

## Quarterly Newsletter - April 2015



Dear Reader

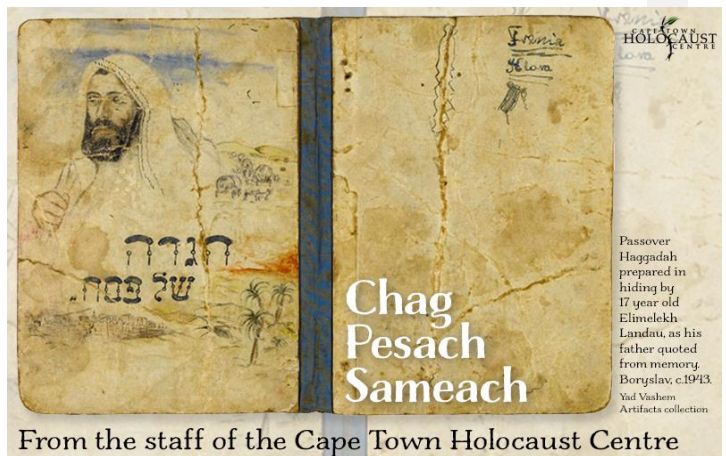
This year marks the 70th anniversary of the end of the World War II and thus the liberation of the camps. As the Jewish Festival of Passover approaches there is an obligation to grapple with the concept of freedom or liberation and exactly what that means to a person living in the 21st century. For the remnant of survivors who we are blessed to have with us, the day of liberation evoked varied responses. For some it indeed meant the beginnings of a new life, almost like a second birthday, yet for others it was the first time that they really had to confront the enormous loss of family, livelihood, childhood and all that the life before the war represented of home and hearth.

Over the last few months our activities have focused on this theme of confrontation with the past, both in terms of our new travelling exhibition which looks at Germany facing its dark past, and in terms of the many lectures, films and other public events which have taken place – attracting close to three thousand visitors and participants. I would like to thank our education team, coordinated by Linda Hackner, for the extraordinary work they have been doing with school and adult groups, as well as the admin staff who have worked tirelessly to facilitate the many public events and to ensure that the experience for everyone has been meaningful and professional.

As you may know the Cape Town Holocaust Centre is the repository of an invaluable collection of documents and artefacts. The archive is a key function of the organisation. We have signed a memorandum of understanding with UCT to house this collection in their special collections archive where they will be preserved and maintained and available to research. This massive programme has been ably coordinated by Michal Singer. We are most grateful to the many Capetonians who have handed over to us their precious family documents which connect to Holocaust history in some way.

The Cape Town Holocaust Centre together with our sister centres in Durban and Johannesburg, form the South African Holocaust & Genocide Foundation, which has as its vision a more caring and just society in which human rights and diversity are respected and valued. Ultimately that is the meaning of true liberation. I take this opportunity of wishing all our Jewish supporters and friends *Chag Pesach Sameach* and to those who celebrate Easter, a happy and meaningful festival.

Richard Freedman  
Director



From the staff of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre



#### NEW CHAIRMAN FOR SAHGF

Gerald Diamond has been appointed chairman of the Board of Trustees of the South African Holocaust & Genocide Foundation (SAHGF), the umbrella body for the Cape Town Holocaust Centre and the Holocaust Centres in Durban and Johannesburg. He has been a trustee of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre since 2003.

Gerald has a long history of service in the Jewish community and has held numerous honorary public, community and charitable positions over the years. He is chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Community Trusts which oversee the UJC (IUA, UCF & Welfare Campaigns).

Gerald is proud to have been appointed chairman of the SAHGF, and hopes to carry on the good work undertaken by his predecessors.



#### INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLING EXHIBITION COMES TO CAPE TOWN

The year got off to a busy start at the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, with the launch of the international travelling exhibition *Germany's Confrontation with the Holocaust in a Global Context*. The exhibition is the result of a project led by Professor Stuart Taberner and his team at University of Leeds (UK), and developed with various partners, including the National Holocaust Centre (UK), the South African Holocaust & Genocide Foundation and the University of the Free State. The exhibition panels were designed by Linda Bester.

The exhibition investigates how Germany has come to terms with its past, and explores how other countries with a 'dark heritage' can do the same. The focus is first the responses of post-war Germans to the crimes committed in their name: responses of silence, outrage, reconciliation and memorialisation. Towards the end of the exhibition, Germans' efforts to face up to their nation's past are placed in a global context, alongside other countries whose 'difficult pasts' – and present – may still be unresolved.



The launch was held on 27 January 2015, the United Nations International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust – marking the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1945. The exhibition was launched simultaneously at the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, the National Holocaust Centre in Nottingham, and in Yorkshire, where it has travelled to Leeds University, Nottingham Trent University and Tile Hill Wood School & Language College, among other locations.



Professor Taberner presented the keynote address at the Cape Town ceremony, and we were honoured to have survivors from the local community attend the event, as well as British Consul General Mr Chris Trott and German Consul General Dr Bernd Rinnert. Meanwhile, CTHC archivist and educator Michal Singer represented the South African Holocaust & Genocide Foundation at the UK launch, which was held in conjunction with an international conference hosted by Leeds University entitled *Transnational Holocaust Memory*.

(Pictured here with Victoria Nesfield, University of Leeds)

For almost three months, the exhibition has been an exciting feature at the Centre, for both the public and the school groups that visit on educational programmes. Throughout 2015 and 2016 it will be on display in various schools and universities in the UK. In South Africa, the exhibition will next open at the Durban Holocaust Centre on Yom Ha'Shoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day, 16 April 2015), and then travel to the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre later in the year.



Prof. Stuart Taberner discusses the exhibition panels with volunteer educators at the CTHC



Delegates from the German Bundestag (National Parliament of Germany) visit the exhibition




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## A CALENDAR FULL OF EVENTS

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### 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Events

2015 marks 70 years since the end of World War II, and the liberation of the death camps in Nazi-occupied Europe. The Centre has hosted a number of public lectures and screenings this year in commemoration of this important anniversary.

*See Events on next page.*





**Ceremony for United Nations Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust**  
Keynote address by Professor Stuart Taberner, University of Leeds, UK



***Liberated but Not Free: 70 Years since the Liberation of Auschwitz***  
Yiftach Ashkenazy, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem  
In partnership with the Embassy of Israel in South Africa



***Karski & the Lords of Humanity (Screening)***  
Filmmakers: Slawomir Grünberg and Katke Reszke (pictured with Miriam Lichterman & Ella Blumenthal)  
In partnership with the Embassy of Poland



***I was a Boy in Belsen***  
A talk by Tomi Reichental (Survivor)  
In partnership with the Jewish Women's Benevolent Society & the Nashua Children's Charity Foundation.



***Voices of Auschwitz***  
Documentary with Wolf Blitzer and Steven Spielberg  
Through the generosity of CNN



***Kinderblock 66: Return to Buchenwald***  
Address by Mr Patrick Kawuma Male, Head of Office for UNHCR.  
Through the generosity of UNIC South Africa

We received wonderful feedback from these events and due to popular demand, we will be showing *Kinderblock 66* again on **Monday 20 April at 6pm**. See *Upcoming Events* for further details.



## MEMORIES OF THE BERGEN-BELSEN LIBERATION

Members of the press were invited to meet visitor to Cape Town Mr Leonard Berney, who was one of the British officers who liberated the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in April 1945. Mr Berney shared his memories of the horrors he saw, and noted the importance of preventing dictatorships and of being vigilant in the face of prejudice.

Mr Berney (left) is pictured with Mr Richard Freedman, Director of the SA Holocaust & Genocide Foundation (SAHGF)



## HIGH TEA AT THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER'S RESIDENCE

The British Consul General Chris Trott hosted a reception to mark the end of the United Kingdom's Chairmanship of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). The tea was attended by (among others) German Consul General Dr Bernd Rinnert, some of our survivors living in Cape Town and staff from the Cape Town Holocaust Centre.

*"It has been a humbling experience to hear from you, the survivors, first-hand how you struggled through those years, and rebuilt your lives in this country afterwards... We see our efforts to understand, commemorate and teach the Holocaust as part of the global effort to prevent future genocides."* - British Consul General Chris Trott



## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

This term, over **1100 learners from 20 high schools** across the greater Cape Town area were able to engage with the international travelling exhibition *Germany's Confrontation with the Holocaust in a Global Context* when they visited the Centre on educational school programmes.

After a guided tour through both the permanent and temporary exhibits, learners participated in a workshop about Germany's confrontation with its past - specifically through memorialisation - and were able to discuss the relevance of this in the new South Africa.



"The most important thing I learnt today is that we are all human and that colour, race, culture, blood does not make us any less human or superior." – Grade 9 learner, Sans Souci High School



"[Learning about] the Holocaust can change the way people behave towards others because I've seen how far we've come since that time. It makes me appreciate the freedom we have." – Grade 9 learner, Meridian Pinehurst



"It makes me reflect on the way Germany is reconciling and that South Africa can also do that. We don't have to forget but we must reflect." – Grade 9 learner, St Cyprian's School



"My understanding of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust has become clearer. I would like to come again and bring my parents with me." – Grade 9 learner, Deutsche Schule



Grade 9 learners from Herzlia Middle School listen to survivor Ella Blumenthal as she recounts her war-time experiences.

April 2015 marks 70 years since Ella was liberated from Bergen-Belsen by the British army.

In addition to high school visits, the education team ran educational programmes for tertiary institutions such as UCT, CPUT and UWC, and for young adults from the Raymond Ackerman Academy of Entrepreneurial Development. A highlight was facilitating a workshop for the cast and crew of *Cabaret* as they prepared for their run of the pre WW II-themed musical at the Fugard Theatre.



"Today I'm going home with a lot of questions, mostly to myself and the role I have to play in making sure that reconciliation is merging between now and then."  
– Student, Raymond Ackerman Academy



"Enlightening, profound, necessary, intense, insightful, horrifying, painful, historically devastating."  
– *Cabaret* cast member



#### EDUCATOR WORKSHOP: TEACHING THE HOLOCAUST

The South African Holocaust & Genocide Foundation, in partnership with the Mpumalanga Education Department (Loskop), conducted three half-day workshops for 55 Grade 9 Social Science (History) educators, entitled 'Teaching the Holocaust'. The workshops, facilitated by CTHC educators Linda Hackner and Lesley Cushman, aimed to create an opportunity for educators to gain a broad understanding of the Holocaust, as well as to provide content and methodological support for the teaching of Holocaust history in line with the Grade 9 History CAPS requirements. Each participant received the SAHGF Educator's Resource Pack *The Holocaust: Lessons for Humanity*. Participants found the workshops to be of enormous benefit to them, and many commented on how they were looking forward to using these new insights and methodologies in their own classrooms.



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## WHITE ROSE ART & WRITING PROJECT 2015

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### Cape Town Holocaust Centre's The White Rose Art & Writing Project

The Cape Town Holocaust Centre is delighted to invite **all Grade 9-12** learners to contribute to The White Rose Art & Writing Project 2015.

This year's theme is

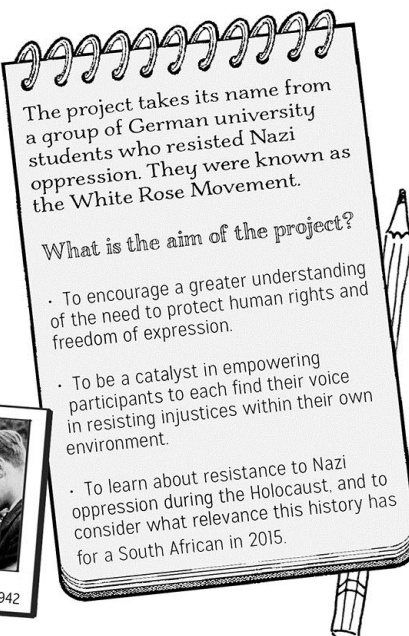
**Freedom of Expression:**  
*The role of art & writing  
in resisting injustice*

Closing date: **Thursday  
30 July 2015.**

**Fantastic prizes  
to be won!**



Members of the White Rose: Hans & Sophie Scholl and Christoph Probst, 1942



We look forward to receiving your essays, stories, poems, songs and artwork!  
For further information, and to download the entry pack, visit our [www.holocaust.org.za](http://www.holocaust.org.za).

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## NEW FACES AT THE CENTRE

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**We extend a warm welcome to Lesley Cushman. Lesley has been employed as an educator in the Cape Town Holocaust Centre education department.**

*Lesley writes:* "I trained as an English and Drama teacher but branched out, over the years, to teach History too. Thirteen of my thirty-five years in teaching were spent in teacher training as a language and literature education specialist. I've taught high school, college and university, in both state and independent institutions. Besides the learning opportunities afforded me in my professional and family life, my work in anti-Apartheid organisations made it possible to acquire insights and skills I could not have gained anywhere else."

**We wish Lesley a long and fulfilling association with the Centre.**



**We have been lucky to have five fantastic interns in the office this quarter.  
Thank you to each one of you for your wonderful contribution to the organisation!**



**Dmitri Abrahams**

Dmitri, a history honours graduate, will be working as an archival assistant at the Centre. "My first visit to the Cape Town Holocaust Centre had a great impact on me," he says. "I wanted to work here to be a part of an institution which seeks to educate people, promote and protect human rights as well as fight against injustice."



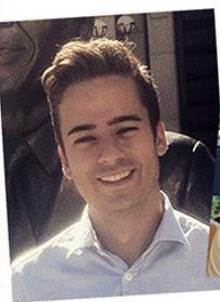
**Daniela Wegrostek**

Daniela interned in our education department where she was responsible for running the school programme on the travelling exhibition Germany's Confrontation with the Holocaust in a Global Context. She will next assist the Durban Holocaust Centre when the exhibition opens there in mid-April.



**Alona Timkaeva**

Alona is a student from Germany, assisting at the Centre with archival research, testimony and translation. Alona says, "I decided to do my internship at the Cape Town Holocaust Centre because I think that educating people about the Holocaust and the negative consequences of discrimination is very important."



**Mackenzie Nugent**

Mackenzie is visiting from Canada. "Studying politics and history at university, I've had a strong interest in world history and how it relates to modern times," he says. "In that light, I'm continually impressed with the ability of the CTHC to transform the horrors of the Holocaust into lessons for today's youth, decades later, across the globe."



**Michael Lurie**

Michael is interning in the archival department after completing his BA Honours in History at UCT. Michael says, "My internship at the Centre has proven to be both an enlightening and emotional experience, giving me new insights into the archiving process and the very real 'human character' of history."

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## SAHGF HERITAGE PROJECT

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### PUBLIC LECTURE ON THE SAHGF ARCHIVE

CTHC archivist Michal Singer gave a captivating lecture at the Centre, entitled *South Africa: An unlikely site for archiving the Holocaust*. Michal showcased the wealth of artefacts that have amassed at the Centre over the years, and gave the audience fascinating insights into how these items shed light on new and unexpected representations of the South African experience of the Holocaust.



The lecture was in memory of Mr Julian Schragenheim, who passed away this month. Mr Schragenheim donated to the CTHC a large collection of family documents and ephemera related to the history of German Jewry, some of which now form a display in our permanent exhibit.

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## WORKSHOPS & MEETINGS

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### HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

The CTHC, in partnership with Limmud SA, hosted a discussion with Clive Lawton for our education staff and volunteer guides. Clive, who was instrumental in having Holocaust Education added to the UK national schools curriculum in the 1980s, spoke to the participants about different teaching methods and the challenges educators may face when teaching the Holocaust.



### WESTERN CAPE MUSEUM EDUCATORS' FORUM

A quarterly meeting of the Western Cape Educator's Forum (WCME) was held at the Centre. Representatives from Robben Island Museum and Chavonnes Battery Museum joined the CTHC staff in engaging with the travelling exhibit *Germany's Confrontation with the Holocaust in a Global Context* and exploring its relevance in museum education in South Africa.

## VOLUNTEER WORKSHOPS AT THE CAPE TOWN HOLOCAUST CENTRE



Two successful volunteer workshops were run at the Centre this quarter. The first was an in-depth training programme for new volunteer educators, who will guide high school learners through the permanent exhibition on their visits to the CTHC.

The second was a workshop for our invaluable front desk volunteers, many of whom have been assisting at the Centre since it opened its doors fifteen years ago!



***Thank you to all our volunteers for your ongoing commitment and dedication to the organisation. We couldn't do it without you!***

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer guide for high school learners, please contact

Linda: [linda@holocaust.org.za](mailto:linda@holocaust.org.za).

If you are interested in becoming a front-desk volunteer, please contact Diana: [diana@holocaust.org.za](mailto:diana@holocaust.org.za).



We asked our Front Desk Volunteers:  
**"What keeps you coming back?"**



"I find it most interesting and learn so much."

"The Centre does sterling work in the community, and educates children."

*"Never to forget."*

"To learn more and have extra knowledge."

*"It's a worthy cause and close to my heart."*

"I enjoy meeting people from different spheres. And to be part of the community."

"I feel comfortable here and the coffee is great!"

*"Being involved in every way."*

"I enjoy the environment, the people, and the fact that I'm volunteering for a good cause."

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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### YOM HASHOAH VEHAGEVURA HOLOCAUST AND HEROISM DAY

70th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz  
and the end of the War

The annual Yom Hashoah Vehagevura Service will take place on:

**THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2015 at 12.45pm**  
Pinelands Jewish Cemetery No 2

**YOM HASHOAH VEHAGEVURA**  
**Holocaust & Heroism Day**

Thursday 16 April, 12:45pm  
Pinelands Cemetery No 2



**Kinderblock 66: Return to Buchenwald**  
**2nd SCREENING DUE TO POPULAR DEMAND!**

Monday 20 April, 6pm  
RSVP: [admin@holocaust.org.za](mailto:admin@holocaust.org.za) or 021 462 5553

### COMMEMORATION CEREMONY FOR THE 1994 GENOCIDE IN RWANDA

Sunday 3 May 2015  
2pm - 4pm

Pola Pasvolsky Conference Centre, 88 Hatfield Street, Gardens  
RSVP Ernest Kajabo: [mkajabo@gmail.com](mailto:mkajabo@gmail.com)

**SOUTH AFRICAN HOLOCAUST & GENOCIDE FOUNDATION**  
**HOLOCAUST CENTRES: CAPE TOWN • DURBAN • JOHANNESBURG**

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