Dear Gloria & Gerri,

I would like to take this opportunity to express our admiration and appreciation to both of you for coordinating the monthly Drop Ins for our Survivors for the past six years. You not only bake delicious goodies such as cheesecake and kosher milk for the drop in, you welcome each Survivor personally with genuine warmth and caring, you organize interesting programs for the drop in with Rabbis, bankers and physicians to name a few, and then extend a thank you to the guests with a gift; you organize rides for those Survivors who need it and you clean the kitchen before you leave! On top of that you remember the birthdays of Survivors who regularly attend the Drop in by mailing them a birthday card. Your commitment is so evident and sincere and we truly appreciate all you do as volunteers of the VHEC. This life fellow recognition is awarded to those individuals who have made special contributions to Holocaust education and remembrance and, Gloria and Gerri, you both truly deserve this recognition.

Rome Fox, Volunteer Coordinator

GERRI LONDON & GLORIA WAISMAN HONOURED WITH 2005 LIFE FELLOWS AWARD

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PICS FROM THE FACES OF LOSS

EXHIBIT ARE NOW READY FOR PICK UP AT THE VHEC

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE EXHIBIT

2005 Lehrer Prize for Student Writing

This year’s winner of the 500 Lehrer prize is Jennifer Rekis, a grade 12 student from Mount Boucherie Secondary School, Kelowna, BC, for her essay on genocide which appears below.

Genocide: The Paroxysm of Human Hatred and Intolerance

by Jennifer Rekis

Living in a radical, democratic, and diverse society, it is nearly impossible for one to imagine being sent to a prison due to one’s ethnic traditions or personal beliefs. A Canadian living in the 21st century will most likely never know the true pains of starvation, disease, medical torture, and widespread death. However, such atrocities were reality for millions of people, particularly Jews and other “undesirable” minorities in Nazi Europe during a time now known as the Holocaust. During this horrific and ultimately catastrophic era, millions of people were deported to concentration camps where they were tortured and brutally murdered. This was genocide. “Genocide” is not just a word to describe massacres, it illustrates the entire destruction of a nation or ethnic group, deliberately and methodically. According to 41 Rummel, in the 20th century alone, approximately 170 million individuals have fallen victim to genocide (Death By Government, figure 1.1); individuals guilty of nothing. How is it then that the diaster of the Second World War, a civilized society, we have not yet embraced prevention against such atrocities but, only idly stand by. It is amazing that such tragic crimes against humanity are still taking place after 1945 when six million Jews bitterly perished. Genocide is a disease that lives in history with the Holocaust, more recently with Rwanda, presently in Sudan, but it is with hope that, with education of human decency and tolerance, genocide can be eliminated.

The language of the 1948 UN Convention of the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide speaks of acts “deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.” This all too clearly depicts the human catastrophe that was rapidly accelerating in Rwanda in 1994.

Despite the full knowledge of the Holocaust, which has become the representation of genocide, and the fearful tension growing between the Hutu and Tutsi, the UN and Western democracies watched. Although the specifics between Rwanda and Nazi Germany were different, the brutality and perpetrators’ desires were the same. Both nations were filled with a legacy of mass death and trauma that share deep psychological scars. Furthermore, Nazi Germany’s 1945 genocide and Rwanda’s 1994 episodes of genocide could have similarly been prevented.

Despite the full knowledge of the Holocaust, which has become the representation of genocide, and the fearful tension growing between the Hutu and Tutsi, the UN and Western democracies watched. Although the specifics between Rwanda and Nazi Germany were different, the brutality and perpetrators’ desires were the same.
Now, a preventative humanitarian crisis, affecting more than two million people, is raging in the Darfur region of Western Sudan. Not since the Rwandan genocide has the world seen such a calculated campaign of slaughter, rape, starvation, and displacement. Government-backed Arab militias, known collectively as the Janjaweed, are systematically eliminating entire communities of African tribal farmers, impersonating Germany’s 1930’s mobile killing squads, the Einsatzgruppen. Villages are being razed, women raped and branded, men murdered, and food and water supplies targeted and destroyed. The human destruction in Darfur has

One of the most vital steps in preventing genocide is raising children and teaching adolescents to become “inclusive,” caring people, that feel compassion for all human beings. Such education and socialization will help develop moral courage, which in turn can lead people to resist the evolution of violence and intolerance. To raise and educate inclusive, caring children requires the transformation of the adults who influence children, and the institutions where children spend a substantial amount of time. “The worst form of child abuse is teaching a child to hate,” said in an Honesty Reporting.com film, Rollensie: The Struggle for Peace in the Middle East. This could not be stated more accurately because hatred and intolerance starts in the minds and hearts of individuals. To stop the cycle of genocide, one must also help the victims of genocide; not only the individual survivors who were directly affected, but the entire group. This will not only improve their lives, but will make it less likely that they will become perpetrators, and thereby helps to cease any continuing cycle of violence and intolerance. Genocidal violence flourishes in a variety of difficult life conditions: intense and persistent economic strife, political conflict and disorganization, such as conflict between privileged minorities and minorities without rights, great social changes, or a combination. These conditions have a tendency to give rise to the search for scapegoats and destructive ideologies. Such ideologies tend to identify enemies, especially when a group’s culture has characteristics such as a history of discrimination against ethnic groups and a tendency to obey authority. These lethal steps can end in genocide. Seeing as the perpetrators are increasingly committed to their annihilative ideology or “genocidal ideology,” only the innocent bystanders are likely to escape. One must act on these actions to stop the evolution towards the rising violence against the victimized group. Furthermore we need to restrain power, foster democratic freedoms, and enforce constitutional governments. Dr. Hummel has stated, “Power kills, absolute power kills absolutely,” as the reason democratic nations should be enforcing democracy in developing worlds and singling out nations who continually refuse to embrace democracy. Active bystanders, teaching tolerance and respect for diversity, and controlling political systems that have historically used innocent citizens of mankind, as demonstrated by its horrific act, genocide. “Mankind must put an end to war, before war puts an end to mankind.” President Kennedy’s words are relevant to the persistent battle against genocide. Do men, women, and children have to be slaughtered in the tens of thousands to cause a change in our priorities and levels of concern? When the sanctity of human rights can be so blatantly violated and yet remain tolerated by the international community, there is a problem of such seriousness that words alone cannot explain it. It is mystifying that human life, the security of noncombatants, and the prevention of such horrors as genocide in the Holocaust, Rwanda, and presently in Sudan are, sadly, not sufficient to act as a catalyst for a swift and determined response from the international community. As Margaret MacMillan wrote in Paris 1919, “How can the irrational patterns of nationalism or religion he contained before they do more damage? (p. 494)” By recognizing this individuals can make a significant difference, by promoting social tolerance and diversity, and by helping nations build true democratic governments yet restrict the abuse of individual power, the global community can foster international cohesion and stop the chain of violence and genocide that has wretchedly become part of our society. It is with hope and perseverance that genocide can for once annihilate itself.

**Book Donations**

*From April to June, 2005*

- Two propaganda posters for teachers’ resources. Donated by Bill Zimmerman.
All That Glitters Is Not Gold
BY VANESSA MATT

In late September 2005, I visited Kulturen, a cultural museum located in Lund, Sweden. My visit was intentional: I aimed to complete something that I had started nearly three years earlier.

The Bus Driver’s Uniform
I began an internship at the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre in November 2002. As a student researcher, I was given the task of gathering information for a future exhibit about the women’s concentration camp at Ravensbrück (Ravensbrück – Forgotten Women of the Holocaust, vHCE, February-May 2003).

A specific topic of my research was the rescue of prisoners from the camp in 1945. The rescued women were transported out of the camp on Red Cross buses, an action attributed to the efforts of Count Folke Bernadotte who, as vice-president of the Swedish Red Cross, had negotiated with Heinrich Himmler for their release. During the internship, I came in contact with Kulturen, a museum in southern Sweden that holds in its collections the uniform of one of the Red Cross bus drivers.

At the same time that I was interning at the vHCE, I was accepted to a graduate program in International Museum Studies at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Two years later, as I contemplated a thesis topic, my thoughts returned to the Red Cross buses and the bus driver’s uniform in Kulturen. Realizing that I was living a three-hour drive north of Lund, I decided to take advantage of the opportunity and see the uniform in person.

Through email correspondence with the museum, I was referred to Anders Jansson, a curator at Kulturen. Having an avid interest in the museum’s collection of items related to Ravensbrück, Anders was keen to assist me in gaining access to the uniform.

During our initial communication, he informed me that the uniform was not the one worn during the rescue missions. Rather, this uniform was made in 1957 for the original bus driver to wear on commemorative trips around Europe honouring the rescue of Holocaust victims. In this way, the uniform assumed a different role in my mind: as a replica of the earlier uniform and as a physical memory of the mission’s success.

Anders also passed on information about the owner of the uniform, Sten Olsson. I learned that Mr. Olsson was a young soldier who drove one of the Red Cross buses that transported women from the camp. The uniform was turned in upon the completion of his service, hence the creation of another in 1960.

Mr. Olsson donated the uniform to the museum in 2001, along with a cigarette holder and banknotes from Theresienstadt, which had been given to him as gifts by the prisoners.

Once at Kulturen, I was led through the museum’s labyrinth-like storage area to a narrow room. Using the bright light of a solitary floor lamp, Anders laid the uniform onto the working table.

It is in notably excellent condition. The uniform has a matching cap, jacket, and pants, as well as a brown leather belt. Armbands on the jacket are prominent against the soft taupe colour of the uniform; these are white bands of fabric, one bearing the blue and yellow Swedish flag and the other a blunt red cross – the symbol of the Red Cross. Small buttons on the jacket’s lapels and on the front of the cap also have the Red Cross emblem.

I felt a certain sense of satisfaction in seeing the uniform that had hung in my memory for so long.

The Ravensbrück Collection
Within the storage room where the uniform is kept lies the ‘Ravensbrück collection’. Kulturen has been safeguarding these objects for the Lakocinski family since the 1960’s and, at present, negotiations are underway for the museum to assume ownership of it. There are 130 items in the collection and an archive of written materials, such as the stories of survivors, is kept in the library of Lund University.

As to the source of the objects, the museum knows that Zygmun Lakocinski collected them when he worked as a translator for the rescued women arriving to Lund, Sweden via the Red Cross transportation. When he discovered that the survivors carried possessions, he asked for and received them. It has been suggested that small items may have been found sewn into the clothes of the former prisoners. Although such garments typically were destroyed, by utilizing his contacts Mr. Lakocinski was able to preserve samples of them as well.

Visually, the Ravensbrück collection makes a strong first impression. I immediately recognized the blue-and-grey striped uniforms as those worn by prisoners in the camps, my reference point being images and sketches I had seen in books. There is an assortment of handmade notebooks, dolls - even pairs of shoes fashioned from rough materials. I still recall the carvings made from the handles of toothbrushes; a tiny, translucent yellow crucifix is remarkable for its intricate detail. What time, what effort, what affection went into making and hiding these objects?

From this experience, I may have closed a door on the topic of ‘the bus driver’s uniform,’ but another has been opened to more objects and stories. Anders and I spoke of the relationship these items had to the human thoughts and feelings that had inspired their creation. In the Ravensbrück collection, there are notebooks that would fit in the palm of the hand. Prisoners had used them as a multi-language reference book, a source of various quotations, or a bitter-sweet journal of life and death. My fiancé, who accompanied me to Kulturen, is French and thus was able to translate the faint, penciled words of French written in the miniature notebook of a former prisoner. As the three of us stood in the dim storage space he read aloud, “All that glitters is not gold.” Looking around me, I could agree.

I would like to give special thanks to Anders Jansson, a Custodian of Antiquities at Kulturen for his expertise and for his willingness to assist me in viewing the collection. Information about the uniform and the Ravensbrück collection was obtained from Mr. Jansson. Permission was received for the taking of personal photographs and their inclusion in this article.

As of January 27, 2005 of this year, the Ravensbrück collection was placed on permanent display at Kulturen. The objects and information pertaining to the collection are accessible online at www.kulturen.com/Ravensbruck/Ravensbruck/English/index.htm
The Amber Necklace

BY VANESSA MATT

During my visit to Kulturen, Anders Jansson brought to my attention one object he feels has special significance. After learning of the item’s poignant history, I too became intrigued by it.

Peeling back the protective tissue paper, Anders showed me a necklace of unpolished amber stones. Initially appearing to be simple and bulky, upon closer examination the necklace is impressive for its size and number of amber pieces. However, its visual attributes come second to the hardship it has been witness to.

Kulturen received the necklace as a donation in 1998. It was sent to the museum by Brit Skoog, who had been given the necklace as a gift from her former neighbour and friend, Regina Jönsson. Because of its extraordinary past, Mrs. Skoog thought that the museum might wish to keep the necklace in its collections.

The following passage is the detailed letter that accompanied the necklace and which describes the life of its original owner, Regina Jönsson:

My name is Brit Skoog, of Gislaved [in the province of Småland, Sweden]. In 1966, my family got to know Regina Jönsson and her husband. We had moved from Gothenburg and got a house close to Regina’s. She became very attached to our daughter and that’s how we got to know each other; a friendship that lasted until 1981 when Regina died.

She was born in 1917 in Warsaw and came from a Jewish family. When she was singing in a children’s choir she was brought to a prison camp, even though she tried to fight back. To be able to catch her they broke her wrists and ankles. Later she was brought to another camp and then finally to Ravensbrück. The gold she had in her teeth was ripped out, her golden earrings too (the scars were still visible), her hair was cut off to be used in cushions. Regina told us about her work in the camp. It was to carry dead people to graves. One Christmas Day morning, she had to stand barefoot without underwear in the snow and the cold while the women were counted over and over again. Her toes got frostbitten. The medical experiments Regina had to undergo I cannot describe. She was destroyed for life. She told about the transportations of prisoners from one camp to another. The carriages were packed with women, dead and alive, and a few guards. The famine was huge and if the guard was asleep she could steal some food from him. At the end of the war Regina came to Lund with the Folke Bernadotte action. She was scared to death when she had to undergo medical examinations.

Then she was brought to Tomelilla [east of Lund] and sometime later she was given shelter in the home of a priest in northern Skåne, by Father Gunnar in Osby. She took care of the children, worked as a maid, but most of all she got compassion. In Osby she met Ove, and they got married and moved to Gislaved where Ove worked as a night porter. Regina soon had to sit in a wheelchair and needed lots of help. I tried to help her as much as I could when not working as a teacher. Our children helped too, and she treated them as her own.

One day, Regina took out a necklace and told me how she had smuggled it through three camps. She wanted to give it to me to thank me for all of the help. It was dirty, just a thread for a string and a rusty clasp unfortunately, but it was a gift from her heart. When I received it sometime later, I put a new thread in it. I might regret that today, but at that time I thought it was a good thing to do. I’ve never worn it because of its history. Now I wonder if you would like to take care of this amber necklace, so that it will be kept. Think about how it’s been hidden under a mattress, among old rags, hidden from the guards etc.

Regina experienced horrible pains in her stomach during the autumn of 1941, fell unconscious quickly at Vårnamo Hospital and died after a couple of weeks. I sat with her in the ward. The doctors and nurses were deeply touched by Regina’s life and I saw many of them crying. With broken feet and hands, figures on her arm – it was too much for them to bear. Now, Regina rests at the cemetery here in Gislaved together with her husband. I take care of the grave because there are no relatives. Through the Red Cross, my husband managed to get a pension from the German government. Regina’s life also got documented. Unfortunately I don’t have a copy of it.

The necklace and the letter are the property of Kulturen (KM 85078).

How All Roads Could Lead to Auschwitz: The Extraordinary Story of Dr. Karel Sperber

BY DR. CLAUDE ROMNEY

During the course of my research on the Auschwitz prisoner doctors, I have come across many extraordinary stories, but Dr. Karel Sperber’s count among the most incredible ones. Dr. Sperber was Mrs. Lisa Kafka’s cousin and some time ago, she donated to the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre archives a copy of a text which he wrote in May 1945, immediately after his return to England from the Nazi concentration camps. As I read his story, it became obvious to me that, for a Jew during WWII, all roads could lead to Auschwitz.

Dr. Sperber was born in 1910 in Tachov, Bohemia, and studied medicine at the German university in Prague. After Czechoslovakia was invaded by the Nazis in 1939, he escaped to England, but as a foreigner was not allowed to practice medicine in that country. He therefore enlisted as a ship’s surgeon on a merchant navy vessel, the Automedon, which routinely sailed from Liverpool to Singapore, Hong Kong and Shanghai. However, the liner was sunk on November 11, 1940 by a German raider in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Sumatra. Some of the crew members were killed during the raid, including the captain, but Dr. Sperber was one of the ninety or so people who were taken prisoner. They spent five weeks on the German raider Atlantis before being transferred to a captured Norwegian tanker which took them to Bordeaux, a port in Southern France. From there they were marched to a prison camp in the vicinity.

In March 1941, Dr. Sperber and some other prisoners were put on a train bound for Germany. He was then interned in a succession of prisons before arriving in a camp for merchant navy prisoners, situated in Northern Germany and named Marlag und Milag. There he was instrumental in having a hospital established to treat the sick inmates and was able to save many lives.

In late 1942, he was moved to a jail in Bremen, and then transferred to Auschwitz where he arrived on December 13. He worked there as a physician, doing his best to treat fellow prisoners. Like the other prisoner doctors, he also witnessed many atrocities. Among them were the barbarous experiments which were performed on young Jewish prisoners, such as crude sterilization surgery. In 1944, he worked in the hospital in Auschwitz II (Buna-Monowitz). In January 1945, after the evacuation of the camp, he was forced to take part in one of the deadly marches in the snow. With a group of prisoner doctors, he arrived in Buchenwald where they succeeded in getting themselves admitted as patients to the hospital and were later able to work as physicians. He subsequently escaped and hid in a forest until he met up with a division of the American army on April 3, 1945.

Dr. Sperber then returned to England where he testified in front of the Allied War Crimes Commission. He was appointed an honorary officer in the Civil Division of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of his “most excellent” humanitarian work in the merchant navy camp. Still unable to work as a physician in Britain, he enlisted on another merchant navy vessel. While on a visit to his uncle and aunt in Vancouver in August 1945, he gave interviews to the press about Auschwitz. Indeed, his accounts of the atrocities committed by the Nazis in that camp must have been among the very first ones to be read by British Columbians.

For a few years he practiced medicine in Ghana, but unfortunately he contracted Hodgkin’s disease and died in Accra in 1957 at the age of 47. Had he lived, he would probably have written more extensively about his experiences in the camps.

His is, indeed, an extraordinary story, but there is more, which was unknown to Dr. Sperber himself. As it happened, when the cargo ship Automedon was sunk in the Indian Ocean, it was carrying top secret documents from His Majesty’s Government to the British Commander in Chief in the Far East. These very detailed documents stated that Britain would not be in a position to defend that region if it were to be attacked by the Japanese. The documents were immediately sent to Berlin and Hitler’s officials promptly communicated the contents to the Japanese who were their allies. According to some historians, the capture of those secret documents enabled the Japanese to plan the attack on Pearl Harbor which took place in December 1941. The Foreign Office was so embarrassed by the whole affair that the British never admitted to the loss of the ship, which had been seized by the Germans and were later found in Berlin in the Foreign Ministry archives.

Dr. Sperber did not know about the secret documents which the Germans found in the safe of the Automedon. He did know, however, that among the ship papers was a list of crew members which gave his nationality as Czech. According to him, this was the reason why, having been captured in the Indian Ocean, he was sent to the notorious Nazi death camp, which goes to show that, for a Jew during WWII, all roads could lead to Auschwitz.
Hana Greenfield was born in Kolin, Czechoslovakia into an educated Jewish family in 1927. She passed through the Terezin Ghetto, Auschwitz & Bergen Belsen Concentration camps during the Second World War. This book is a story of her experiences.

When Germany occupied Czechoslovakia, her family was deported from Prague to a suburb and then in 1942 they were deported to the Terezin Ghetto. During the war, all of her family members perished and she was forced to stay alone until April 1st, 1945 when the United States Army liberated her at Bergen-Belsen.

Because her memories of the events during the war remained so vivid, Hana decided to write Fragments of Memory. It is a book of several stories, written by an eyewitness of the Holocaust.

The story that made the greatest impression on me was that of the children’s march through the Terezin Ghetto in 1943. About 2000 Jewish children were deported from Bialystok, Poland to Terezin. Rows of children between the ages of 4 – 12 walked through the Ghetto as marching ghosts, with wet rags clinging to their emaciated bodies. Holding hands, older children helped the small ones as best they could. People on the streets stopped and watched with tears in their eyes, as the children were lead by 58 men to a building where inmates of the Ghetto were disinfected and deleoused. Smelling an unusual odor, the children started to cry and shouted “Gas! Gas!” They huddled together, refusing to be washed or have their wet rags changed for dry clothing. Looking like scarecrows, the older children again tried to protect the smaller children by standing in front of them, holding hands and doing their best to comfort them. The other inmates of the Ghetto could not understand why these children refused to wash; their clothing permeated with lice, their bodies full of sores. But those watching didn’t know of the gas chambers and of the murders, as the children did.

On October 7th 1943, the children were deported to Auschwitz and on the eve of Yom-Kippur, they were murdered in the gas chambers. The sight of the children’s march through Terezin was so horrendous that five artists living in the ghetto at this time, painted pictures of the event. Among them was a young girl of 14. One artist, Ernest Morgan, a former lawyer from Australia, painted the scene after he was liberated. The rest of the artists painted their pictures during their stay in the Ghettos and hid them in different areas. At present, four of these pictures are in museums in Jerusalem.

Another story which is impossible to forget demonstrates that the Nazis not only murdered people, but also tried to kill their dignity by turning them into animals. In an Auschwitz hospital, a mother sat beside her sick, dying daughter. When the daily rations were distributed, she stood in line for some watery soup. Upon her return, the mother realized her daughter was dead. She sat down on the edge of the bed, ate her daughter’s soup and just after, she closed her child’s eyes, covered her pale face with the thin gray blanket and cried.

Hana Greenfield’s book has been published in many languages, such as: Hebrew, Polish, French, Yiddish, English, German, Russian and Czech. Ruth Davis of The Journal of Jewish History said The Diary of Anne Frank is now a part of a Reading List. I would recommend Hana Greenfield’s Fragments of Memory as a better book for older students because where Anne Frank’s narrative stops, Hana Greenfield’s takes the reader into the heart of darkness and shows what life was in the death camps through the eyes of a teenager. I think Hana Greenfield’s Fragments of Memory must be more widely read.

The Meaning(s) of “Liberation” BY PETER SUEFELD

As our group of dirty, hungry, and shivering children huddled in a dark Budapest cellar a few days after a Russian soldier had burst in and announced “Habouru kaput” (“War finished”), another Russian appeared at the door. We could tell from his uniform and equipment that he was an officer. In fairly good Hungarian, he asked the woman in charge who those children were? She answered that we were war orphans being cared for by the International Red Cross. To his next question, she said, “Yes, some of them are Jewish.”

The Russian looked around, saw that none of his comrades were in sight, and furtively showed her a Mogen David on a thin chain under his tunic. Then, hearing that we were very short of food, he went into the street and shot a horse that happened to be coming along, pulling a wagon. Its owner was devastated, but he was not about to argue with an armed Soviet officer; for us, it was the first meat and the best meal in several months.

The recent commemorations of the liberation of Auschwitz, and an even more recent discussion among the Child Survivors’ Group at the vuacs led me to ponder the meaning of liberation. Regarding the former, what struck me while I was watching the TV coverage of the ceremonies and the history they evoked, was that the overwhelming focus was on the horrors of Auschwitz–Birkenau and by extension of the Shoah. Very little was said about the event that led to these anniversary programs: the liberation of Auschwitz and, again by extension, the eventual end of the Shoah, the Nazi Reich, and the war in Europe. Almost nowhere was the joy, the celebration, the honoring of the men who fought, the nations that mobilized their military might, and their domestic economies, that made this anniversary meaningful. I thought this a strange and unsettling way to commemorate liberation.

I’ve also been thinking about that Red Army major. He was clearly afraid, or at least reluctant, to let his fellow soldiers know he was Jewish. We, hidden children, knew what this was about, as we had been well drilled in concealing our true religion, name, and parentage. But now we had been liberated, and for the first time the few of us, appearing among the majority of real war orphans in the group - mostly Catholic, like most Hungarians – could reveal ourselves. That officer obviously was still in need of that kind of liberation. Perhaps we should differentiate between liberation from murderous governmental persecution and liberation from society’s ingrained prejudices.

Soon after the Soviets liberated Hungary from the Germans and our own homegrown version of the Nazis, their occupation forces not only engaged in widespread robbery and rape, but also suppressed all practices and opinions that were not in line with their life in the subsequent six decades, they have never been free from it. Does liberation imply that one should lose the memory of the suffering that preceded it, or the aftermath of that suffering? Should we expect that liberation from persecution would also liberate us from those memories and their impact?

I have raised the questions, but I cannot provide clear answers. For me, words that are used loosely lose their meaning. I don’t think that poor, deteriorating inner city neighborhoods are “ghettos”, or that Israel’s security fence is a “Berlin Wall”, or that unkind words are an “assault”. I don’t accept “cultural genocide” as equivalent to genocide, and for me liberation was when that first Russian infantryman poked the muzzle of his sub-machine gun into our cellar and declared the war to be over. The problems that came afterward, including persistent experiences of anti-Semitism, do not detract from that liberation. Others, obviously, view it differently and have trouble fully celebrating the moment when they were liberated in this perhaps limited sense.

I celebrate mine with great, unending joy and gratitude.

Peter and his father after the war in Vienna (1947). Realizing that his wife had perished in the Holocaust, Peter’s father decided to go to Vienna where he worked as a musician for the American Army.
April 1 – June 30, 2005

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Alex Buckman, Thank you. vjhec Board & Staff and the Gala Planning Committee
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Serge Vanyu, Given, well soon. The vjhec Board & Staff
Mazel Tov — Rita Akselrod, On your honour. Frieda Miller & Danny Shapiro, Lola & Saul Apfelbaum, Alan Farber & Felicia Folk, The vjhec Board & Staff
Rhona & Larry Barzelou, On your 25th Wedding Anniversary. Aron & Neri Tischler
David Bluman & Olga Frankenstein, Mazel Tov. Chris & Rhoda Friedricks
Moxy & Paul Charkov, On your 35th Wedding Anniversary. Beth & Leon Bogner
Karol Chot, Happy Birthday. Mark, Debby, Barbara, Daniel & Rachel Chot
Sabina Chot, Happy Birthday. Mark, Debby, Barbara, Daniel & Rachel Chot
Emanda Cotton, On your Graduation. Penny & Mel Sprackman
Mariette Doduck, On your 70th Birthday. Gerri, Mark, Dana & David London
Mariette Doduck, On your great effort with the Gala. Belty Ellermans, Mayer & Gail Mattuck, Ethel Kosky
Mariette & Sid Doduck, On your Grandson’s Bar Mitzvah. Barrie & Ellen Yackness
Sandy Dory, Wishing you a great retirement. Gloria & Robbie Waisman
Robbie Waisman, Mazel Tov. On your Grandson’s Bar Mitzvah. In memory of your husband, Tommy MacDonald.
Tobi & Rochelle Feldman, Mazel Tov on both occasions. Joyce Lowy
Norman Gladstone, On your very Special Birthday. Peter & Marla Gropper
Cathy & David Golden, On Shane’s Bar Mitzvah. Vivian & Jeff Claman
Serge & Elmon Haker, Happy 50th Anniversary. Lola & Bill Mendelson
Joanna Jordan, On Your Bat Mitzvah. Alan Morosan & Bev Spring
Robert Kremeny, On both of your special occasions. Estika Humming
Lani Levine, On the birth of your granddaughter. Frieda Miller & Danny Shapiro
Michael Levy, On your 60th Birthday. Beth & Leon Bogner
Ed Lewin, Happy 90th Birthday. Patti & Ralph Akin, Lynne & J.F. Fader and Children
Lucie & Carolie Lieberman, On your daughter’s engagement. The vjhec Board & Staff
Carole Lieberman, Happy Birthday. Gloria & Robbie Waisman, Gayle & Alvin Rossman
Dr. & Mrs. Roger Lyons, Mazel Tov on 35 years. Gloria & Robbie Waisman
Karla Marks, On your 60th Birthday. Leon & Beth Bogner
Sophie Miraszas, On your Bat Mitzvah. Sheryl Siroksen & Hillel Goelman
Corazon Munrane, On your Honourable Mention in the Learner Student Essay Contest. Frieda Miller
Dana Prince & Elena Sigal, On the Bar Mitzvah of your son.
Jeannette & Harry Greenhut
Dr. & Jenny Rootman, On the birth of your Grandchild. Lili & Itzik Folk
Stanley Schwartz, On your 60th Birthday. Beth & Leon Bogner
Marlise Sigal & Aviekh Nachmani, On the Bat Mitzvah of your Daughter, Nomi. Harry & Jeannette Greenhut
Ruth & Cecil Sigal, On the Bar Mitzvah of your Grandson and the Bat Mitzvah of your Granddaughter. Jeannette & Harry Greenhut
Mel & Penny Sprackman, On the birth of your Grandsons. Judy & Harvey Dales
Lynane & Larry Thal, Mazel Tov on Todd & Carrie’s engagement. Barbara & Herb Silber
Stephen Tick, Happy Special Birthday. Vera Bakonyi & Family
Robbie Waisman, In your honour. Maurice Schachter, Lili & Itzik Folk, Sidney & Shirley Kaplan, Graham & Judith Forst, Cathy, David, Tyler & Shane Golden, Ruth & Doug Freeman, Irine & Stuart Ross, Jack & Karen Micner, Barb & Herb Silber, Ben & Rita Akselrod, Ethel Kosky, Judy & Mark Litvak
Vera Bakonyi & Family, Mazel Tov. On your 60th Birthday. Susie & Chaim Miskin
Izak Folk, Happy Birthday. Frieda Miller & Danny Shapiro
Dr. & Mrs. Roger Lyons, Mazel Tov on 35 years. Gloria & Robbie Waisman
Mark Rozenberg, In memory of your dear Mother, Miriam. Mark Rosenzweig, Lynn Kaplan Family, Ed & Debbie Rosenzweig
Beth & Leon Bogner
Jeanette & Harry Greenhut
Vlasta Amsoucha & Family, With sympathy. Nan Ravin
Gertrude Blum, In memory of your husband, Andree. Vera & Bernard Rosen, Susie & Chaim Micner
Paula Brook, On the passing of your beloved mother, Miriam. Irving Westergaard & Norman Gladstone
Ron Burnett, In memory of Sophie Burnett. Munique Fouquet & Michael Bannwell & the Academic Office of Emily Carr Institute
Philip Chernov, In memory of your mother, Mona. Beth & Leon Bogner
Dr. Sherrin Cohen, On the passing of your wife, Charlotte. George & Frieda Wteman
Amelia Coleman, In memory of your Father. Mark & Susie Kiernersblat
Ona, Tal, Darry & Shani Danzig, Sorry for your loss. Cedar Morton
Ken & Eva Davidson & Family, In memory of your dear Mother, Miriam. Mark Rosenzweig, Lynn Kaplan Family, Ed & Debbie Rosenzweig
Mel & Gini Davis & Family, In memory of your Dad, Tommy MacDonald.
Leon & Beth Bogner & Family
Bea Fayerman, In memory of your Mother. Susan & Joe Stein & Family
Zoila Fletscher, Condolences on the loss of Erka. Miriam Einzer
Haya Fuchs & Tim Newman, On the passing of your Father.
The vhec is honoured to have the support of the following new endowment funds established in 2005 to secure the future of the vhec.

- Averbach Family Endowment Fund, established by Gary & Dianne Averbach & Betty Averbach.
- Dr. Barrett Benny Endowment Fund
- Larry Brandt & Family Endowment Fund, Established by Esther Brandt to honour the memory of her husband Larry Brandt (z”l).
- Sam & Frances Belberg Endowment Fund
- Lorre & Sylvia Cristal Family Endowment Fund. Established in honour of our children Jodie, Jackie & Gary, Alex and Jodi, and grand-children Ashley, Justin, Tyler & Andrew.
- The Harvey & Jody Daks Hospitality Endowment Fund of the vhec, to provide funds to the contributions of staff & volunteers.
- The Mel & Gati Davis, Charles & Dana Davis Family Endowment Fund
- Gordon & Leslie Diamond Family Endowment Fund
- Isabelle, Craig, Craig & Carrie Diamond Family Endowment Fund
- Sidney & Mariette Doduck Endowment Fund
- The Doduck Children Legacy Endowment Fund, established in 2005 by Cathy Doduck Golden, Cheryl Doduck Young and Bernice Doduck Carmel.
- Dr. Arthur & Judith Doduck Endowment Fund
- Abe & Rachel Leah Fox and sons, Michael & Nathan Fox Endowment Fund, established in 2005.
- The Erika Fleischer Memorial Endowment Fund, established by Mark & Susie Kierszenblat and Ernie Fleischer & Luc Elma Rubio to honor the memory of survivor Erika Fleischer (z”l).
- Max & Margaret Fugman Endowment Fund
- The Abie & Leyla Sacks Foundation Fund
- David & Aurelia Gold Endowment Fund, established by Judy Weiner & Andrew Gillad, and Joseph Gold.
- Sylvia Eibschtuch & Dr. Peter & Marla Gropper Endowment Fund
- The Sam Haber Endowment Fund, established by Lola, and sons Mel and Robert Haber. Sam (z”l) and Michael (z”l) Heller Memorial Endowment Fund
- Paul & Zilbina Heller Endowment Fund
- Mr. & Mrs. Craig Moss & Family, In memory of your beloved Father. revelations to honor parents Dr’s. Isaak (z”l) & Bluma, Aron & Neri Tischler.
- The Karen & Jack Micner Legacy Endowment Fund
- The Arya Schwartz, Our sympathies are with family, In memory of your beloved mother, Grandmother & Wife.
- The Dr. Stanley Sunshine Endowment Fund, established anonymously to honor Dr. Stanley Sunshine.
- The Isaac & Judith Thau Endowment Fund established through donations to the Jewish Community Foundation. Isaac (z”l) & Bluma, Aron & Neri Tischler Family Endowment Fund, established by Aron and Neri Tischler to honor parents Dr’s. Isaak (z”l) & Bluma Tischler.
- The Robert & Gloria Waisman Endowment Fund, established by Bernard Pinsky & Daniella Coston, Max & Leona Pinsky, Helen Pinsky & Victor Elias families.
- The Roseale & Joseph Segal Endowment Fund
- The Anita, Zev & Elaine Shaflan Legacy Endowment Fund
- The Art Shiff & Carla van Messeg Legacy Endowment Fund
- The Lee & Bernie Simpson, Annie, Jory, & Samantha Endowment Fund
- The Irving & Irvin Snider Foundation Endowment Fund
- The Eric Sonner Endowment Fund of the vhec established through planned giving.
- The Dr. Sidney & Lila Waisman Endowment Fund
- The Dr. Stanley Sunshine Endowment Fund
- The Karen & Jacob Meiner Legacy Endowment Fund
- The Saul & Warren Endowment Fund, established by Judy Wener & Andrew Gillad.
- the vhec is honored to have the support of the following new endowment funds established in 2005 to secure the future of the vhec.

In many cases the permanent name of the fund has not been confirmed.
VHEC 10th Anniversary Gala
a Huge Success!

Under the impressive leadership of Gala Co-chairs Mariette Doduck and Jody Dales, the vhec Gala was held on May 29, 2005 to honor past presidents Dr. Robert Krell and Robbie Waisman was a joyful event that marked ten years of growth and service to the community by the vhec. The theme Touching Hearts – Engaging Minds reflects our commitment to quality Holocaust education that has been and will remain the focus of the work of the Centre. The fundraising team, co-chaired by Harvey Dales and Louis Eisman, did an outstanding job. Thanks to our loyal and generous donors, many new endowment funds were established, ensuring the future for the vhec. An event such as this requires the support of dozens of dedicated volunteers, the vhec Board and the entire staff of the vhec. We are grateful for the help of so many, and for the support that the community showed for the work of the Centre.