life and spirit of activities at the "Maccabi Hatzair" youth movement there is nothing new except for the payment of 5 crowns received in the common kitty of the group. There is much work at the factory; we also have a new 'Chromatika' accordion which cost 2.700 crowns."

All members of Moshe's family - his parents Olga (born 1900) and Otto (born 1895) and brother Pavel (born 1924, a well-known football player) remained in the "Protectorate" and were deported from Brno to ghetto Terezin with a transport leaving on January 28, 1942. Father and son were sent together to Auschwitz-Birkenau with a transport of men, which left the ghetto on September 29, 1944. The mother Olga was deported with a women's transport on October 4, 1944. None of them survived. ■



**Itai Ben-Tsvi and Sivan Cohen, grandchildren of former prisoners of ghetto Terezin, participated in the German-Israeli project for remembrance and Holocaust study. They returned with a new view on their families, on German-Israeli relations and on the possibility to prevent occurrences of racialism and discrimination in our days**

## **Impressions from the Project "Israelis - Germans 2006"**

Itai Ben-Tsvi

My name is Itai Ben-Tsvi; I am 30 years old, from Tel Aviv. My grandmother Hanka Drori is a Holocaust survivor, born in the Czech Republic who - during WWII - spent about three years in ghetto Terezin. Following her suggestion, I joined the project; in the beginning, I took part only in some of the activities in Israel, later I participated in the trip to the Czech Republic and in the final meeting in Berlin. With hindsight, the project was for me a turning point in my relation to the subject of the Holocaust and its ramifications. For quite a time I feel that I do not know enough about the Holocaust and even do not know enough about my family's history in that epoch. Though in the past I traveled with my grandmother to the Czech Republic and visited Terezin and the scenes of her childhood, that trip was not focused on the subject and so I missed many details; often I did not connect the stories into the large picture.

When I was first approached about the project, there was a problem of hosting the members of the German delegation. At that stage, I thought that as a host I would have the chance to somehow help and take part in activities for Holocaust remembrance. In the end, the subject of hosting did not come about but I found myself joining the visit to Yad Vashem and the old town of Jerusalem. That is how I first got to know the project and its participants.

It is hard for me to explain exactly the feeling, but after a very short time strong ties developed between the participants of the project and me; I found them to be very open, interested, sensitive and responsible. So I decided to continue and to meet with them in the remaining days of that part of the project. After they left, I decided that I am interested to continue my participation and to join the planned trip to the Czech Republic. In the period between the meeting in Israel and that in the Czech Republic, I found myself thinking often about the project, in a dilemma about the place it occupies in my world.

I concluded that the most important question for me was, how to connect the central subject of the project to the problems of today: hate and violence based on nationalism, religion and race are still rampant in all corners of the world, specifically hate of Jews and Israelis and especially in Europe. Though the reasons for the hate changed since WWII and are expressed today mainly from extremist Islamic elements - the basic character of the problem is similar and stems in the main from cultural and educational deficiencies. The study and research of the Holocaust are excellent tools in the struggle against this phenomenon; in many cases, they are able to open eyes regarding the consequences of this hate. That is why I decided to concentrate on this subject with the members of the German delegation during our meeting in the Czech Republic.

### **Journey with grandmother**

Because of the fighting in Lebanon, we postponed our trip and that caused a change in the list of the Israeli participants. I was glad that my grandmother joined - as I said she

survived ghetto Theresienstadt - as did my grandfather Hayim, also a Holocaust survivor. In contrast to my former trips with grandmother, this time the Holocaust and her personal story were at the center and I was more determined than before to listen to the stories, to see the places, to absorb the details and to try to get to the bottom of it all. As a result, the experience was - from my side - very exciting, and I feel that I learned much and understand better the world in which my grandmother grew up. Throughout the trip, I learned much by watching the behavior of the German participants: on one hand, most of them had not much awareness of the subject though they learned about it at school and heard stories, but for them, of course, the Holocaust is not a central topic to deal with. On the other hand, all were very interested, asked questions and showed much empathy, engagement and readiness to act. I believe - although this was not a representative sample of the population - that this behavior

**Throughout the trip, I learned much by watching the behavior of the German participants: on one hand, most of them had not much awareness of the subject ... On the other hand; all were very interested, asked questions and showed much empathy, engagement and readiness to act**

strengthens the argument that dealing with the Holocaust as a way of coping with racism is effective. I developed the subject with my friends, which sparked an interesting discussion, revealing the present situation in Germany as they saw it. They described a disturbing situation, where stereotypes based on race are quite common. They even described cases of clear

discrimination against various minorities. Most of them seemed to be very troubled by the topic and ready to act with determination to correct the situation. Some of them had started all kinds of activities with youth even before the project; they found further encouragement and tools for their activities in the project.

### **Berlin - City of Commemoration**

During our stay in the Czech Republic Gerd, the organizer of the project from the German side, invited my grandmother and me to come a month later to Berlin to take part in a PR action, to introduce our project to people interested to participate in similar projects.

This visit gave me a chance - together with grandmother - to see Berlin for the first time, to get an impression of the importance the Holocaust has today in the life of the city and in German society. I was very surprised to find that Berlin is full of various sites of remembrance, starting with simple street signs reminding one "don't forget, it should never happen again" up to museums and monuments, quite prominent in the city.

It is also remarkable that many citizens feel the responsibility to participate actively in educational and publicity work. There are, alas, not a few people in need of this work. In conclusion, the project gave me a broad picture of the meaning of the Holocaust in the past and in the present and about the place it occupies in German society. In addition, I had the chance to make a further step in my connection to the history of my family and my nation. I even believe that the project gave me a serious push to take an active part in future remembrance projects. ■



## Travelogue

### The German-Israeli Delegation for Holocaust Study, Berlin 2006

Sivan Cohen

I peer through the camera, steady my hand to get a good picture. So it is not blurred. They are sitting there, talking and explaining, and all around everybody looks at him with sparkling and curious eyes. Grown-ups, boys and children – Germans who had come to listen to stories we grew up on. The presentation ends and there is time for questions. Almost everybody has something to say, to check and to clear up. Most parts of it I do not understand since the conversation is in German, but the interest is fascinating. I did not think it would be like that, I glance sidewise at Laura and see tears in her eyes. Even when she stayed with me in Israel, I could see that she is specifically sensitive to this topic and it is important for her to listen to the stories. Simon also listens tensely, riveted – and slowly I am looking around and see all of them here – together, trying to connect to the stories.

We are here only five days and it seems like eternity, as if we grew up with these people. We sit in a restaurant and talk about every topic in the world. Who would have believed that – Germans and Jews eating together in a restaurant? Days of the Messiah?

Evidently not. This comradeship is the outcome of a project planned by Beit Terezin and a group of German students headed by Gerd. It started with a meeting for which the group came to Israel and dispersed to a number of host families,

and in-between there were common activities. One outstanding experience was the visit to Yad Vashem – the feedback we received was overwhelming. It is moving to see the reaction of “the other side”. Another meeting was in the Czech Republic where both groups visited the former ghetto Terezin, heard explanations by my grandfather Max Livni and visited Hana Drori’s childhood home. Now we are here at the “Youth Day” in Berlin, many groups of young people arrive and put up stands.

**We are here only five days and it seems like eternity, as if we grew up with these people. We sit in a restaurant and talk about every topic in the world. Who would have believed that – Germans and Jews eating together in a restaurant? Days of the Messiah?**

Our project also took part and evoked much interest. There was a stand where buttons with the name (in Hebrew!) were made, it was a great success. We were surprised to see people standing in line to write their name in our language (and a big thank you to Dan and Noam for the idea!).

The next day we met at a Youth Center for the conclusion of the project. Some

of my friends from the German group who could not take part earlier, troubled to come from all parts of Europe, to be with us. Simon presented the documentary he shot in Israel; Max and Hana answered many questions. I want to thank Gerd and Anita for this rare chance they opened for us of a meaningful meeting with contemporaries from Germany. It is astounding how unimportant nationality and religion become when one gets nearer to each other – and for that: thanks! ■

## Surprise Meeting in LA

David Magen

Recently finding myself with some time on my hands in Los Angeles, on Anita's recommendation I made contact with Susan Boyer who heads the Czech Torah Scroll Network and is herself an interesting person. The Czech Torah Network is an education organization dedicated to remembrance and Jewish spiritual continuity by connecting synagogues and religious institutions that have Czech Torah Scrolls which were taken by the Nazis from Jewish synagogues in Bohemia and Moravia. Today, these Czech torahs are being used in congregations throughout the world as a source of Jewish spiritual continuity. When Susan asked me how and why I am involved with Beit Theresienstadt, I explained that my grandparents were there for the last two years of their lives, and in fact I was born with their family name – Fleischner. Susan replied that she once heard of a Fleischner, but there's no way I could know of him since he changed his name to Fleming. That's when my jaw dropped, breath stopped, “that's my father” I told her. Apparently the late Eugene Stein researched her family roots (Wodicka), but at the same time he was helping my father discover our family history. My mother's paternal grandmother was Wodicka from the same original family. Mr. Stein had told Susan that Otto Fleischner was also engaged in research but had changed his surname to Fleming. Susan kindly gave me a copy of the Wodicka family tree, and I hope to show her ours when she comes to Israel. Small world..... ■



### The Unlucky Man in the Yellow Cap

Zuzana Justman

Last August I produced my brother J.R. Pick's Terezin play **"The Unlucky man in the Yellow Cap"** for the 10th annual New York International Fringe Festival-Fringe NYC. It is a play with music about a group of young people who stage a cabaret in Terezin and it centers around two lovers, beautiful Lucy, a nineteen-year-old singer, and a bookish ghetto policeman, Norbert. A tale of love and resistance, it dares to treat tragic material with irony and humor.

I translated and adapted the play from Czech into English and the music for the five songs was written by the award-winning composer, Peter Fish, who had also composed the music for two of my films.

We were assigned five performances at the beautiful 350-seat Henry Street Harry De Jur Playhouse Theater. I worried about filling such a big venue, but thanks to a front-page article in the New York Times Arts section, our wonderful eleven actor/singers performed for large enthusiastic audiences.

My brother Jiri Robert Pick (1925 -1983) lived in Prague and was best known for writing plays, satirical sketches, poems and epigrams. He published nine books, including the semi-autobiographical novel **"The Society for the Protection of Animals"** that was first published in Prague in 1969 and reissued in 1996. Both this novel and the play **"The Unlucky Man in the Yellow Cap"** were based on his experiences in Terezin where he spent two years. In the 1960s he wrote several comedies for the Prague Paravan Theater which he had founded and where he was the artistic director. After 1969, however, the Communist regime considered J. R. Pick a persona non-grata and banned all of his work except for his two Terezin plays. **The Dream of Far Away Lakes** played for over a year at the Prague E.F. Burian Theater because its artistic director wanted to perform the leading role and **"The Unlucky Man in the Yellow Cap"** was produced by a daring young producer in two provincial towns.

Bobby, as we called him, spent almost all of his time in Terezin in hospitals, first with polio, then tuberculosis. Tuberculosis surgery after the war left him with poor health and a short life expectancy. But he lived years longer than he was supposed to; he had too much to do. He had a full, active life and was a most prolific writer. He loved to make people laugh and I wish he could have been at the Henry Street Harry De Jur Playhouse to hear **"The Unlucky Man"** audience laughing - and crying ■.

Visit [www.unluckyman.com](http://www.unluckyman.com) for more information about the play

### Finding Dr. Schatz

Anita Tarsi

The new book **"Finding Dr. Schatz: The Discovery of Streptomycin and A Life it Saved"** by Inge Auerbacher and Albert Schatz combines the stories of a little girl in ghetto Terezin with that of a researcher/scientist who was trying to find a remedy for tuberculosis.

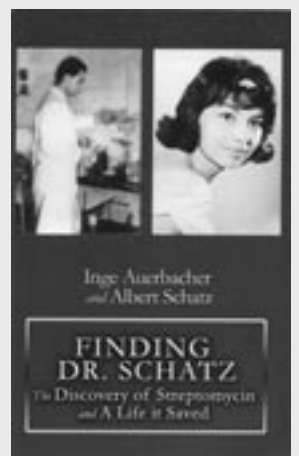
Inge Auerbacher, born in Germany, was seven years old when she was deported with her parents in 1942 to Theresienstadt. At the end of WWII, she was liberated in the ghetto together with her family; after a short time they immigrated to the USA. At liberation, Inge suffered from tuberculosis and when the disease got worse, she was hospitalized. The normal treatment then consisted mainly of much rest and good food. In spite of the efforts of her parents and the staff at the hospital, her condition continued to deteriorate. When it seemed that there was no change, her physicians decided to treat her with a new, experimental drug - streptomycin. More than ten years throughout her youth, Inge fought with her condition until she recovered. Even afterwards her life was influenced by the disease - the stigma that adhered in those days to people who had tuberculosis and the fear of them became a wall that prevented her to fulfill her aspirations to study medicine and to found a family.

Inge found her way to self-fulfillment in science and research - and as an authoress. One of her books is "I am a Star" about the events of the Holocaust and her experiences as

a child, from the time Hitler ascended to power in Germany until liberation in ghetto Theresienstadt.

In 1997 Inge read an article about Dr. Albert Schatz, who discovered streptomycin. She looked for him to thank him for the life the drug had given her back. According to Dr. Schatz, he never got the appropriate recognition - professor Waksman, in whose laboratory Schatz worked when he discovered the drug took the credit. The book relates the life stories of two fascinating personalities, Inge Auerbacher and Albert Schatz - who met many years after the work of one of them gave the other a new life. In his last years, Schatz got the recognition for his part in the development of this life-saving drug, mainly thanks to Inge who searched for him and became bound to him in deep friendship, which led to the writing of the book.

In addition to her life as a child in the Holocaust Inge reveals in the book also her struggle with the hard years afterward. She does this courageously, openly and in a gripping manner. Highly recommended ■.



# REPLACING THE EXHIBITION AT OUR HISTORICAL MUSEUM

These days a team of designers – Shmuel Groag, Giliya Berger and Nataly Tal are designing the new permanent exhibition of Beit Theresienstadt's historical museum. The design is based on a concept approved by the members of our steering committee who are closely involved both in the planning stage and in the execution of the new display. The design proposed by the team headed by S. Groag, according to the predefined principles won out in a tender over three other designers. A central principle of the new design is to retain the existing character of the building with its mosaic floor. The building as such transmits a strong expression of Holocaust remembrance. If it were possible – the exhibition should be located in a separate building and this one kept as an impressive site of meditation and remembrance. But since neither the space nor the means for that are available, the challenge facing us is to create an uncluttered exhibition without lessening the message impacted by the building itself. At the same time, it should be detailed enough to impart the history of ghetto Theresienstadt and its prisoners, interesting and touching both heart and intellect. Another principle anchored in the design is that we do not want a highly modern technology-rich

**The challenge facing us is to create an uncluttered exhibition without lessening the message impacted by the building. At the same time it should be detailed enough to impart the history of ghetto Theresienstadt and its prisoners**

exhibition, as is so "in" these days. Naturally, we will exploit the possibilities opened during the last 30 years since the existing exhibition was designed – but we will do that sparingly and with modesty.

In the guidelines we stressed a number of subjects usually not dealt with fittingly in exhibitions and lectures about ghetto Theresienstadt, among them: the impact of the transports on the prisoner's life and the question of Theresienstadt's place in the Nazi machinery of the "final solution".

Based on the approved plan a small team selects now the documents, art works and photographs to be used in the exhibition and prepares the accompanying texts. The team consists of Dr. Margalit Shlain, Sima Shahar and Anita Tarsi.

Those of our members who have documents, items, diaries or art objects they deem suitable for display, please contact Anita Tarsi - phone: \*972-54-6678832.

The replacement of the exhibition is made possible through the support of the Claims Conference, the "Maror" fund and member's contributions. We did not succeed yet to mobilize all of the monies needed for this project and ask our members for additional help. ■

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO BEIT THERESIENSTADT

### Contributions for special projects and for the establishment of the "Perpetual Fund" for Beit Theresienstadt

We ask our members and friends who are interested and willing to contribute for special education projects and for the renovation of the permanent exhibition in our historical museum. A further objective is the establishment of a perpetual fund for Beit Theresienstadt; this fund will guarantee stability and a more secure economic horizon in the coming years.

## Membership Dues for 2007

### Annual membership dues:

- In Israel: NIS 120.- per person, NIS 180.- per family
- Abroad: US\$ 60.- per person, US\$ 90.- per family

**Payments may be made to Beit Terezin in the following ways -**

- cash  
check made out to "Beit Theresienstadt", at Givat Hayim-Ihud, mobile post Emek Hefer 38935, Israel
- bank transfer to the account of our association:  
Bank Leumi LeIsrael - 10  
Branch Herzlia Pituah - 958 (Address: 38 Wingate str., 46752, Herzlia Pituah, Israel  
IBAN: IL01095801181045; SWIFT: LUMIILITXXX

Account no. - 011810/25

After the transfer, please inform Beit Theresienstadt to enable us to credit you accordingly!

- By credit card (for the time being only VISA)  
Phone Beit Terezin - \*\*972-4-6369515. The receipt will be sent by return mail.

In the USA tax deductible contributions can be made via P.E.F. (Israel Endowments Funds, Inc.) using Beit Theresienstadt's code # 2210 with a request that the contribution should be directed to Beit Theresienstadt. Checks should be made out to P.E.F., the address is: P.E.F. 317 Madison Avenue, Suite 607, New York, NY 10017, Tel: (212) 599-1260 Fax: (212) 599-5981. E mail: pefisrael@aol.com



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