Learning from the past ~ lessons for today

Holocaust Education Trust Ireland in association with
The Department of Justice and Equality
Dublin City Council
Dublin Maccabi Charitable Trust
Jewish Representative Council of Ireland
Sisters of Sion, Council for Christians and Jews
Holocaust Memorial Day

The Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration is designed to cherish the memory of all of the victims of the Nazi Holocaust.

A candle-lighting ceremony is an integral part of the commemoration at which six candles are always lit for the six million Jews who perished, as well as candles for all of the other victims.

The commemoration serves as a constant reminder of the dangers of racism and intolerance and provides lessons from the past that are relevant today.

Summary of the Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust

Issued in January 2000, on the 55th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1945, and endorsed by all participating countries, including Ireland

We, the governments attending the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, recognise that the Holocaust was a tragically defining episode of the 20th century, a crisis for European civilisation and a universal catastrophe for humanity. In declaring that the Holocaust fundamentally challenged the foundations of civilisation, we share a commitment to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust, and to honour those who stood against it. The horrors that engulfed the Jewish people and other victims of the Nazis must forever be seared in our collective memory. With humanity still scarred by genocide, antisemitism, ethnic cleansing, racism, xenophobia and other expressions of hatred and discrimination, we share a solemn responsibility to fight against these evils.

Together with our European partners and the wider international community, we share a commitment to remember the victims who perished, to respect the survivors still with us, and to reaffirm humanity’s common aspiration for a democratic and tolerant society, free of the evils of prejudice and other forms of bigotry.
Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration
Sunday 25 January 2015, Mansion House, Dublin

Programme

MC: Ingrid Craigie  Music: Conor Shiel, clarinet; Maria Geheran, keyboard
Youth readers: Bnei Brith Youth Organisation

- **Opening remarks:** Ingrid Craigie, MC
- **Words of welcome:** Lord Mayor of Dublin, Christy Burke

**Keynote address: President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins**

- **The legacy of the Holocaust:** Frances Fitzgerald, TD, Minister for Justice and Equality
- **The Stockholm Declaration:** Charles Flanagan, TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade
- **Europe and the Holocaust:** Mary Banotti, former MEP and founding trustee of HETI

**Musical interlude**

- **The Jews of Europe before the Holocaust:** Zuleika Rodgers, Lecturer in Jewish Studies and Director of the Herzog Centre, TCD
- **Book burning:** Kevin McCarthy, Senior Inspector, Department of Education and Skills
- **Nowhere to go:** Oliver Sears
- **Evia:** Maurice Cohen, Chairman, Jewish Representative Council of Ireland
- **Kristallnacht:** Klaus Unger
- **Yellow Star:** Youth reader, Rachel O’Mahony
- **Holocaust survivor:** Suzi Diamond
- **Ghettos:** Cllr Dermot Lacey, Dublin City Council. Youth reader, Jemima Turley
- **Einsatzgruppen:** Peter Garry, École Européenne Bruxelles III
- **Holocaust survivor:** Jan Kaminski (read by his daughter, Jadzia Kaminska)
- **Wannsee:** Bryan Fanning, Professor in the School of Applied Social Science, UCD
- **The Nazi camp system:** John Lonergan, former Governor of Mountjoy Prison
  Youth readers, Jake Turley and Sol Strelitz

**Musical interlude**

- **Victim readings:**
  - People with disabilities: John Dolan, CEO, Disability Federation Ireland
  - Poles: Aneta Stepień, TCD Department of Russian and Slavonic Studies, Trinity College Dublin
  - Roma and Sinti: Gabi Muntean, Community Development Worker, Roma Project, Pavee Point
  - Homosexual victims: Kieran Rose, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
  - Black and ethnic minorities: Clement Esebamen, Director General at Ireland West Africa Business & Economic Council
  - Political victims: Kim Bielenberg
  - Christian victims: Peter Admirand, Mater Dei Institute and Dublin City University
- **All of the victims:** Helen Marks, President, Dublin Jewish Progressive Congregation
- **Israel and the Shoah:** HE Boaz Modai, Ambassador of Israel
- **Holocaust survivor:** Tomi Reichental
- **Scroll of Names:** Stratford College, Dublin; Árdscoil na Tríonóide, Kildare; St Michael’s College, Dublin

**Musical interlude**

- **Liberation:** World War II veteran Albert Sutton. Youth reader, Gina Cohen
- **Righteous Among the Nations:** Anastasia Crickley, Maynooth University, United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Council of Europe Committee Framework Convention for Protection of National Minorities
- **Hubert Butler:** Read by his granddaughter, Suzanna Crampton
- **Second Generation:** Riva Neuman and Caroline Zinn-Collis
- **Universal lessons:** Aodhán Ó Riordáin, Minister of State for New Communities, Culture and Equality
- **Go home from this place:** The Honourable Mrs Justice Susan Denham, Chief Justice
- **Minute’s silence**

**CANDLE LIGHTING**

- **El Malay Rachamim:** Prayer for the Repose of the Souls of the Departed, Cantor Alwyn Shulman, Irish Jewish Community
- **Closing remarks:** Ingrid Craigie, MC
Message from the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Christy Burke

The hosting of the 2015 Holocaust Memorial Day in the Round Room on behalf of the people of Dublin is, as Lord Mayor of Dublin, one of my first privileges of the year.

It is an honour to be here among survivors and descendants of survivors of the Holocaust who have made Dublin and Ireland their home.

This Memorial Day marks the date of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1945. Tonight we recall the suffering inflicted on the Jewish people and those of other faiths during the Holocaust. We will reflect on this and will speak of our hopes that such acts of inhumanity will become fewer and fewer during our lifetime.

This very important event is one of the first in the city’s annual calendar. It is a date when we gather to remember the suffering of those who have gone before us and it gives us an opportunity to also reflect on the suffering still being inflicted throughout the world.

The work of the Holocaust Education Trust Ireland must be acknowledged; it is vital to ensure the historical facts are never diluted and our children’s children are properly informed.

Christy Burke
Lord Mayor of Dublin

The Legacy of the Holocaust

The Holocaust was intended not to have any witnesses. The Nazi plan was to erase an entire people from the history and memory of the world. The Jews were not supposed to survive.

Everything was planned, thought out and organised so as not to leave any evidence of the murderous project. The existence of the gas chambers was kept hidden like a state secret. The Nazi death machine was designed to eradicate not only the Jews and Gypsies as peoples, but also all evidence of their annihilation.

It was the survivors themselves who first acknowledged their responsibility for passing on knowledge of the Holocaust and keeping its memory alive. For this reason it is essential to teach about the Shoah, whether there are Jews in your respective countries or not – whether there are many, or few, or none left. The Shoah should never be diminished, denied, used for other ends, or trivialised.

Simone Veil, Holocaust survivor and founder of the Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris
Read by Frances Fitzgerald, TD, Minister for Justice and Equality
The Jews of Europe before World War II

The majority of Jews in Eastern Europe belonged to Orthodox Jewish communities living in small towns or villages called shtetls. Their lives centred around the strict observance of the Jewish commandments and their daily existence was determined by the Jewish calendar. Many spoke Yiddish as their first language and wore distinctive traditional clothing, the men being particularly noticeable with their long beards, side curls, black coats and black hats. In the shtetl, the Jewish population undertook a wide range of occupations, including those connected with communal institutions such as synagogues, schools and burial societies.

Alongside these vibrant communities were great centres of Jewish learning and Yiddish culture.

The large number of Jewish people living in the great cities of western Europe, such as Berlin, Paris, Prague, Budapest and Warsaw, had a more integrated existence. Although many observed Jewish festivals, the Sabbath and kashrut (dietary requirements), the majority were assimilated and relatively secular. They belonged to the culture in which they lived, speaking the language of the country, dressing like their non-Jewish neighbours and participating in all areas of life: academia, the arts, the professions, commerce and politics.

There were also Sephardi Jewish communities, most of whom resided in the countries around the Mediterranean and in the Balkans, as well as in cities such as Amsterdam and London. Sephardi culture had originated in the Iberian Peninsula, and Sephardi Jews spoke Ladino, a language with Spanish roots. The Sephardi communities were scattered after the expulsions from Spain and Portugal in the fifteenth century. Over time, Sephardi Jews occupied important positions in the economy and government administration of the countries where they lived, and some rose to become diplomats in the royal courts.

Despite waves of persecution and expulsion, Jews had lived and flourished in Europe for many hundreds of years. Some had been living in areas of the Aegean and the Mediterranean since Greek and Roman times. Before Hitler and the Nazi party came to power in 1933, Jewish life in Germany and elsewhere in Europe had not been free from struggle and conflict, but it had seen the participation of Jews in all spheres of life and society. In the interwar years, the Jewish contribution to European culture was significant, with major achievements in the areas of literature, art, music, science and commerce.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, many Jews were as secure as they had ever been, yet there were still large areas of poverty, particularly in eastern Poland and western Russia. Anti-Jewish prejudice was ever-present, even in the most modern and cultured states of Europe.

On 1 September 1939 Nazi Germany invaded Poland, and World War II began. By the end of the war, most of the European Jewish communities had been decimated by the Holocaust, and those of Eastern Europe and parts of the Balkans had been utterly destroyed.

**Grodno, Byelorussia: A street in a shtetl**

Suddenly, all those places where Jews had lived for hundreds of years had vanished. And I thought that in years to come, long after the slaughter, Jews might want to hear about the places which had disappeared, about the life that once was and no longer is.

*Roman Vishniak*
When Adolf Hitler became leader of the Nazi party in 1921, he stated that his ultimate aim was ‘the removal of the Jews from German society.’ By the time he was appointed Chancellor of Germany in 1933, he was planning the removal of the Jews by expulsion – making conditions so difficult for Jews, they would be compelled to leave the country. Hitler’s hatred of Jews was soon manifested in actions, and violence against Jews became prevalent.

Boycotts of Jewish shops, businesses and professions were organised throughout Germany in April 1933. Jews were also forced out of jobs in the civil service, universities and the media.

Jewish books and books by Jewish authors were burned in public bonfires along with other books judged by Hitler and the Nazi party to be ‘degenerate.’ These public book burnings took place in Berlin and other university towns throughout Germany, where some of the finest works of German literature, history, sociology, philosophy, music, art and architecture were destroyed.
Antisemitism fuelled Nazi propaganda and reached all levels of German society. Nazi ideology alleged a hierarchy of peoples: the pure ‘Aryan’ German at the top, with Poles, Slavs, Gypsies and ethnic minorities very low down on the list. Jews were at the bottom, considered ‘sub-human’. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 classified Jews as a ‘race’, and many laws were enacted for ‘the protection of German blood and honour’. Non-Jews were not allowed to marry or have relationships with Jews. Increasingly, Jews were excluded from German society and no longer allowed in public places: parks, cafés, cinemas, theatres, sports clubs and public transport. Jewish banks and bank accounts held by Jews were closed, and Jewish employees were sacked from their places of work.

The Nazis considered all people with intellectual and physical disabilities as ‘life unworthy of life’ and a ‘burden on the state’. High school textbooks contained examples of maths problems calculating the costs of care for people with disabilities compared to the costs of caring for a healthy person.

Nazi racist policies also extended to others, and laws were passed enforcing the sterilisation of Roma and Sinti people and of black and mixed race people. When the black American athlete Jesse Owens won four gold medals at the Berlin Olympic Games, Hitler refused to shake hands with a ‘member of the inferior race’.
As it became increasingly difficult for Jews to continue working in Germany, they sought refuge elsewhere. Few countries were prepared to accept Jewish refugees, and borders were gradually closed to them. Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, convened an international conference in Évian-les-Bains, France, in July 1938, to consider refugee policies. Out of all of the 32 countries represented at Évian, including Ireland, none was willing to take in more refugees, and the conference was deemed a failure.

In March 1938 Austria was annexed as part of Nazi Germany. More than 200,000 Austrian Jews came under Nazi control.

We do not know how many Jewish refugees applied to come to Ireland, although it is definitely in the hundreds, if not thousands. Only a small percentage of applicants was actually admitted. While it is important to examine Ireland’s reaction to the refugee crisis in the light of the broader historical context, and the policy examples provided by other countries, especially Britain, one cannot ignore a persistent theme about this episode in Irish history: immigrants were not welcome, refugees were not welcome, but Jewish immigrants and Jewish refugees were less welcome than others.

A very small number of Jewish families from Austria and Czechoslovakia received permits to work in the hat and ribbon factories in the west of Ireland – leaving behind families who later perished in the Holocaust.

One Irish citizen, Ettie Steinberg, who was married to a Belgian Jew, Vogtjeck Gluck, perished in Auschwitz along with her husband and baby son, Leon. The permits for them to come to Ireland arrived the day they had been arrested and deported.
Kristallnacht, the November Pogrom

On the night of 9/10 November 1938, the state-sponsored pogrom known as Kristallnacht erupted against the Jews of Germany and Austria. Hitler Youth, bolstered by the SA and locals, unleashed a night of terror, violence and destruction. Synagogues and schools were wrecked and set ablaze; Jewish businesses and homes had their windows smashed, leaving the streets strewn with glass. Ninety-one Jews were murdered, and 30,000 Jewish men were thrown into concentration camps. After the destruction, the Jewish communities were fined one billion Reichsmarks to pay for the damage!

For many Jews, it became clear that they had to leave. With the confiscation of their property and bank accounts, and no longer able to find employment, Jews were forced to sell their businesses and properties far below their market value. Offices were set up to speed Jewish emigration.

After years of official harassment of Jews in Nazi Germany, the state sanctioned violence of Kristallnacht marked the acceleration of Jewish persecution that would ultimately culminate in the Holocaust.

Kinderttransports

Prompted by the events of Kristallnacht, Britain agreed to offer temporary refuge to Jewish children from Nazi-occupied lands.

Between December 1938 and September 1939 Britain accepted 10,000 Jewish children from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. They arrived on special trains called Kinderrtransports. Jewish and Christian voluntary organisations worked together to find homes for the children. Funds were raised, guarantors were found. The children were housed in private homes, farms, castles, boarding schools and holiday camps – anywhere they were accepted. Although the majority of the children who had arrived on the Kinderrtransports survived the war, most of their parents perished in the Holocaust.

Geoffrey Phillips was born in Wanne-Eickel, Germany in 1925. In December 1938, along with thousands of other German children, he was sent to Britain on the Kinderrtransports by his mother. He did not know where he was going and he spoke only a little English. He had a small brown suitcase, a small bag with provisions, and a ticket to a foreign land. He was thirteen years old.

Geoffrey was initially able to keep in touch with his parents by letter but censorship was strict. Later, limited communications via the Red Cross were possible but ceased with the outbreak of war. The last letter that Geoffrey received ended ‘look after yourself and God Speed’ which he took to be a coded message that his parents realised their destiny.

One morning we discovered that our synagogue had been set on fire by squads of Hitler youth. We were told that the same thing was happening all over the country. Before we could recover from the shock of this terrible news, there was a knock on the door. Two plain-clothes policemen asked for my father, told him to pack a change of clothes and took him away. Not long after we learned that Britain was prepared to take in a limited number of young Jewish children and my mother arranged to send me on the Kinderrtransport. I never saw my parents again.

Geoffrey lived in England, where he married, and later came to Ireland with his wife, Phyllis. They settled here and raised three sons. Geoffrey passed away in Dublin in 2011.
Murder

In the brief two years between autumn 1939 and autumn 1941, Nazi Jewish policy escalated from the prewar policy of forced emigration to the Final Solution as it is now understood, the systematic attempt to murder every last Jew within the German grasp.

Christopher R. Browning

Today I will once more be a prophet: if the international Jewish financiers in and outside Europe should succeed in plunging the nations once more into a world war, then the result will be...the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe!

Adolf Hitler, January 1939

Ghettos

More than a thousand ghettos were established in countries occupied by the Germans, and it is estimated that more than a million Jews died in them. The purpose of the ghettos was to separate the Jews from the rest of the population so that they could be easily controlled and transported. Ghettos were created in cities and large towns, close to railways, and often near killing sites or death camps. Many ghettos were walled in or fenced off, and Jews who left them without permission were often severely punished and sometimes shot. The brutality, harsh living conditions and disease added to the death toll.

The inhabitants of the ghettos, who came from all walks of life, soon realised that the ghetto served as a place to destroy them physically and psychologically, and that their eventual fate would be death. The illusion that the ghetto was a temporary place to reside before being sent for ‘resettlement in the east’ was soon dispelled as the ghetto residents realised the euphemism for murder.

Although there are heroic stories of resistance, most of the ghetto populations were murdered.

Thousands of Roma and Sinti were also incarcerated in some of the ghettos, and they ultimately met the same fate as the Jews.

In the end, all the ghettos created by the Nazis were razed, and there were few survivors.

Einsatzgruppen/Killing squads

On 21 June 1941, Germany launched Operation Barbarossa — the invasion of the Soviet Union. Special killing squads called Einsatzgruppen followed the German army through the eastern territories of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and into Russia. They operated hundreds of killing sites in these regions. Einsatzgruppen comprised SS units, police, local collaborators, and officers and soldiers of the German army. They murdered more than 1.5 million Jews in the forests, fields and cemeteries. They herded them into ravines or forced their victims to dig pits themselves before they were shot into them. Einsatzgruppen mostly killed Jews, but they also murdered Gypsies, Communists and others. This ‘slow and cumbersome’ method of murdering their victims, as well as the face-to-face killing, had a psychological impact on some of the killers. This prompted the Nazis to find a more efficient method of murdering the Jewish people — the establishment of purpose-built death camps. Einsatzgruppen continued to operate in rural areas in parallel to the annihilation of the Jewish people taking place in these death camps.
The Nazis employed different methods to murder the Jewish people of Europe. It suited them if they could demonstrate that the Jews had died ‘from natural causes’ – invariably from brutality, disease, starvation, exposure and hard labour. These methods were soon expanded by the \textit{Einsatzgruppen} (killing squads) operating in the Eastern territories and by the establishment of purpose-built death camps, specifically to murder Jews by poison gas.

### Wannsee Conference

The Wannsee Conference took place on 20 January 1942 in a secluded lakeside villa, south-west of Berlin. Fifteen senior Nazi and German government officials had been summoned by Reinhard Heydrich of the Reich Security Head Office and Head of German Secret Police. He was seeking endorsement to carry out Hitler’s plans to annihilate the Jews of Europe. Adolf Eichmann presented the delegates with a list of the number of Jews living in each European country, whom the Nazis intended to murder; Ireland appears on the list with a total of 4,000 Jews.

The delegates debated at length who was Jewish according to bloodline considerations and discussed ‘evacuation’ and ‘resettlement’ of the Jews. They concluded that a more efficient method of ‘disposal’ was necessary and one that would also spare those operating the killing sites in the eastern territories from the psychological effects of face-to-face killing.

It took the delegates less than two hours to give unanimous support to Heydrich for the implementation of the ‘Final Solution to the Jewish question’ – murder of the Jewish people by poison gas.

### Operation Reinhard

Named after Reinhard Heydrich, this was the establishment of three death camps at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, in which Jews were murdered by poison gas. Between March 1942 and August 1943 some 1,700,000 Jews, mostly from Poland, were murdered in gas chambers. These camps were dismantled on completion of their ‘function’, and all traces of their existence were destroyed. The lands where they had stood were planted with forests, farms and grasslands.

In March 1942 every major Jewish community was still intact, and 80% of those European Jews who would be murdered in the Holocaust were still alive. By February 1943, just under one year later, 80% of those European Jews were already dead.

\textit{Christopher R. Browning}
Concentration camps were an integral feature of the Nazi regime. Originally for political opponents, the first concentration camps were established in Germany in 1933. After 1939, they were places of imprisonment for Jews. At least 1,500 concentration camps were established in the territories of the Reich.

Labour camps meant annihilation through work. Prisoners were forced to carry out super-human tasks such as shifting boulders or laying roads or railways by hand, often for twelve hours a day, with little to eat or drink.

Transit camps were usually established beside large cities as a place to collect Jews (and others) for deportation. They were sometimes purpose-built, but often they were run-down apartment blocks, where hundreds were forced into overcrowded poor living conditions where they were subjected to maltreatment and brutality.

Death camps were six death camps, all of them on Polish soil, established to murder the Jewish people of Europe by poison gas. Other victims were also murdered in these camps.

Hungary

Nazi policy towards Hungary, which had been an Axis partner of the Third Reich, changed dramatically in July 1944. Eichmann was dispatched to oversee the roundup and deportation of the Jews of Hungary, and in just eight weeks, 437,000 were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. The railway line at the death camp was extended under the gateway right up to the unloading ramp where 'selections' were made. In Budapest, the Germans were supported by their Hungarian collaborators the Arrow Cross, who were responsible for shooting more than 100,000 Jews into the Danube.
Kitty

We had scarcely been inside a few minutes when Isa, a girl I had chatted to on the way here, pulled me to a window. ‘You must see this, look.’ I didn’t want to look. I was too afraid of what I might see. But I had to go and stand beside her. Not fifty yards away was an incredible sight. A column of people had been shuffling from the direction of the railway line into a long, low hall. When the place was full, there was a delay; but I went on watching, hypnotised. What I was witnessing was murder, not of one person, but of hundreds of innocent people at a time. Of course we had known, had whispered about it, and been terrified of it from a distance; but now I was seeing it, right there in front of me...

On the outside of the low building a ladder had been placed. A figure in SS uniform climbed briskly up. At the top he pulled on a gas mask and gloves, tipped what looked from here like a white powder into an opening in the roof, and then hurried back down the ladder and ran off...

Screams began to come out of the building. We could hear them echoing across to our hut, the desperate cries of suffocating people. ‘It’s over.’ Someone was shaking me. ‘They’re all dead now!’

I went on staring at the building. Smoke was beginning to billow out of the tall chimneys. Soon a spurt of flame shot up into the sky. As evening came, the whole sky was red. Smoke and flames were pouring out of all the chimneys.

None of us slept that night. It was no longer possible to pretend even to yourself that the stories were not really true. All that we had heard and guessed was now before our eyes. Here were the death factories.

Kitty Hart-Moxon, nee Felix, was born in Bielsko, Poland. She survived several concentration camps and also a Death March. From the time of liberation Kitty felt it was her duty, having witnessed and experienced the horrors of war, to speak out about her past and warn of the consequences of intolerance, racism and hatred. She continues to speak in schools, Universities and to the general public in the UK and abroad.

Death Marches

As the allies closed in, the Nazis wanted to remove all traces of their murderous projects. They forced prisoners out of the camps to walk hundreds of kilometers back towards Germany. It is estimated that 350 former camp internees, already weakened by malnutrition and forced labour, died on these death marches.

Pictured right: A view of the death march from Dachau passing through German villages in the direction of Wolfratshausen, Germany, April 1945.

Auschwitz-Birkenau

Auschwitz-Birkenau was the largest of the Nazi camps. There were 40 subcamps in the Auschwitz camp complex with Auschwitz I, Auschwitz II Birkenau, and Auschwitz III Monowitz, where Primo Levi was incarcerated, being the most well known. Birkenau was the killing centre where between 1.1 and 1.4 million victims were murdered, 90% of whom were Jews.

When Auschwitz-Birkenau was liberated by Soviet troops in January 1945, they found:

- 7,600 emaciated prisoners alive
- 836,500 items of women’s clothing
- 348,800 items of men’s clothing
- 43,400 pairs of shoes
- Hundreds of thousands of spectacles
- 7 tons of human hair

Each lock of hair, each pair of shoes and each pair of spectacles belonged to one person.
It is true that not all victims were Jews...

People with disabilities
Hitler initiated the T4 Euthanasia Programme in 1939 in order to kill elderly people, the terminally ill and people with disabilities, whom the Nazis referred to as ‘life unworthy of life’. Although the programme was officially discontinued in 1941 due to public outcry, the killings continued clandestinely until 1945. It is estimated that 200,000 people with disabilities in Germany and Austria were murdered in the T4 Euthanasia Programme.

Political opponents
The torching of the Reichstag national parliament building in 1933 gave the Nazis a pretext for brutally suppressing Communists and later, Social Democrats. The Nazis abolished trade unions and co-operatives, confiscated their assets and prohibited strikes. As early as 1933, the Nazis established the first concentration camp, Dachau, as a detention centre for political prisoners.

Poles and Slavs
Hitler ordered the elimination of the Polish intelligentsia and professionals. Tens of thousands were murdered or sent to concentration camps. Polish children did not progress beyond elementary school, and thousands were forcibly taken to Germany to be ‘Aryanised’ and reared as Germans. It is estimated that three million Poles were murdered by the Nazis.

Roma and Sinti (Gypsies)
The Nazis deported thousands of Roma and Sinti people (Gypsies) to ghettos and concentration camps. In 1941 Himmler ordered the deportation of all Romanies living in Europe to be murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau. It is estimated that between 250,000 and 500,000 Roma and Sinti people were murdered by the Nazis.

Black, mixed race and ethnic minorities
In 1933 the Nazis established Commission Number 3, whereby hundreds of adults and children of African descent were forcibly sterilised. According to Nazi philosophy, this would ‘preserve German blood and honour’. By the outbreak of World War II, thousands of black, mixed race and ethnic people had fled, and most of those who remained were murdered.

Homosexual victims
Thousands of gay men were arrested by the Nazis and imprisoned in concentration camps, where they were subjected to harder work, less food and more brutal treatment than other inmates. Hundreds were put to death, and thousands died from the appalling conditions and brutality. Homosexuality remained on the German statute books as a criminal offence until 1969, and many former gay internees had to serve out their original prison sentences after the war, with no allowance for the time they had served in the camps. This deterred many gay survivors from telling their stories.

Christian victims
Hundreds of Jehovah’s Witnesses were murdered by the Nazis for their refusal to salute Hitler as ‘Saviour’ or to serve in the German armed forces. Thousands of Catholic priests and nuns and Protestant religious leaders were persecuted and murdered by the Nazis for their opposition to the regime. There were also a great many Quakers and others of Christian affiliation who risked their lives to save Jews.
The white figures on black relate to the approximate number of Jews who perished in each European country between September 1939 and May 1945. The total of just over 5,750,000 does not include thousands of infants murdered by the Nazis in late 1941, before their births could be recorded. Thousands of people from the remoter villages in Poland were added to the deportation trains which left larger localities, without any record of their existence or of their fate.
The defeat of Nazism would have taken much longer without the Red Army’s invasion of German-held territory in the East. The D-Day allied invasion of Normandy took place in June 1944. The same month, the Soviets advanced. By the end of summer 1944 the Soviet army had liberated Majdanek death camp and reached the gates of Warsaw. The road to Berlin had been opened. On 27 January 1945, the Soviet army, including many Jewish soldiers, liberated Auschwitz-Birkenau. It is this date that was designated by the United Nations as International Holocaust Memorial Day.

By spring 1942 some Polish, Russian and even German deserters had become partisans. Many partisan groups were well armed and organised. Villagers, thrown out of their homes to make way for ethnic Germans, swelled their ranks. Most partisan groups did not welcome Jews.

Jewish partisan groups, consisting of men and women who had fled deep into the forests of Eastern Europe to escape the guns of the Einsatzgruppen, also began to emerge early in 1942. The first Jewish resistance group in Eastern Europe was started by the 23-year-old intellectual Abba Kovner in Vilna in 1941. Another group was set up by the four Bielski brothers in early 1942, and their numbers reached 1,500 by the end of the war. Many more Jews joined local Communist-led partisan units as individuals.

So for us even the hour of liberty rang out grave and muffled and filled our souls with joy and yet also with pain. Nothing could ever happen good and pure enough to rub out our past. The scars of the outrage would remain with us forever, in the memories of those who saw it, in the places where it occurred and in the stories that we shall tell of it...

Primo Levi
I went in. At one end lay a heap of smoking clothes amongst which a few ghouls picked and searched – for what, God only knows. As we entered the long hut the stench hit us in the face, and a queer wailing sound came to our ears. Along both sides of the shed was tier upon tier of what can only be described as shelves. And lying on these, packed tightly side by side, like knives and forks in a chest, were living creatures - some of them stirring, some of them stiff and silent, but all of them skeletons, with the skin drawn tight over their bones, with heads bulging and misshapen from emaciation, with burning eyes and sagging jaws. And as we came in, those with strength to do so turned their heads and gazed at us; and from their lips came that thin unearthly sound. Then I realised what it was. It was meant to be cheering. They were cheering the uniform that I wore. They were cheering for the hope that it brought them.

Denis Johnston on entering Buchenwald after liberation, 1945
In Jewish tradition there is a quotation from the Talmud: …*For he who saves one life is regarded as if he had saved an entire world.* (TB Sanhedrin 4:5)

In 1963, Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority in Israel, inaugurated the award of Righteous Among the Nations to honour non-Jews who risked their lives and those of their families to help save Jews during the Holocaust. The Talmudic quotation, which is included in the Yad Vashem citation of the award, should be treated literally; not only those Jews who have been personally saved by the Righteous owe them their lives, but all their descendants as well.

There is no single definition that can describe those who receive the Righteous Among the Nations award. They come from diverse social, religious and ethnic backgrounds. They are farmers, priests, nuns and soldiers, believers and nonbelievers, and from every land occupied by the Germans and their collaborators, they made the impossible possible. There were families, groups of friends or members of organised efforts such as the Dutch Resistance, the village of Le Chambon sur Lignon in France, or Zegota (the Council for Aid to Jews) in Poland. They were the people of Denmark, Bulgaria or Albania whose nations opposed the Nazis and refused to hand over their Jews. There are well-known efforts such as those of businessmen Oskar Schindler and Nicholas Winton, and assistance by diplomats such as Raoul Wallenberg from Sweden who saved thousands of Jews in Budapest and the Japanese official Sempo Sugihara who saved thousands in Lithuania. Jewswere rescued by Muslims in Albania and in the Arab lands of north Africa. Jews were rescued by simple villagers and by wealthy landowners in all countries occupied by the Third Reich. All the rescuers were united in their desire to help their fellow human beings.

Under German occupation the Righteous feared their neighbours as much as the authorities. A Jew in hiding was a potential threat to all those who lived nearby, and hostile neighbours could be as dangerous as the Gestapo, often betraying both those in hiding and those who were hiding them. Finding refuge in non-Jewish surroundings was dictated by two basic factors – the attitude of local inhabitants and the punishment awaiting those who extended help.

Over 25,000 Righteous have been recognised under Yad Vashem’s very strict criteria and this number continues to grow as stories are revealed. But they are only part of a larger group whose true number we will never know. After the war, many Righteous encountered hostility in Communist eastern European countries, when their brave actions became known. Even today, many of their descendants refuse to accept the Yad Vashem award, for fear of antagonising their neighbours.

Thousands of Jews worldwide are alive today because one day, during the Holocaust, someone decided to risk his or her life to protect an individual. The heroism of the Righteous was limited in time, but the gratitude of those who were saved will remain as long as the Jewish people exist.

The story of the Righteous is one of exceptional goodness that emerged in the midst of unspeakable tragedy and destruction. The nightmare and horrors of the Holocaust also became a defining moment of courage and decency.

The altruism of the Righteous calls us to understand the different choices that individuals make and to commit to challenging every example of intolerance that we witness.

*Konstanty Gebert, Polish Council for Christians and Jews*
Hubert Butler

In 1938, Hubert Butler travelled from Ireland to Vienna with one objective in mind: to bring Jewish refugees to Ireland. He was motivated by a humanitarian concern for the plight of Jews in Europe following the rise of Hitler. The record of Hubert Butler’s humanitarian and noble conduct is preserved in the Yad Vashem archives.

After the Anschluss Hubert Butler worked with a Quaker group in Vienna to secure exit visas for Austrian Jews. In seeking entry for refugees to Ireland he dealt with the Irish Co-ordinating Committee for the Relief of Christian Refugees. This voluntary committee held an effective monopoly in recommending which refugees should be admitted to Ireland. However, an overt policy of discrimination against Jewish refugees existed in Ireland in 1938. It lasted throughout the Second World War and during the aftermath of the Holocaust. The Department of Justice routinely advised against the admittance of Jews until 1956 when Ireland ratified the UN Convention (1951). Discrimination within state practices took the form of subjecting Jewish applications for visas to specifically stringent interpretation within an overall illiberal policy. A Department of Justice memorandum on 16 November 1938 endorsed the views of the Irish Co-ordinating Committee for the Relief of Christian Refugees that the state should admit Catholic refugees who had converted from Judaism but not Jewish refugees.

Hubert Butler and his wife Peggy Butler rescued a Jewish family who would have been refused entry to Ireland by this committee by arranging for their illegal entry into the Irish Free State. Erwin Strunz, a journalist, had converted to Judaism on marrying his Jewish wife, Lisl. They had two children. On 16 September 1938 Erwin Strunz was informed by a friend that his deportation to Dachau had been decided. Hubert Butler helped the Strunz family to escape to London where they were met by his wife Peggy who took them to her mother’s home in County Monaghan. Hubert Butler, Peggy Butler and Erwin Strunz continued to work to secure the rescue of other Jews from Austria.

Both at home and at the Evian conference convened in 1938 to address the Jewish refugee crisis, Hubert Butler was struck by the indifference of his fellow countrymen to the suffering of the Jews in Europe. As an Irishman, he was driven to act by his profound anger and disappointment with the attitudes of apathy and antisemitism displayed by the Irish establishment, and went to work in the Quaker Centre for Refugees in Vienna.

Through his work with the Quakers, Hubert Butler succeeded in bringing a number of Jewish refugees to Ireland, despite Irish government restrictions. He helped them settle in Ireland or secure passage onward to North and South America, among other destinations.

He described his time in Vienna working to rescue Jews as ‘one of the happiest times of [his] life’. However he was also profoundly struck by the hatred that was growing and the horrors to which it would inevitably lead. Reflecting on his time there he wrote:

“I think now it was obtuse of us not to have anticipated Auschwitz. I had walked along the Prater Strasse to the great Viennese Park where bands played and stalls sold ice cream and coffee. The street must have had a great many Jewish shopkeepers in it, because all the way down there were broken windows in front of looted shops with VERHOLUNG NACH DACHAU (‘Gone for a rest-cure to Dachau’) scrawled over the surviving panes, and the air was full of the mindless hatred which war, that fosters all our base passions, would inevitably make murderous.”

SMcC
Tomi Reichental was born in 1935 in Piestany, Slovakia. In November 1944 he was captured and deported to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp along with his mother, brother, grandmother, aunt and cousin. Tomi was just nine years old when the camp was liberated. Thirty five members of Tomi’s family were murdered in the Holocaust.

I was captured with my mother, grandmother, aunt, brother, and cousin. We were herded into a cattle car and from that moment onwards, we were treated worse than animals. There was no privacy or hygiene, the stench and conditions were unbearable.

Eventually, after seven nights the cattle train stopped. The doors were opened and we were greeted by shouts from the SS with guns at the ready, and the barking of their Alsatian dogs – we had arrived at our destination – Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. I was there from November 1944 until the liberation of the camp in April 1945.

What I witnessed as a nine-year-old boy is impossible to describe. The starvation, the cruelty of the camp guards, the cold and disease. People, who were just skin and bone and looked like living skeletons, were walking around very slowly, some of them dropping where they fell, never to get up again. They were dying in their hundreds, their emaciated bodies left where they fell or thrown into heaps. In front of our barracks there were piles of decomposing corpses. For many prisoners in Bergen-Belsen, the conditions were too much to bear and they threw themselves on the barbed wire at night to be shot and put an end to their misery. We found their corpses there in the mornings.

I lost 35 members of my family in the Holocaust.

Since his retirement, Tomi has dedicated much of his time to telling his story to young people throughout Ireland. He works closely with Holocaust Education Trust Ireland in coordinating a senior schools’ programme, Hearing a Holocaust Survivor speak... sharing his personal experiences of the Holocaust with pupils and university students. Tomi addresses hundreds of students every year, and HETI is indebted to him for his commitment to Holocaust education and awareness.
Jan Kaminski

Jan Kaminski was born Chaim-Srul Zybner in 1932, the second eldest of a Jewish family of two boys and two girls. They lived with their parents in the small rural town of Bilgoraj in eastern Poland.

Under Operation Reinhard, Nazi forces ‘liquidated’ Bilgoraj on 3 and 9 November 1942, dispatching almost the entire Jewish population of 5,000 – which had been incarcerated in an exposed ghetto situated in the market square – to the nearby death camp of Belzec. Chaim found himself separated from his family during the liquidation and fled to the relative safety of the thick woods that surrounded the town. From then onwards, he adopted a non-Jewish identity and became Jan Kaminski, a name he would retain for the greater part of his life.

Working on small farms for food and shelter, Jan would move on whenever he felt vulnerable or that anyone suspected his Jewish origins. He was captured and deported with other children to be ‘Germanised’ until he was rescued by Polish Underground forces. Jan was ‘adopted’ by a tailor’s family and apprenticed to that trade. In 1943, while attending a summer camp a group of boys discovered that Jan was Jewish, and reported him. While awaiting his inevitable fate, he found himself momentarily alone, and once again fled to the woods.

Yet again Jan found himself seeking shelter where he could, doing odd jobs on farms and living on his wits. By 1944 he had made his way to Lublin, into which Russian forces were advancing. Spotting a unit of Polish soldiers attached to the Russian army, Jan became the ‘mascot’ of the 21st Artillery Regiment of the Polish army. Later he joined another unit on its way to Murnau in south-eastern Germany, where the United Nations had set up a school in the camp, and where Jan began his education at the age of 15.

Jan ultimately arrived in Britain, where he learned English, and with the support of Zofia Sarnowska, manager of the Polish YMCA in Sloane Square and of van Karnebeek of the Dutch embassy, he completed his education. He passed his GCE exams and through the Catholic agency Veritas he obtained a scholarship in 1954 to study in Ireland at Cork University. He successfully completed entrance exams and transferred to Trinity College, Dublin, where he studied Economics and Politics. When he graduated at the end of the 1950s, he was granted an Irish passport.

In 1965 Jan married an Irish woman, Margaret (Breach), and began his long and varied business career in the computer education and tourism industries. He and Margaret had three children, Orla, Jadwiga and Jas. It was only about 25 years ago that Jan revealed his original Jewish identity to his family.

After World War II it was revealed that the once flourishing Jewish communities of Poland had been utterly destroyed. Jan’s entire family had been wiped away: his parents, Mindla and Szulim, his sisters, Chana-Matla and Rywka, and baby brother, whose name is not recorded, were all gone. Today, there is a modest project of Jewish revival taking place in Jan’s home town of Bilgoraj, but so far no further traces of his direct family have been found.

Jan lives in Dublin and remains keenly aware of his Polish and Jewish roots. He retired in 2006. He is surrounded by his children and grandchildren and is still active in the Polish community.

Jas Kaminski

Main square, Bilgoraj, 1930
Suzi Diamond

Suzi (Suzi) Molnar was born in Debrecen, near Budapest, in Hungary. In April 1945, she was found with her brother, Tibor (Terry), in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp by the British liberators. She was a very small child and her brother was five years older.

Suzi’s father had been taken away by the Nazis. Suzi, her mother and her brother were rounded up and forced into cattle trucks. They were sent first to Ravensbrück, a concentration camp for women and children, and then on to Bergen-Belsen. During the journey the three huddled together, their mother attempting to shield them from the overcrowding and squalor. On arrival at Bergen-Belsen, she was washed down with a fire hose.

Suzi remembers her mother giving her and Terry almost all of her own rations. Eventually her mother became so weak that she was moved to another hut; she did not return, and died of TB shortly after the arrival of the British.

When the camp was liberated, Suzi herself was ill with typhus. The army established a makeshift hospital for the thousands of ailing survivors. An Irish volunteer paediatrician, Bob Collis, working with the Red Cross, befriended Suzi and Terry, and eventually brought them home to Ireland with four other children.

Suzi and Terry recovered their physical health, and Bob Collis arranged for them to be adopted by an Orthodox Jewish couple in Dublin, Elsie and Willie Samuels.

Like many Holocaust survivors, for Suzi the emotional damage has outlasted the physical. According to the prevailing attitude at the time of her youth, traumatic experiences were suppressed in the hope that they would be forgotten. Suzi buried her concentration-camp experience. However, she still lives with a fear of water, an utter abhorrence of dirt and a mistrust of all that is unfamiliar. Also, like many other survivors, she was unable to speak about Bergen-Belsen until fifty years after leaving it behind.

Suzi has spent her life in Dublin. She is married to Alec Diamond and they have two grown-up children. Her brother Terry passed away in January 2007.

I remember the long, oblong-shaped carriage; there were no seats, only wooden floors, and the three of us huddled together.

Inge Radford

Inge Radford was born in Vienna in 1932, one of ten children, and now lives in Northern Ireland. Inge lost six members of her immediate family in the Holocaust, her mother and five brothers, Sigmund, Kurt, Walter, Herbert and Fritz.

From evidence given in post-war criminal trials we know what they, with thousands of other Austrian Jews, endured before they were finally shot or gassed. They were initially incarcerated in the Minsk ghetto and then transferred to the labour camp in the village of Maly Trostinec. This camp had no permanent gas chambers but victims were murdered in mobile gas vans. In May 1943, five hundred victims per day were murdered in gas vans that went daily between Minsk and Maly Trostinec.

Five of my family were spared the unspeakable ordeal of ghetto living, imprisonment and violent death; we got out before war broke out. Our passports were stamped with a large red ‘J’, and the middle names of Sara for girls and Israel for boys were added to identify us as Jews. My eldest sister, Elli, went to live with relatives in the USA. My 13- and 14-year-old brothers, Ernst and Erich, went to live on farms in Denmark, and my nine-year-old sister, Rose, and I, aged seven, came to England (separately and unbeknown to each other for several years). Our passage out of Vienna was organised under the auspices of the Jewish Children’s Refugee Organisation, which raised the £50 per child asked for by the British government, who arranged the mechanics of our escape.

Homes and hearts were opened to us. Many children like myself stayed with our adoptive families through school, university, marriage and parenthood. For me, these new, kind and loving relationships blurred the picture of a small smiling woman surrounded by several boys, all waving as the train pulled out of Vienna Station.
Holocaust Memorial Day 2015

Four million Jewish victims of the Holocaust now identified

Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust museum, has by now managed to identify four million of six million Jews murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators during the second World War.

One and a half million new names were added over the last decade, increasing the list of confirmed victims by 60 per cent, as the museum stepped up efforts to counter Holocaust denial from neo-Nazi groups and Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Yad Vashem chairman Avner Shalev said one of the museum’s main aims since it was set up in Jerusalem in 1953 had been to recover every victim’s name and personal story. ‘The Germans sought not only to destroy the Jews but also to erase their memory. One of our main missions is to give each victim a face and a name.’

The figure of six million victims was based on pre-war census lists of Jewish communities in areas occupied by the Nazis. Due to the difficulty of obtaining accurate information, particularly from eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, Mr Shalev admitted a comprehensive tally was impossible, but said Yad Vashem was aiming to eventually account for five million victims.

In an effort to boost its database, in 2004 Yad Vashem launched its Pages of Testimony project. Visitors to the museum and to its website were encouraged to fill in special forms on the victims, which were then double-checked against existing archival information. The project was a huge success, and 55 per cent of the four million names came from Pages of Testimony.

Names of Jews deported from western European states, such as Germany, France and the Netherlands, were well documented. In the eastern areas occupied by the Nazis, mass killings and an absence of accurate lists of victims created a difficult task for Yad Vashem researchers.

In recent years the museum has focused its efforts on these areas, making significant headway. Whereas in 2005 only 20 per cent of the victims from Ukraine were listed, the figure today is 35 per cent. In Poland the percentage has risen from 35 to 46 per cent.

Mr Shalev said Yad Vashem was co-operating with east European states to obtain extra names from existing archives. ‘We will continue our efforts to recover the unknown names, and by harnessing technology in the service of memory, we are able to share their names with the world.’

Mark Weiss, Jerusalem

The annual Holocaust Memorial Day commemorates the loss of six million Jewish lives, one third of the world’s Jewish people, and emphasizes the importance of the message of Never Again will the Jewish people be threatened with extermination.

In the aftermath of the Holocaust, hundreds of thousands of Holocaust survivors found refuge in Israel. They re-built their lives and established new generations of family in their ancient homeland. I cannot help but wonder if Israel had been established earlier, would the six million people who were murdered in the Holocaust have had a different destiny.

The right of Israel to exist as a national home of the Jewish people is the only way to ensure that a second Shoah will never happen.

Boaz Modai, Ambassador of Israel
We Remember...

Max Heller
Born Chomotow, Czechoslavakia
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 73 Years

Klara Heller
Born Hermanstat, Czechoslavakia
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 68 Years

Gisella Molnar
Born Debrecen, Hungary
Murdered Bergen-Belsen 1945
Aged 35 Years

Sandra Molnar
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 39 Years

Bajla Hercberg
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 41 Years

Matthias Hercberg
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 38 Years

Ruchla Orzel
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 39 Years

Fajwel Orzel
Born Sosnowiec, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 64 Years

Slazma Urbach
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 32 Years

Hirsch Urbach
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 30 Years

Tauba Urbach
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 45 Years

David Josef Urbach
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Germany 1944
Aged 23 Years

Shaul Urbach
Born Kielce, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 16 Years

Abe Tzvi Urbach
Born Kielce, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 12 Years

Gitta Fraidla
Born Kielce, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 10 Years

Laja Fagla
Born Kielce, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 8 Years

Nuchim Mordechai
Born Kielce, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 2 Years

Ruchla Golda Urbach
Born Kielce, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 41 Years

Sarah Urbach
Born Kielce, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 17 Years

Chil Fried
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 39 Years

Szymon Urbach
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 39 Years

Nuchim Urbach
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 44 Years

Faigla Urbach
Born Wloszczowa, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 39 Years

Perla Urbach
Born Wodzislaw, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 32 Years

Frymeta Urbach
Born Wodzislaw, Poland
Murdered Treblinka 1942
Aged 46 Years

Moses Klein
Born Wodzislaw, Poland
Murdered Auschwitz 1944
Aged 16 Years

Hilde Frenkel
Born Vienna
Murdered Belorussia 1942
Aged 15 Years

Kurt Frenkel
Born Vienna
Murdered Belorussia 1942
Aged 14 Years

Walter Frenkel
Born Vienna
Murdered Belorussia 1942
Aged 13 Years

Herbert Frenkel
Born Vienna
Murdered Belorussia 1942
Aged 8 Years

Fritz Frenkel
Born Vienna
Murdered Belorussia 1942
Aged 62 Years

Zigmund Frenkel
Born Vienna
Murdered Auschwitz 1944
Aged 62 Years

Saloman Delmonte
Born Amsterdam
Murdered Auschwitz
Aged 50 Years

Karoline Wolff
Born Aurich, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Martin Wolff
Born Aurich, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Wolfgang Wolff
Born Aurich, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Selly Wolff
Born Aurich, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Henrietta Wolff
Born Aurich, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Rosewta Wolff
Born Aurich, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Eli Velvel Avisanski
Born Lithuania
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

David Philipp
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Recha Philipp
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Leopold Philipp
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Julia Philipp
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Dagbert Philipp
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Louis Philipp
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Valeria Philipp
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Rosalia Scheinovitz
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Julius Mayer
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Gejza Suri
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Oskar Scheinovitz
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Adela Fried
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Bella Fried
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Katerina Fried
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Agnes Fried
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Ezekiel Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Katarina Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Kalmar Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Ilona Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Gita Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Ibi Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Desider Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Ferdinand Alt
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Renka Alt
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Erna Elbert
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Marta Elbert
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Recha Freed
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Agnes Fried
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Ezekiel Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Katarina Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Kalmar Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Ilona Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Gita Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Ibi Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Desider Reichental
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Ferdinand Alt
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Renka Alt
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Erna Elbert
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years

Marta Elbert
Born Wanne-Eickel, Germany
Murdered Auschwitz 1943
Aged 66 Years
We Remember...

Jøsef Drechsler  Born Plzen, Czechoslovakia  Murdered Zamosc 1942  Aged 60 Years
Bedriska Drechsler  Born Prague, Czechoslovakia  Murdered Zamosc 1942  Aged 46 Years
Paul Drechsler  Born Plzen, Czechoslovakia  Murdered Zamosc 1942  Aged 54 Years
Meta Drechsler  Born Bzenec, Czechoslovakia  Murdered Zamosc 1942  Aged 41 Years
Bella Perlberg  Born Plzen, Czechoslovakia  Murdered Auschwitz 1942  Aged 64 Years
Irma Popper  Born Plzen, Czechoslovakia  Murdered Auschwitz 1942  Aged 60 Years
Ephraim Nayman  Born Blogosodolje, Poland  Murdered Auschwitz 1942  Aged 5 Years
Zvi Nayman  Born Blogojodolje, Poland  Murdered Auschwitz 1942  Aged 3 Years
Chaya Zeler  Born Ostrow Mazovetyck, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 50 Years
Israel Zeler  Born Ostrow Mazovetyck, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 50 Years
5 Zeler Children  Born Ostrow Mazovetyck, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 45 Years
Royze Centnersher  Born Blogojodolje, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 45 Years
Moshe Centnersher  Born Blogojodolje, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 45 Years
6 Centnersher Children  Born Blogojodolje, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 45 Years
Fishel Bernholtz  Born Blogojodolje, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 48 Years
Mrs Bernholtz  Born Blogojodolje, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 48 Years
Bernholtz Children  Born Blogojodolje, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 48 Years
Lable Nayman  Born Viskof, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 48 Years
Mrs Nayman  Born Viskof, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 48 Years
Nayman Children  Born Viskof, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 48 Years
Menachem Nayman  Born Viskof, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 48 Years
Mrs Nayman  Born Viskof, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 48 Years
Nayman Children  Born Viskof, Poland  Murdered Poland 1940–41  Aged 48 Years
Mordechai Shteinbock  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Hendel Shteinbock  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Sara Shteinbock  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Ester Shteinbock  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Mordechai Shteinbock  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Hindel Shteinbock  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Israel Shteinbock  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Hrtz Hofman  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Chaya Hofman  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Meir Hofman  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Ela Hofman  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Hofman Children  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Zelig Hofman  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Mordechai Hofman  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 60 Years
Baruch Gottlieb  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 50 Years
Royze Gottlieb  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 50 Years
Gottlieb Children  Born Drohobyucz, Ukraine  Murdered Bronica forest, Ukraine 1943  Aged 50 Years
Racemiel Smaiovitch  Born Teresva, Czechoslavakia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Sara/Ermet Smaiovitch  Born Teresva, Czechoslavakia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Arie/Lyabi Smaiovitch  Born Teresva, Czechoslavakia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Lea/Lycho Smaiovitch  Born Teresva, Czechoslavakia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Rachel/Rhochele Smaiovitch  Born Teresva, Czechoslavakia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Devora Smaiovitch  Born Teresva, Czechoslavakia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Miriam Pollak  Born Teresva, Czechoslavakia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Doyetch Bliimi  Born Teresva, Czechoslavakia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Jure Mataija  Born Lika, Croatia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Ivica Mataija  Born Lika, Croatia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Anika Mataija  Born Lika, Croatia  Murdered Jasenovac, Croatia 1945  Aged 45 Years
Kalman Rosenthal  Born Yasnva, Ukraine  Murdered Auschwitz 1944  Aged 66 Years
Eleonora Rosenthal  Born Kuty, Poland  Murdered Auschwitz 1944  Aged 62 Years
Abraham Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
Polin Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
David Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
Shemon Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
Regena Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
Rapae Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
Marta Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
Shobtai Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
Lusi Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
Moshe-Yom Tov Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
Adela Soutiel  Born Thessaloniki, Greece  Murdered Auschwitz 1943  Aged 63 Years
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<td>Selma Hainbach</td>
<td>Vienna, Austria</td>
<td>Riga, Latvia 1941</td>
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<td>Simcha Zaks</td>
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*…We will always remember*
Holocaust Memorial Day Candle Lighting

It is traditional at Holocaust memorial events to light six candles in memory of the six million Jews who perished in the Shoah. In Ireland, we also light candles in memory of all of the other victims of Nazi atrocities.

**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES:**
In memory of people with disabilities and disabling conditions who were murdered, starved to death and forcibly sterilised by doctors and other willing helpers.

*Candle-lighters: Deirdre Spain, Inclusion Ireland and Erik Casey, Los Pisa Club, St John of Gods*

**POLES, SLAVS and ETHNIC MINORITIES:**
In memory of millions of Poles and Slavs who were murdered, displaced, and forcibly 'Aryanised' by the Nazis; and the thousands of people from ethnic minorities who were persecuted, sterilised and murdered.

*Candle-lighters: Salome Mbugua, AkiDwA (National network of migrant women living in Ireland) and Joanna Siewierska, Irish-Polish Society*

**ROMA/SINTI (GYPSIES):**
In memory of the Romany people of Europe who were rounded up, murdered, displaced and forcibly sterilised by the Nazis.

*Candle-lighters: Diana Păun, Roma Representative and Emanuel Păun, Pavee Point*

**HOMOSEXUALS:**
In memory of homosexual men and women who were persecuted and murdered because of their sexual orientation.

*Candle-lighters: Natalie Weadick, co-chair of GLEN (Gay, Lesbian Equality Network) and Emily Oman, BeLonG To (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender organisation)*

**POLITICAL VICTIMS:**
In memory of the political victims of the Holocaust – Socialists, Communists, Trade Unionists, Democrats, and other anti-Nazi organisations.

*Candle-lighters: Ken McCue, SARI (Sport Against Racism Ireland) and Mary Lawlor, Director, Frontline Defenders*

**CHRISTIAN VICTIMS:**
In memory of Christian victims of all denominations including the Jehovah's Witnesses who were persecuted and murdered by the Nazis.

*Candle-lighters: Sr Ellen Knox, Sisters of Sion and Revd. Alan Martin, retired minister of the Presbyterian church*

**JEWISH VICTIMS**
Six candles are dedicated to the memory of the six million Jews, including one and a half million children, who were annihilated in the Holocaust by the Nazis and their collaborators. Jews were murdered in concentration camps and death camps, Jews perished in the ghettos, Jews died of starvation and disease, Jews were shot in the forests and Jews were murdered in the streets and in their homes.

Those lighting candles in memory of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust are children or grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, second and third generation. All of them lost countless members of their families who perished in the Holocaust.

*Candle-lighters:*
- Brenda Borchardt, whose grandparents Hatzkel Abram and Belia Abram and many family members perished in the Holocaust
- Mark Hainbach, whose grandparents Heinrich Hainbach and Selma Hainbach and other family members perished in the Holocaust
- Tony Collis, whose grandfather Zoltan survived Bergen-Belsen and whose other family members perished in the Holocaust
- Marina Herbst, in memory of the Herbst and Cohn families who perished in the Holocaust
- Joe Katz, whose mother, Frida, survived Auschwitz and whose other family members perished in the Holocaust
- Sharlette Caplin, whose father, Raphael Urbach, survived Buchenwald and Theresienstadt and whose other family members perished in the Holocaust
The Crocus Project
More than 50,000 young people participate in The Crocus Project in Ireland and Europe, planting yellow crocuses in memory of more than 1.5 million Jewish children and thousands of other children who perished in the Holocaust.

Hearing a Holocaust Survivor speak…
a unique opportunity to hear a survivor recount his or her personal experiences of the Holocaust.

An interactive workshop presenting an overview of the Holocaust before, during and after World War II.

Five teacher education programmes take place throughout the year. These include the Certificate in Holocaust Education as well as study visits and in-service teacher education programmes.
Holocaust Education Trust Ireland (HETI) educates and informs about the Holocaust in order to address antisemitism and all forms of racism and intolerance in Ireland.

CERTIFICATE IN HOLOCAUST EDUCATION
Awarded by Trinity College Dublin, this part-time one year programme provides in-depth tuition on the historical significance and contemporary resonances of the Holocaust. Special Purpose award at NFQ level 7 carrying 20 ECTS.

SEMINAR AT YAD VASHEM
An 8-day seminar for Irish teachers organised through HETI in association with the International School for Holocaust Studies in Yad Vashem, in Israel. This gives teachers the opportunity to work at the exceptional Holocaust Museum and Archive Centre in Jerusalem.

OUTREACH EDUCATION
Exhibitions, public lectures, cultural projects and other events are organised throughout the year and throughout Ireland.

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY
HETI organises the national Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration which takes place on the Sunday nearest to 27 January every year. Tribute is paid to the six million Jews who were murdered in the Holocaust and hundreds of thousands of others who were victims of Nazi atrocities. It is an inclusive, dignified and impressive ceremony.

DONATE
If would like to support our important work, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

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AWARENESS AND MEMORIALISATION
REFERENCES and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY HONOURED GUESTS

Suzi Diamond – Bergen-Belsen
Jan Kaminski – Bilgoraj, Poland
Inge Radford – Vienna
Tomi Reichental – Bergen-Belsen
Doris Segal – Sudetenland

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Hubert Butler, (page 17) Bryan Fanning and Sandra McCarthy

PHOTOGRAPHS and ILLUSTRATIONS and IMAGES

Auschwitz-Birkenau, Gate-tower and Ramp: courtesy Panstwowe Muzeum, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Poland
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Campe: Yad Vashem
Candle lighting in Westerbork: Yad Vashem
Concentration camp: USHMM
Courageous German: Topography of Terror Museum, Berlin
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Einsatzgruppen - shooting Jewish man: USHMM
Evian: Myran Taylor representing Roosevelt: Yad Vashem
Front cover image I Remember Auschwitz Again, Heinrich Zussman, Carte Grattage
Gas Chamber, USHMM
Ghettos, (Jewish Residential District): Yad Vashem
Grodno shetl: Yad Vashem
Hall of Remembrance: Yad Vashem
Hitler appointed Chancellor: Yad Vashem
Humiliation of Jewish man: Yad Vashem
Image of man on wire: Tisa von der Schuleburg
Irena Sendler: Yad Vashem

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Map of number of Jews in Europe: Routledge, Atlas of the Holocaust, by Martin Gilbert
Memorial monument to the Holocaust, Listowel: Paddy Fitzgibbon
Other victims of the Holocaust p 12: USHMM
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Poisonous Mushroom: Yad Vashem
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Toriciled synagogue: Imperial War Museum
Treblinka notice: Yad Vashem
Wannsee List, House of the Wannsee Conference: Berlin

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The Council for Christians and Jews
The Sisters of Sion
The Council for Christians and Jews
Private donations

MASTER of CEREMONIES: Ingrid Craigie
MUSICIANS: Comer Shiel and Maria Geberan
MUSIC: Baermann: etude in Bb minor; E. Satie: Gnossienne No 1 for Clarinet and Piano; A. Piazzolla: Oblivion; J.S. Bach: Arioso from Cantata BWV 156
MEDIA COORDINATOR: Colette Haverty
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Colette Haverty

SPECIAL ADVISOR ON RACIAL ISSUES TO HETI: Clement Esebamen, Director General at Ireland West Africa Business & Economic Council

BOOKLET

Writing & Research: Lynn Jackson, Sandra McCarthy Proofreader: Léan Ní Chuilleanáin
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The only public Holocaust memorial monument in Ireland was unveiled in The Garden of Europe in Listowel, Co. Kerry, in May 1995. The occasion marked fifty years since the end of World War II when the horrors of the Holocaust were revealed.

Paddy Fitzgibbon, of the Rotary Club of Listowel, made a very moving speech on that occasion; an excerpt is printed below:

*Our generation, and the generation or two after us, will be the last that will be able to say that we stood and shook the hands of some of those who survived. Go home from this place and tell your children and your grandchildren and your great-grandchildren that today in Listowel, you looked into eyes that witnessed the most cataclysmic events ever unleashed by mankind upon mankind. Tell them that you met people who will still be remembered and still talked about and still wept over 10,000 years from now – because if they are not, there will be no hope for us at all. The Holocaust happened and it can happen again, and every one of us, if only out of our own sense of self-preservation, has a solemn duty to ensure that nothing like it ever occurs again.*