

The Newsletter of the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre

Zachor

"Remember"

Number 1,
January 2004

LIGHT ONE CANDLE



Cemetery Memorial in need of repair



As we approach the 17th anniversary year of the establishment of the memorial at the Schara Tzedek Cemetery we are facing some costly repairs and preventative maintenance due to climate and the effects of time. The site has a high exposure to the elements, wind and rain, much of which is acid rain. Some areas of the monument are flat, which doesn't allow water to run off, and has caused a need for annual maintenance. The site will deteriorate quickly unless proper long-term steps are taken now. The work needed will cost over \$5,000. Generous donations from Izzy Fraeme and Aaron Szajman have enabled us to begin this needed work. We greatly appreciate the help of donors in offsetting the costs of maintaining the memorial for future generations.

Mark Elster and Jack Micner have agreed to be the vigilant eyes to periodically examine the monument and overseeing the ongoing maintenance and repairs. There is concern specifically with the inscribed names, many of which have letters and words that are fading with time. The plan is to clean and polish the stone and then repaint the names so they will look like the newer stones. Caulking will be done and all cracks in the areas of the stones that have names (of our dear departed) will be carefully repaired.

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Information for Survivors

Under a new Supplementary Social Security Agreement between Canada and Germany there is now a pension available to those who (1) are ethnic German Jews who primarily spoke the German language; and (2) fled an Eastern or Central European country (not including Germany) during WWII; and (3) were at least 16 years old in the year the Nazi regime occupied their country.

Please note that there are other eligibility criteria, which must be met. The deadline for applying is November 30, 2005. To obtain an application form please visit the website <http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/fas-sfa/eforms/fbn5e.shtml> or call Human Resources Development Canada at 613.957.1954 (collect calls accepted.) If you require assistance filling out the form please call the VHEC at 604.264.0499.

February Survivor Drop-in

The next Survivor Drop-in will be held on February 10th at 2 pm. Lilian Boraks Nemetz and Irene Watts will be speaking about their latest book, *Tapestry of Hope*.

Rental Opportunities

The Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre offers an ideal space to host your event. With a seating capacity from 30 – 80 people, our facilities are suited to meetings, screenings, public lectures, and special events. To book a rental or for more information please phone the VHEC Administrator at 604-264-0499

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Cover: Children playing in the Kovno Ghetto. Photo: George Kadish

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

A CHILD'S DIARY OF THE HOLOCAUST

EXHIBITION RUNS FROM FEBRUARY 22 – MAY 28, 2004



The VHEC is pleased to host the exhibit *"Light One Candle: A Child's Diary of the Holocaust"* based on the Holocaust experiences of survivor Solly Ganor. *Light One Candle* will open on February 22, 2004 and run through May, 2004. The exhibit was created

by Holocaust Educational Traveling Exhibits, Visas for Life Foundation, Eric Saul, Curator. The exhibit premiered in 2001 under unique circumstances. Due to the war, Solly Ganor never had a Bar Mitzvah. In September of 2001, Solly Ganor, was the guest of honor at a Bar Mitzvah in Detroit, Michigan. This exhibit premiered as part of the commemoration of Solly's Bar Mitzvah. It was shown at the YIVO Institute in New York in 2002.

This exhibit will be used by the VHEC as a vehicle to educate students about the events of the Holocaust. The exhibit has been designed for a younger audience with many of the images in the Kovno (Kaunas) ghetto depicting young people. The exhibit *Light One Candle: A Child's Diary of the Holocaust* depicts the life of Solly Ganor which parallels the fate of thousands of Jewish children who were victims and survivors of Lithuania.

The exhibit depicts the story of Solly Ganor (Zalke Genkind); a ten-year old boy, who in 1941 found himself caught up in the Holocaust. He was the same age as Anne Frank. For the next four years, he miraculously survived numerous Nazi actions, dangerous life in a ghetto, two concentration camps and a death march. Most of the members of his extended family perished. Solly's life, parallels the experiences of millions of other Jewish children caught in the Holocaust. It took Solly Ganor more than 30 years to heal from the painful memories of the Holocaust. It took an additional ten years to prepare and edit his wartime diaries, which provide the quotes that run throughout the exhibit.

"This is a photo of me taken after the war. I was so lucky to survive the Holocaust. Of the 45,000 Jews in the Kovno Ghetto, only 3,000 survived. I have considered every day that I have lived since to be a blessing."

– Solly Ganor

This exhibit was able to be successfully mounted because of the quality of surviving photographic collections. Eighty-five photographs are presented in this exhibit from the following collections:

George Kadish Photographs: Between 1941 and 1944, Kadish took hundreds of photographs of daily life in the Kovno ghetto. This is perhaps the most historically significant photographic collection taken by a victim during the Holocaust. The George Kadish collection was recently acquired by the Simon Wiesenthal Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. The photographs were printed directly from his original negatives. This is the first time these photographs have been printed from the negatives in nearly 40 years. More than sixty of the Kadish photographs are part of the exhibit.

Consul Chiune Sugihara Photographs: In the summer of 1939, Solly Ganor was befriended by the Japanese Consul Chiune Sugihara in Kovno, Lithuania. The Ganor family received a Sugihara visa, but was unable to use it. Curator Eric Saul was given access to original Sugihara photographs from the Sugihara family archives.



Solly Ganor in the Kovno Ghetto (boy third from left).
Photo: George Kadish

It was Clarence who picked me up out of the snow and saved my life on the morning of May 2, 1945. This was the first act of kindness from a person in a uniform that I had seen in more than five years. – Solly Ganor

Landsberg-Kaufering Concentration Camp Photographic Collection: The survivors of the Kovno ghetto were sent to the 11 Landsberg-Kaufering concentration camps for Jewish slave labour, part of Dachau camp complex near Munich, Germany. Thousands of Lithuanian men died in these camps in the spring and fall of 1944-45. The curator obtained an important collection of photographs taken at these camps at the time of the liberation by the United States Army.

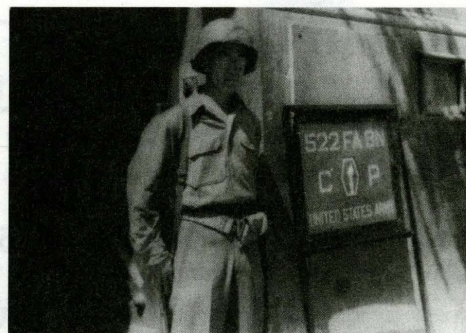
Death March Photographs: On April 24, 1945, thousands of Jewish men and women from the Landsberg-Kaufering-Dachau camps were taken on a death march. We have a collection of six extremely rare original photographs of the death march, which Solly Ganor survived and describes movingly in his book.

Liberation of the death march by the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion (Japanese American) Photographic Collection: Solly Ganor was liberated by an all-Japanese American artillery battalion. Ironically, many of these Japanese American soldiers volunteered from America's relocation camps. On May 2, 1945, the men of the 522nd liberated the last remnants of the Dachau death marchers and the survivors of Lithuania. The exhibit contains some of the original photographs taken by Japanese American soldiers at the liberation.

After the war, Solly Ganor briefly served with the US Army intelligence, helping to bring Nazi war criminals to justice. During this period, his widowed father met and married a Canadian woman, Ethel Ostry, who was in charge of the refugee agency UNRUH. Solly's father and stepmother moved to Canada to start a new life. After the outbreak of the War of Independence in Israel, Solly moved to Israel and volunteered to fight for the new state of Israel. Solly remains both a Canadian and Israeli citizen to this day.

In 1995, Solly Ganor's memoir *Light One Candle* was published. The book was based on his childhood wartime diary kept throughout Solly Ganor's internment in the Kovno ghetto. It is a poignant story of a young man's survival against the odds. More than 97% of the Jews of the Kovno ghetto were murdered. Many Holocaust historians and educators consider Solly Ganor's book to be a sensitive and poignant story of a child surviving the Holocaust.

The book *Light One Candle* has been translated into German and Japanese and is now recommended reading for high school students in these countries. The book will be given to schools attending the *Annual High School Symposium on the Holocaust*. Solly's articles on the Holocaust and Israel are on the internet and are widely read. They can be found at: <http://www.ron-greene.com/solly.html> Recently, Solly reflected, "I feel I have finally fulfilled my promise to my perished friends and family to tell their stories. I have finally lit 'One Candle' for them."



Clarence Matsumura, Solly Ganor's liberator.

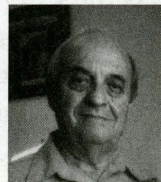


Five year old boy receiving his family's ration of hot soup from the ghetto soup kitchen. The boy was shot during the "Children's Action" on March 27, 1944. Photo: George Kadish



Japanese-American soldier(left) with three Dachau Survivors liberated on May 2, 1945
Photo: George Oiyé

For your information:

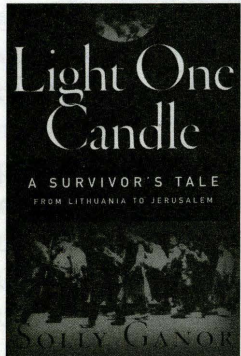


Solly Ganor will speak to students at the Annual High School Symposium on the Holocaust at UBC on May 5 & 6

There will be a free public reception at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 6 at the VHEC

Light One Candle: A Survivor's Tale from Lithuania to Jerusalem

By Solly Ganor – Reviewed by S Fuller



Left for dead by SS guards on a snow bank, Holocaust survivor Solly Ganor was helped to safety by a Japanese-American soldier of the 522 Field Artillery Battalion, the unit that rescued survivors of the Death March he was on in May 1945. This same man, Clarence Matsumura, would liberate Solly again when they met for the second time in Jerusalem in 1992 – this time it was from an “emotional” death.

In *Light One Candle: A Survivor's Tale from Lithuania to Jerusalem*, Ganor says that while he had survived the Death March with his body intact, his spirit had been left crippled. He saw himself “as the trunk of a tree that had survived a forest fire. Black and charred beyond recognition, with all my branches gone.” It was in the presence of Clarence and his fellow veterans of the 522 Field Artillery, 37 years later, that he was to feel that he had sprouted “new emotional branches; perhaps reviving old ones that weren’t really dead, only dormant.” It was also the first time since his liberation from the Death March, that he had been able to cry.

Few people knew of the important role the “Nisei”, as Japanese Americans were known, played in the liberation of concentration camps. Following his reunion with Clarence Matsumura many reporters were eager for interviews with Solly and the group of liberators in the remaining eight days they were in Israel.

In *Light One Candle: A Survivor's Tale from Lithuania to Jerusalem*, Ganor chronicles his life as a boy in Kaunas, Lithuania before the rise of the Nazis, his unimaginable suffering in the ghetto, the concentration camps of Dachau and then the Death March, his time fighting in the War of Independence and his subsequent life in Israel, where he still lives when not living in the United States, his other country of residence.

In his story two people, both of Japanese ancestry, feature as critical to his survival and he names them in his dedication, describing the one as his guide, and one as his rescuer. Clarence Matsumura and the men of the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion are his rescuers and Chiune Sugihara was his guide. Also included in his dedication are his mother and brother who died and his father and

sister who survived, as well as his wife, Pola, and his two children.

In a story which tells of the monstrous things of which human beings are capable of, this story also tells about two people who acted courageously and morally. Sugihara was the Japanese consul in Kaunas, Lithuania, the town in which Ganor lived. He describes Kaunas as “a bit like some small Eastern European version of Beirut or Casablanca” which had for decades been a favored asylum for all sorts of refugees and where nearly one third of its hundred- thousand residents were Jewish. Ganor first met the man he thanks for helping restore his faith in humanity at his aunt’s store – a store in which she sold imported and gourmet foods. Ganor was only 11 years old, but he immediately recognized Sugihara’s goodness and kindness, something that was to remain with him and feature prominently in his life.

At the meeting at his aunt’s shop he was given Chanukah money. The Japanese Consul asked Solly to consider him as an uncle. Ganor then reciprocated Sugihara’s kindness by inviting him to the family’s Chanukah party. It was the first time Sugihara had visited a Jewish home. Thus began a relationship with the man whose “shining moral example guided me through the darkest years of the Holocaust”. Following this meeting in the winter of 1939, conditions in Kaunas worsened. The Nazi’s took control of more of Europe and with this, increasing numbers of Jews urgently sought transit visas. Sugihara, against orders of the Japanese Government, decided it was his humanitarian duty to issue visas to those whose lives were in danger. He issued thousands of visas to Jewish families seeking asylum from the Nazi regime before moving to a new post in Berlin.

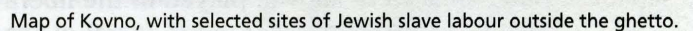
Disgraced for defying the Japanese government’s orders and issuing visas, Sugihara was later recognized for his courageous acts. He was named by Yad Vashem as a “Righteous Among the Nations” in 1985 and later Japan posthumously awarded him the Nagasaki Peace Prize.

Solly Ganor will be the keynote speaker at this year’s Annual High School symposium on the Holocaust.

The exhibition Light One Candle opens in February 2004 at the VHEC.

The Jews of Lithuania suffered some of the most extensive losses of any community in Europe during the Nazi genocide, with over 95% of their population destroyed. Despite the almost complete annihilation of Lithuanian Jewry, a courageous form of Jewish resistance took place in Kovno, one of Lithuania's most prominent cities. During the three years of internment in the Kovno Ghetto, and despite the daily struggle against malnutrition, disease and Nazi oppression, the Jews of Kovno, like those in the Warsaw Ghetto, undertook the perilous task of secretly documenting their experiences. This undertaking was carried out with such devotion, that although Kovno itself lay in utter ruins after the war, the memory of those who had inhabited the ghetto still endures today.

For the Jews, this terrible calamity was only the beginning. On July 10, 1941, the same day the SS decreed that all Jews must wear the Star of David, the remaining 29,000 Jews of Kovno were ordered to resettle into Slobodka, the city's poorest district. The incarceration of the Jews was thus underway and by mid-August, after the resettlement was completed, the Kovno Ghetto was permanently sealed.



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Shortly after the "Great Action" the Jews of the ghetto realized that something needed to be done to prevent the total annihilation of their history. It was decided that all those willing to take the risk would engage in creating extensive secret archives. This served a two-fold purpose: to record the internal history of life in the ghetto and to document Nazi crimes in order that the Nazis could one day be brought to justice. The Aeltestenrat (the Council of Elders that had been mandated by the Germans to run the internal affairs of the ghetto) began to urge writers, artists, and scholars to undertake this assignment. Despite the Aeltestenrat's quandary—having to carry out German orders to subjugate the Jews while at the same time trying to lessen the hardships of life in the ghetto—they devoted an enormous amount of effort towards the gathering of archival material.

Led by Council Chairman Dr. Elkhanan Elkes, writers were asked to keep diaries as eyewitness accounts, artists were commissioned to create portraits of ghetto scenes, and photographers were emboldened to take clandestine pictures. All forms of documentation, including songs and poems, and even things like council meeting minutes and ration coupons, were to be carefully preserved. The Council's Secretariat, Avraham Tory, undertook the ambitious task of obtaining all the ghetto's statutes and decrees and compiling them into a yearbook, the "Slobodka Ghetto 1942." Remarkably, this contained an almost daily record of events in the ghetto in 1942. As the ghetto's chief archivist, Tory also collected a separate compilation of SS orders and entitled them, "And These

are the Laws—German Style." The gathering of such detailed records was carried out at colossal risk to all involved.

As the war began to turn against Germany and the state of the ghetto deteriorated further, the Aeltestenrat made plans to conserve their archives in order to one day have hard proof of the Nazi's atrocities. Tory hid his two major compilations, along with his own personal diaries, in wooden crates. Other artefacts were stashed in metal containers or ceramic jugs and everything that had been painstakingly collected by Kovno's Jews was buried in bunkers or under buildings beneath the ghetto.

By 1944 the German war effort was showing irreversible signs of failure. Thus the process of extinguishing all remaining life in the ghetto and covering up all evidence of war crimes was carried out by the Germans with a great sense of urgency. By July 1944, the last Jews of Kovno, now totalling merely 6100, were transported away from the eastern front. Women were sent to Stutthof concentration camp and men were sent to Dachau. Kovno was now practically devoid of Jewish life, but the Nazis continued their destructiveness, burning down every last building of what had once been the Kovno Ghetto. By the end of July, Kovno lay in ruins.

It is estimated that only 2500 Kovno Jews survived in German concentration camps during the final months, and another few hundred who escaped the ghetto survived in the forests. Tragically, the vast majority of the over 30,000 Jews of Kovno did not survive the Holocaust. Shortly after liberation, a handful of those who had escaped the ghetto returned to what was now a charred landscape in hopes that their archives might have somehow survived the fires. Miraculously, they found that much of the buried archives avoided destruction. These artefacts exist today as a reminder of what was once a thriving Jewish community, and as a testament to the unfailing devotion of the Jews of the ghetto to inform future generations of their fate at the hands of the Nazis.



Members of the Kovno Ghetto's Jewish Council, the Aeltestenrat, 1943. Left to right: Avraham Tory, head of the Secretariat; Lieb Garfunkel, deputy chairman; Dr. Elkhanan Elkes, chairman; Yakov Goldberg, head of the Labour Office; Zvi Levin, an advisor.

"My Camera will be my revenge"

By Marie-Luise Ermisch

Photographs taken during the Holocaust are among the most poignant images that we have of human suffering. These, mostly black and white photographs, have allowed us to imagine the unimaginable, and have significantly shaped the representation of one of the most horrific events in modern history. When viewing these images, we must always ask: Who took the picture and for what purpose? Most were taken by the perpetrators themselves, some by the liberators, and a very few by eyewitnesses of Nazi abuse of the Jews. We have come to know the Holocaust through the body of primary images taken by the Nazis and their collaborators. Yet these images were taken to promote anti-Semitic propaganda, to humiliate the Jews, or as evidence of the success of the Nazi's Final Solution. These images show Jews being rounded up, deported, forced into ghettos, worked to death in concentration camps and "exterminated" as vermin.

Understandably, the rarest photographs are those taken by the victims themselves as the events unfolded. Jewish photographers, mostly in the ghettos or in the forests as partisans, put their own lives at risk to keep a photographic record of the atrocities. Often deprived of the barest fundamentals necessary for a healthy existence, Jewish men and women went to great lengths to obtain the supplies needed to take and develop photographs. As victims of the atrocity themselves, they intimately knew the daily suffering and struggles that Holocaust victims faced. As a result, victim photographers were able to portray the strength and human dignity where the Nazis saw none, adding truth and reality to the distorted representation of the Nazis.

One such photographer was George Kadish. He was born Zvi (Hirsh) Kadushin in Raseiniai, Lithuania, in 1910. He moved to Kovno, Lithuania with his family after attending the local Hebrew school of Raseiniai. He joined the rightist Zionist movement while studying engineering at Kovno's Aleksotas University. Before the war, he enjoyed a



George Kadish in Kovno after liberation.

*I took over a thousand [photographs]...
but not every take was perfect... and I went on
taking those pictures for later. For eternity.*

— George Kadish

teaching career at a local Hebrew high school, teaching mathematics, science, and electronics. His hobby of photography, however, would become the most significant aspect of his life and would come to shape our understanding of the Holocaust, in particular of the Kovno Ghetto.

In 1941 the Germans invaded Lithuania. The lives of the thousands of Jews of Kovno were disrupted as they were forced into the overcrowded Jewish sector of the city. Once sealed, the Jews in the Kovno Ghetto could only leave with the permission of Nazi officials, this permission usually only being granted to those doing forced labor in the city. George Kadish, with his engineering background, was employed by the German forces to



Photos taken through Kadish's buttonhole. Photo: George Kadish

The Children of Willesden Lane, Beyond the Kindertransport: A memoir of music, love, and survival

repair x-ray machines in Kovno. This job enabled him to secretly continue to take photographs in the ghetto because he could barter for film and other photographic supplies while in the city. At the German Military Hospital where he worked he was able to develop his negatives using the same chemicals he used to develop x-ray film. He then smuggled his pictures into the ghetto in hollowed out crutches.

Taking photographs in the ghetto was strictly forbidden by the Nazis, the offence being punishable by death. Yet Kadish went on to take scores of photographs in order to document the inherent dignity of those interned in the ghetto. Ingeniously, Kadish designed and constructed cameras that could be attached to his belt or hidden behind the buttonhole of his jacket to serve his purpose. Carrying his camera everywhere with him, Kadish was always ready to capture authentic images of Jews going about their lives in the ghetto. "In addition to depicting the severe conditions of the ghetto life, he had the insider's eye for portraiture, the desolation of deserted streets, and the intimacy of informal, improvised gatherings." This is demonstrated by his vast array of pictures, which include Jews searching for smuggled food while being abused by German and Lithuanian guards, Jews concentrated in labour brigades, Jews moving their belongings about on sleds and or carts, as well as happier images of children engaged in the ghetto school or orphanages, and adults at work in ghetto workshops and food gardens.

One night in June, 1941, Kadish heard shouting outside his home in the ghetto. When it ceased, he went

downstairs to investigate. There he found his neighbor lying on the floor, bleeding. Weakly stretching out his hand, his neighbor wrote "nekoma", the Yiddish word for revenge, on the floor with his blood. As always, ready with his camera in hand, Kadish was able to document this powerful moment.

Kadish feared the loss of his precious photographic collection. Thus, to help him hide his negatives and prints he obtained the aid of Yehuda Zupowitz, a high-ranking officer in the ghetto's Jewish police. Zupowitz never betrayed any information about Kadish's work or the location of his collection, even when Zupowitz was tortured and killed during the "Police Action" of March 27, 1944. In July, 1944 Kadish successfully escaped the Kovno ghetto. He later returned to photograph the ghetto's liquidation and its ruins once the Germans deserted it, and to retrieve his negatives and photos. After Germany's surrender in 1945, Kadish left Lithuania for Germany. In the American Occupation Zone he exhibited his rare portraits of ghetto life for survivors living in Displaced Persons Camps.

The photographs of the Kovno Ghetto in the exhibit *Light One Candle* were taken by George Kadish. Many of these images were printed directly from Kadish's original 35mm negatives, now housed in the Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles. Kadish died in 1999, in Florida. His photographs are a lasting tribute to the story of the destruction of the Jews of Kovno. By taking these pictures he fulfilled his vow of using his camera as his revenge.



Children playing in the Kovno Ghetto.
Photo: George Kadish



Jews of the Kovno Ghetto moving their belongings about on sleds and carts.
Photo: George Kadish

Ruth's Diary

By Ruth Sigal – Edited by: Lillian Boraks Nemetz



In August of 2003, Ruth Sigal, her husband Cecil, Ruth's brother Leo, his wife Jill, and eight cousins set out on a journey to retrace the Lithuanian roots of their parents and grandparents. They explored various places for clues that would help them better understand their family's history. Ruth kept a diary, and what follows are a few excerpts about her own discoveries on this journey.

Lithuania had 250,000 Jews before the war. Only 30,000 survived. Now there are approximately 3000 Jews in all of Lithuania. Mostly in Vilna, 250 in Shavel, 700 in Kovno.

The countryside is beautiful. Flat, lots of cows grazing, with many storks, forests and apple orchards. It's hard to believe that all these woods were sites of massacres, and that the soil is soaked with Jewish blood.

We visited Shavel where my sister Tamara was born. From there we went to Kujai—the killing fields in the forest near Amalia, where I was in hiding after the Kinder Action, and from where Tamara, my four year old sister, and 823 other Jewish children were gathered, and taken to Auschwitz to be gassed and burned.

I was hidden in Amalia for about one year with the Ragauskies. This place carries a lot of emotion for me. The place and shed are still the same, and the garden is still full of apple trees. But the house had burned down and has been replaced. I felt very alone there while in hiding, but felt safe with the Ragauskies.

We arrived in Kovno and proceeded to the Fort IX. Thirty thousand Jews were murdered there in plain view of the local Lithuanians. It used to be an old fort for prisoners, now it contains many exhibits including the one on Diplomat rescuer, Chuine Sugihara. The Russians erected a huge monument here in honor of the dead.

The next day we went to see Slobodka—the ghetto in Kovno. We visited the Slobodka Yeshiva, where in June 1941, 15,000 Yeshiva students and their teachers were shot in cold blood, and humiliated further by having water hoses placed in their mouths and anuses and filled with water until they exploded their insides. How evil and sadis-

tic. The civilian Lithuanians did all the murdering on the command of the Germans.

We found an old lady who was an eyewitness to the murders. She was fifteen years old when she and her sister witnessed what happened. Our guide, Regina, bought the old lady a book about the Kovno Ghetto, and my cousin Judy asked her to tell the children and grand children what they had witnessed. It was horrible to hear her account, but good that the witnesses, especially the non-Jews, are beginning to speak about the atrocities.

Next we went to visit the hospital, "Levitans" Clinic, where I was born. We visited the synagogues in Kovno and were greeted by some members of the Jewish community. We saw the memorial for the murdered children, those who God didn't help.

Once there were more than thirty synagogues in Kovno. All but the one we visited were destroyed. The one we visited only survived because the Germans used it as a sorting place for stolen Jewish goods. The original owners were sent to the Fort IX, to die.

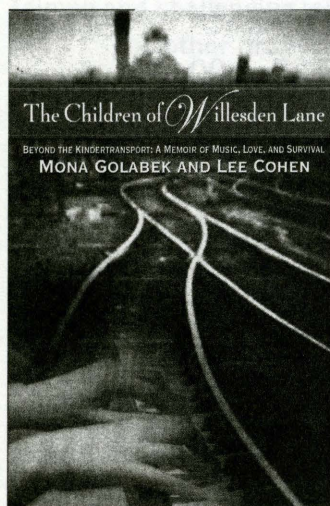
Afterwards we went to Garliava, a small town, with a church and a restaurant. Very little was left of the once thriving Jewish life. Regina stopped an old man who remembered those years. This man saw a group of naked women being marched to their death under machine guns. "They never returned," he said. We decided to follow the route of these doomed women. A girl on a bicycle showed us the way to the killing fields ravine. The weather, hot and sunny up to then, changed at this moment, and the rain and wind came.

So ended a great adventure shared by the twelve of us. The trip brought us closer to each other, and provided us with a deeper understanding of who we were, and who our parents were. I felt much more integrated and more whole—than ever, after this journey of discovery.



The Children of Willesden Lane, Beyond the Kindertransport: A memoir of Music, Love and Survival

By Mona Golabek & Lee Cohen – Review by: Irene W. Watts



Mona Golabek, herself a concert pianist of note, has written a tender memoir of her mother Lisa Jura Golabek's life from the age of fourteen to twenty-one.

Lisa was already known as a musical prodigy in her native Vienna, her talent inherited from her mother Malka. "Make something of yourself" Malka told her daughter, and Lisa listened.

The Vienna, of music lessons, Friday night Sabbath dinners where anyone was welcome, of walks, waltzes and dreams, ended abruptly when the Nazis occupied the country in 1938. Kristallnacht confirmed everyone's worst fears.

Lisa's sister Rosie, at eighteen, was too old for the rescue trains that spirited Jewish children to Britain and safety. Twelve-year-old Sonia would go when a sponsor could be found for her. Lisa would go to her first cousins.

Malta's final words to Lisa were, "Your music will carry you through."

And so Lisa departs for England. On her arrival, the cousins who were supposed to take her in, greet her with an apology, they have no room for her.

The homesick, bewildered adolescent is sent to a makeshift former holiday camp, Dovercourt, where in the freezing temperatures, the children wait to be fostered or employed. Lisa is hired as a maid in a well to do home, and is treated with kindness, but determined to make something more of her life, cycles from Brighton to London and begs Mr. Hardisty at Bloomsbury House to find her something in London. She implores him to try and find a sponsor for her little sister, before time runs out. In this she is successful and Sonia is fostered in a good home

outside London.

Lisa is sent to a hostel run by a formidable 'Austrian' refugee with a heart of gold. She and Mrs. Glazer, the Czechoslovakian cook, make a home for some thirty-two young Jewish refugees.

Lisa bonds closely with a small group of boys and girls, who support and help each other through the difficult six years of war ahead.

When Lisa discovers a Bechstein piano in the hostel basement it becomes the center of her life, giving her and all who listen to her consolation. Just as her piano playing nourished her Viennese neighborhood, now it consoles her neighbors at war and under the siege of daily and nightly air raids by the Luftwaffe.

Lisa auditions for the Royal Academy of Music, and is accepted, winning a scholarship and eventually making her triumphant debut at the prestigious Wigmore Hall. At the end of the war she is happily reunited with her oldest sister, though like many, many Kindertransport, she had lost her parents.

Mona Golabek has written a moving account of a gifted adolescent on her own in a foreign land. Yet not alone, for the children of Willesden Lane and the people who support them become a new and loving family. The book makes each of the young people, with their strengths and problems, come alive for the reader.

Golabek ably captures the spirit of the times, both in Vienna and in Blitz besieged London. This is a recognizable world for those of us who lived through similar experiences, and a fascinating account of youthful resilience, talent and compassion in times of war, for those who did not.

The Children of Willesden Lane is a welcome addition to the many Kindertransport memoirs available. It would be particular interest to readers of fourteen and up.

Reviewed by Irene W. Watts, whose anthology "Tapestry of Hope" Holocaust Writing for Young People co-edited with Lillian Boraks Nemetz, Tundra Books, was published 2003.

The Child Survivor Page – "No Longer Alone" welcomes submissions from Child Survivors.

Send submissions to the Editorial Committee: Lillian Boraks Nemetz c/o VHEC, 50 – 950 W. 41st Ave, Vancouver, BC V5Z 2N7

The Trials of John Demjanjuk: A Holocaust Cabaret

Is part of CHUTZPAH! The Lisa Nemetz Showcase of Jewish Performing Arts

Sunday, February 22nd, 3:00 pm

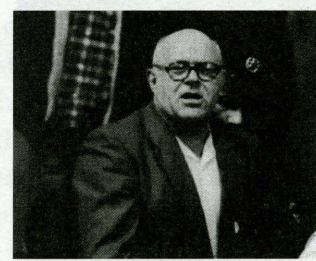
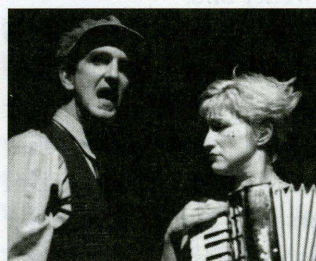
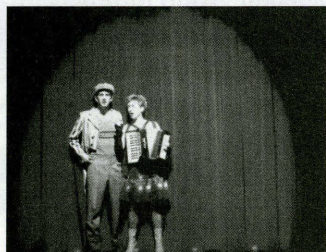
Reception and discussion to follow in the VHEC

Tuesday, February 24, 8:00 pm

Wednesday, February 25, 8:00 pm

All showings in the Norman Rothstein Theatre, Tickets are \$18 available through Chutzpah Box Office, Call 604.257.5145

Generously Sponsored by The Canada Council for the Arts in Association with The Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre



The Trials of John Demjanjuk: A Controversial Holocaust Cabaret

By Jonathan Garfinkel

I was asked to write about the potential controversial nature of my play, *The Trails of John Demjanjuk: A Holocaust Cabaret*. I have always felt that the only controversial aspect of this play is that it's provocative in that it explores a very difficult and complicated trial, from unusual, and challenging angles. The actual trial of John Demjanjuk was anything but a simple, open-shut affair, as was originally thought by the OSI in 1978, and my play attempts to express that. The twists and turns in the case are enough to fill an 800 page novel, let alone a 90 minute play. Conspiracy theories, "absolutely certain evidence" later found to be false, a Jewish lawyer defending an accused Nazi, and Ivan the Terrible of Treblinka, an almost mythical genocidal maniac—the characters and the stories are epic and, by their nature, theatrical. As a writer, and a Jew, interested in the affects of the Holocaust in the years after the fact, this is material that resonates with profound themes and questions on the nature of guilt, memory and retribution.

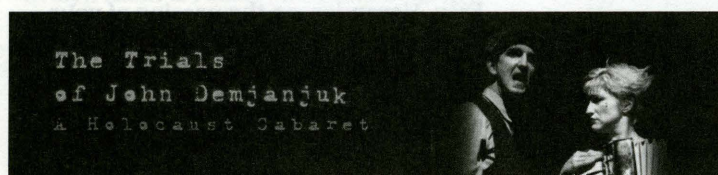
There are several elements of the *The Trials* that make the piece 'provocative'. First is the very form of the piece: the Cabaret. Jennifer Herszman Capraru, the director and dramaturge of *The Trials* since its inception, originally proposed a cabaret form when I was attempting to turn a poem about the Demjanjuk trial into a play. I immediately was attracted to the idea and went full-throttle ahead. I started to write songs to tell the narrative, which

then freed me up to present the scenes in a variety of voices: courtroom naturalism, absurdist comedic sketches, and surreal visitations in the cell of John Demjanjuk by his conscience, in the guise of Ivan the Terrible. It is the Cabaret form that holds these strands all together, which is one reason why I like this form. Another reason I am so attracted to the Cabaret style is that it is a powerful metaphor for the Demjanjuk trial itself. This was the first televised trial in Israel, and the courtroom was placed in a former theatre. There was also the accusation by the defending lawyer, Yoram Sheftel, that the Demjanjuk trial was a show-trial for the Jewish people. Although I don't completely agree with Sheftel's assertion— it is typically, in his way of speaking, an over-the-top, exaggerated claim— one cannot escape the very public and hence theatrical nature of this trial. The Cabaret plays into this exaggeration, into the trial's complexities, which at times resemble carnival, spectacle. But the Cabaret form also provides a distancing affect that allows the audience to listen to material that is otherwise too much to listen to. There is an element of unreality to the Holocaust for someone like myself who was not there: how could such horrible events have happened? And how do we talk about them? The songs, especially, allow us to do that, in a non-sentimental, and engaging way. In past productions, the music engages people, and makes them even laugh, without giving short shrift to the historical facts. In the

end, the Cabaret is used to fulfill what it was originally intended for: social commentary and satire, in an entertaining and challenging way.

The other provocative element of the piece is that the story is John Demjanjuk's story. He is the central character of the play, and is portrayed humanely, and at times, sympathetically. One of my fascinations has always been the question of what went on in the mind of John. This has been one of the great challenges in writing this play. If he was guilty of being Ivan: how could he have been such a kind and loving family man in suburban Cleveland? If he was not guilty: how did he endure the years of the trial? The pressures, the solitude? Or: if he was guilty of something, but not what he was accused of: what is the truth of what he did? *The Trials* explores these questions. It presents the facts, and the audience is the judge. In the end, though, what interests me is not whether John was Ivan or not, but that John was capable of being an Ivan: my goal is to make the Holocaust human, as it were. To call the perpetrator a monster, is only half a truth. That the perpetrator can be both man and raging beast, is what truly horrifies us, and begs the question: how is any human being capable of becoming a monster, such as Ivan the Terrible of Treblinka? How is anyone capable of this kind of killing? That John is a simple, immigrant, is ideal, from an author's perspective. That we might be able to identify with him, and even feel sorry for him, as a victim of the forces of history, and his own decisions, is my goal.

The Shoah was a catastrophic event whose tremors are still being felt today. It is, as Elie Wiesel reminds us, vital to our memory as a people. It affected all peoples of Central and Eastern Europe: Jews, Ukrainians, Poles, and Germans alike. *The Trials* is about the devastating affects it has had on these people, and the monstrous shadows that linger in Israel today. I urge you to come out and see this work. *The Trials* is not meant to be an answer, but a series of questions. For in the end, theatre is about challenging our ideas of what we believe to be true, in an attempt to understand the world, and live more humanely.



A Special Thank you to VHEC Volunteers

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Donations in Kind

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September 12 – December 23, 2003

☞ New Year ☞

Herschel Weintraub, have a happy & sweet New Year. Arthur & Rose Chinkis

Maya Weintraub, have a happy & sweet New Year. Arthur & Rose Chinkis

Jena Tova Weintraub, have a happy & sweet New Year. Arthur & Rose Chinkis

☞ Mazel Tov ☞

Joseph Achsen, Happy Birthday!
George & Frieda Wertman

Lola Apfelbaum, on being awarded the special Multicultural Award. Ellen Yackness, the VHEC Board & Staff, Robbie & Gloria Waisman, Gloria, Gerri, & the Survivor Drop-In Group

Ms. Pamela Fayerman – Congratulations on winning the Fellowship in Medical Journalism. Jody & Harvey Dales

Bill Gluck, congratulations on the birth of your Granddaughter!
The VHEC Board & Staff

Frances Hoyd, Happy Birthday! The Geshner Group, Gisi Levitt, Annica Hyman & Gerri London, Bert Argossy

Nomi Kaplan, In honor of your 70th Birthday. Ruth & Cecil Sigal

Lyuba & Layzer Klot, on the birth of your 1st grandchild, Brando-Alexander.
Vulf & Maya Sternin

Robert & Marilyn Krell, on the birth of your Granddaughter, Mattea. Geoffrey Druker, Elayne & Howard Shapray, Barry Dunner & Family, Ben & Rita Akselrod, Lucien & Carole Lieberman, The Younger Zayda & Safta Romalis, Karen & Gary Simkin, The Vancouver Child Survivor Group, Alex & Colette Buckman, The VHEC Board & Staff

Emmy Krell, on the Birth of your Great Granddaughter! Karl & Sabina Choit.

Lucien Lieberman, on your 35th wedding anniversary. The VHEC Board & Staff

Ken & Leah Levitt, on the birth of your Granddaughter! Susan & Joe Stein & Family

Herb Loomer, happy 70th Birthday.
Ruth & Cecil Sigal

Max Meyer, the book, *In My Brother's Image* by Eugene L. Pogany, has been donated in your honour. Lucien Lieberman

Mr. H. Nortman, happy 80th birthday.
Lola & Vover Mendelson, Shoshana & Moshe Fidelman

Sally Rogow, on the publication of your book! The VHEC The Board & Staff

Joy & Andy Rosengarten, in honour of the upcoming wedding! Shoshana & Moshe Fidelman

Olga Schwartz, in honor of our dear friend Olga's 90th Birthday. Rosa & Elie Ferera, Veronica, Miriam & Daniella Winkler

Aaron Szajman, Happy Special Birthday. Abe & Goldie Miedzygorski & Family, David Feldman, Izzy, Murray & Jeff Fraeme

Stan Taviss, Happy Birthday! Heather & Ben Baker (plus one), The VHEC Board & Staff

Robbie & Gloria Waisman, congratulations on the Birth of your Granddaughter! Dr. Graham Forst

Joseph Wall, on the occasion of your 90th Birthday. Geri, Mel, Lisa, Ryan, & Gabriel Davis, Bernie & Lisa Conn, Craig & Beth Marshall, Jeff Davis & Linda Goodwin Davis, Dr. Graham Forst, Dora & Chuck Davis, Robert & Marilyn Krell

Elizabeth Wolak, on your Special Birthday! Susan & Joe Stein

Anne & Yudel Ziskind, on the birth of your Grandson Noah. Vulf & Maya Sternin

☞ Get Well ☞

Mrs. Lili Folk, we were pleased to hear that everything went well. Sherie, Odie, & Jordan Kaplan

Miriam Davidowicz, wishing you a quick recovery. Holocaust Survivor Visiting Program Group

Rose Lewin, glad you are feeling better. Sherie, Odie, & Jordan Kaplan

Freda Feldstein, wishing you a speedy recovery. Susan & Joe Stein

Mrs. Lili Folk, on the occasion of your successful surgery and on having your sight back. Izzy Fraeme

Leah Fox, best wishes for an easy and speedy recovery. Gerri & Mark London

Max Fugman, our best wishes for a complete and full recovery. David, Cathy, Tyler, & Shane Golden

Celia Margolis, wishing you a speedy and full recovery. Al Szajman

Lola & William Mendelson. Get well Lola & best wishes for a Happy New Year to you both! Shoshana Fidelman

Julie Shatsky, thinking of you at this time. Estika Hunning & Family

Cecille Shtabsky, wishing you a full and speedy recovery! Hymie, Rome, Aylee, Danya, & Aiden Fox

☞ Sympathy ☞

Hector & Balinsky Families, in memory of Lorna Balinsky. Richard & Jocy Lowy, Gary & Tamar Lowy & Family.

Claire Ahren & Family, on the loss of your husband, father and grandfather. Henia & Jack Perel & Family

Fran Alexander, on the passing of your beloved mom. Catherine, Michael, David, Alexander & Johanna Epstein
Lynn Altman, on the loss of your beloved mother. Ida Kaplan

Roberta Beiser, in memory of your dear mother, Edith Lando. Ruth & Cecil Sigal, Lillian Nemetz

Norman Gladstone & Birgit Westergaard, in memory of your father & grandfather. The VHEC Board & Staff

Esther Brandt & Family, on the loss of your beloved Larry; husband, father, & grandfather. Evelyn Kahn, Abbe Chivers, Celia & Irvin Lerner, Cathy & David Golden & Family, Gary & Tamar Lowy & Family, Richard & Jocy Lowy, Cookie Mackoff, Claire Osipov & Family, Izzy Fraeme, Susy & Chaim Micner, Philip & Aileen Monheit, Harry & Resia Norman

Toby & Ron Brandt, With heartfelt sympathy on the loss of your beloved father and grandfather, Glenda & Jerry Klayman

Rochelle Brown, in loving memory of your beloved father Larry. Izzy Fraeme

Dr. J. Hofbauer, Dr. L. Fox, Claire, & Alexander, on the loss of your beloved mother & father, grandmother & grandfather. Jenny & Jack Rootman & Family

Gerri & Mark London & Family, on the loss of your mother, Bess. Robbie & Gloria Waisman & Family, Lola Apfelbaum, Celina Lieberman, Ida, Sherie, & Odie Kaplan, David & Cathy Golden & Family, Karen & Gary Simkin, Barbara & Herb Silber

The Polsky Family, in loving memory of your father & grandfather. Gila & Doug Wertheimer

David Freedman, on the loss of your grandfather, Myer. Susan & Joe Stein

Susan Hector, on the passing of your mother, Lorna Balinsky. Gloria, Robbie, & Howie Waisman.

Evelyn Kahn & Family, we think of Leon often and know his memory will live on in many hearts. Jean & Harvey Gerber Joseph Kahn – Tietz & Family, in memory of your father & grandfather. Jean & Harvey Gerber

Anne Krauss, on the passing of your husband Jack. George & Frieda Wertman

Sheila Larsen, in memory of Dr. Harold Spiro. Robbie & Gloria Waisman

Alan LeFevre, on the loss of your mother. The Second Generation Group

Errol Lipschitz & Family, in memory of your father. Rosa & Elie Ferera

Max Meyer, in memory of Paul Meyer. Frieda Ullman, Ellen Yackness, Lucien & Carole Lieberman

Sheryl Morris, in memory of your beloved grandmother, Ruth. Susan & Joe Stein & Family

Mr. & Mrs. H. Morris, on the loss of your dear mother, Ruth. Grace & David Ehrlich

Judy Pace, in memory of your dear mother, Elsie Klau. Ruth Sigal

Harry & Carol Segal, in memory of Lil Segal. The Snider Family

George Steiner & Family, in memory of your mother, grandmother, & great grandmother, Mary. Ruth & Cecil Sigal, Edwina & Paul Heller

Blanche Tlumack, on the loss of your sister. Henia & Jack Perel & Family.

Peter Uram, in memory of your uncle. Carol & Leiren Hall

Sari Weintraub, on the loss of your dear mother. Sheryl & Saul Kahn, Izzy Fraeme

Barbara Wohl, in memory of Meyer Irwin Wohl. Fraser and Company. Teddy & Linda Zacks, Odie Kaplan

☾ In Appreciation ☾

Lola Apfelbaum, wishing you a year as sweet as your baking. Frieda & Roberta at the VHEC

Sheila Barkusky, for all of your hard work & dedication in translating my father's memoirs. Avi & Ellen Bick

Alex Buckman, with appreciation. Chartwell Elementary School, Upper Lynn Elementary School

Mariette Doduck, with appreciation. Crofton House Elementary School

Sandy Karmel & Gabriel Garfinkel, A donation has been made to *The Anne Frank Project* in your honor. Hana & Mordehai Wosk

Marla Morry, for all your help. Frieda Ullman

Peter Parker, with appreciation. Coquitlam Alternative Basic Education

Mrs. Sally Rogow, for your generous donation of copies of your book, *Faces of Courage*. The VHEC Board & Staff

David Schaffer, for all of your hard work & dedication in translating my father's memoirs. Avi & Ellen Bick

Ms. Vera Slymovics, for sharing your memories with us. Beth Israel Alumni Morasha Group

Mrs. Bronia Sonnenschein, with appreciation. Port Moody Secondary School

Robbie Waisman, with appreciation. Timothy Christian School

Gerry Zipursky & Zev Shafran, for the beautiful fruit basket! Happy New Year. The VHEC Board and Staff

Donations received after December 23, 2003 will appear in the next issue of *Zachor*

Too Close to Home:

Anti-Semitism & Fascism in Canada

1930s & 1940s



A Discovery Kit

By Frieda Miller

Jews found themselves marginalized socially, economically and politically in Canada during the 1930s and 1940s. The majority of Canadians, not just the radical few, believed that Canada was and should be a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant country. Fascist and other extremist groups called for the boycott of Jewish businesses. Jews found themselves barred from many public places like hotels, beaches and parks, some schools, hospitals and businesses had policies of not hiring Jews and some universities established quotas for Jews. Anti-Semitism also had a direct impact on Canada's immigration policies with consequences that were felt beyond Canada's borders at a crucial point in history. Just as European Jews were trying to flee Nazi Germany and Austria, they found Canada's doors closed to them.

This history and the related issues of Anti-Semitism, Nazism, Fascism, immigration and propaganda are particularly relevant for grade 11 Social Studies and History 12 classrooms. Teachers who brought their classes to the exhibit *Too Close To Home* in 2001 were clearly enthusiastic about the topic and wanted copies of the exhibit and school program materials. To meet this need for curricular support materials, this discovery kit was launched in January 2004.

What better way to understand the social anti-Semitism of the times than for students to be able to examine a sign that says "NOTICE Jews are not wanted here in Ste. Agathe, so scram while the going is good"? What better way to understand the extent to which Fascism and Nazism permeated the Canadian landscape, than to be able to study a photograph of Nazi uniforms being manufactured in Montreal in 1938. Similarly, what better way to understand Canada's restrictive immigration policies than to read first-hand from a letter written by the Director of Immigration, F.C. Blair - "I often think that instead of persecution it would be far better if we more often told them (Jews) frankly why many of them are unpopular. If they would divest themselves of certain of their habits I am sure they would be just as popular in Canada as our Scandinavians."

Together, the 40 artefacts paint a vivid picture of the socio-political climate of the times. A study guide included in the kit provides students with background readings, discussion questions and extension activities. The kit was produced with support from *The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany Inc. Rabbi Israel Miller Fund for Shoah Research, Documentation and Education*, and Susan Quastel. It is available from the VHEC for \$20.

