



Bulletin number 150 - September 2026

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1. A Meeting Between Generations – Sukkot 2026, Ben Shemen

As every year, we will meet again this year in the Ben-Shemen Forest for the traditional intergenerational meeting - Sukkot gathering. Blessings will be offered on the four species.

Driving with Waze to Ben Shemen Forest, Mexico Park:

<https://waze.com/ul/hsv8vg01fh>

2. Feedback on pictures of children in the Holocaust [Bulletin 149]

I received information about 2 [of 4] girls, relating to their families.

A. “Four-year-old Gerti Mermelstein looks straight into the camera. Next to her are her mother, sister and grandmother. They have just arrived at Auschwitz-Birkenau after being transported from their hometown of Mukachevo.”

Since the photo appears in the “Auschwitz Album” - I returned to it. There I found the identified photo of the woman, sitting in the front, fourth from the right, whose name was Taube-Yona Mermelstein. In a search of the “Yad Vashem” witness pages, I found that Taube-Yona, born in 1886, was the great-grandmother of our friend, Eyal Bloch, from Kiryat Ono. In a telephone conversation, Eyal confirmed to me all the missing details: **Along with Gerti, her sister Vally and mother Rozsi/Rivka are also in the photo. It turns out that their last name was Ackermann; Mermelstein is the mother's maiden name, which is the name of Taube-Yona Mermelstein! The four of them were sent to the gas chambers on May 6, 1944. In the witness pages filled out by Eyal Bloch, he testifies that Gerti and Vally's father's name was Moshe-Dov, a tailor by profession.**

[The 4 women marked on the right].

Second from the left is Rivka/Rozsi Ackerman, Gerti and Vally's mother – from Eyal Bloch.

One of the two girls on the right is Rabbi Shapira's daughter of Munkacs.



On this occasion, I was also able to complete **also the 3 names of the murdered marked on the left**: Our friend, David Forkosh from Ashdod, wrote to us that this picture shows a cousin of his wife Nellie, née Mermelstein. The relative is Irene Weiss, née Fogel, from Bótrágy/Batrady in the Beregszasz district. Irene lives in the US and is involved in documenting the Holocaust. In the film documenting her life, she states that the woman photographed is her mother and her two brothers, waiting to be taken to the crematorium...

Link to the film of: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ayN-lhDYBBQ>

I found information about Irene on Wikipedia, as published by the Holocaust Museum in Washington: "Irene Weiss was born Perl Ruchel Fogel on November 21, 1930, in Bótrágy, Czechoslovakia (now Batrad', Ukraine). Her father, Meyer Fogel, owned a lumber yard. Her mother, Leah Fogel, managed their home and cared for Irene and her five siblings—Serena, Moshe (Moise), Edit (Edith), Reuven, and Gershon. According to the 1941 census, the village of Bótrágy had 1,421 inhabitants of whom 72 were Jews.

Irene's father was also selected to perform forced labor. He worked as a prisoner in the Sonderkommando, removing corpses from the gas chambers and cremating them. While still in the camp, Irene's aunt learned through a boy from their hometown that when Meyer could no longer perform this work, the SS shot and killed him. Her brother Moshe did not survive, although his exact fate is unknown. Irene, Serena, and two maternal aunts, Rose and Piri Mermelstein, worked in the "Kanada" section of Birkenau—storage warehouses located near two crematoria—for eight months until January 1945, when the SS forcibly evacuated the camp. The prisoners were made to walk through the cold on a death march. The four of them ended up in the Ravensbrück concentration camp in central Germany. Afterwards, the SS transported them to Neustadt-Glewe, a subcamp of Ravensbrück, east of Hamburg. There, Piri became ill and was killed. In Prague, they found Joseph Mermelstein, Serena and Irene's maternal uncle. He had emigrated from his hometown to Palestine and returned as a soldier in a Czechoslovak unit of the British Army. A few aunts and uncles survived, but Irene and Serena were the only surviving members of their immediate family. Irene, Serena, and Rose lived together with their surviving relatives in Teplice-Šanov in western Czechoslovakia. Irene attended a Czech school, Serena worked in a factory, and Rose remained at home, ill with tuberculosis. With the sponsorship of relatives and financial aid from the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Irene, Serena, and Rose immigrated to New York in 1947. Irene married Martin Weiss in 1949 and they moved to northern Virginia in 1953. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in education from American University and taught in the Fairfax County Public School system in Virginia for 13 years. Martin passed away in January 2013. Irene and Martin have three children, six grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren. Irene is a volunteer at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum." Irene was also interviewed on 60 Minutes. 1935 Here is the link: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1699486444416381>



Irene photographed on the ramp at Auschwitz



had separated her little sister from her.

Irene's daughter is Leslie Weiss, and she is a [second] cousin of our friend, Yehudit Weber, née Mermelstein. Irene and Yehudit's father were cousins - and Yehudit is in regular contact with Leslie. Leslie confirmed that in the photo of the waiting in the grove for the murder in the gas chambers, her mother's two younger brothers, Reuven [1935] and Gershon [1936] remarr appears in the lower left corner, along with their mother, Leah/Lenke, who is her grandmother, born in 1899. Grandfather Meir was born in 1896. In the testimony sheet Leslie filled out in 2005 about her grandmother, she notes that her maiden name was Mermelstein. The testimony sheets also recorded the birth years of Meir, Leah, Reuven and Gershon. Moshe, Leah's brother, was born in 1928; sister Edith was born in 1932.

B. "Hana Hajmalka Adler was born on May 13, 1940 in Mukachevo. She was the daughter of Charlotte/Sarah (nee Kahan) and Samuel-Zvi-Hersh Adler."

Charlotte's brother was Shraga. In a search on MyHeritage, I found



records of the family and contacted Roni Kahana, the site manager, who turned out to be

Shraga's granddaughter. Samuel-Zvi-Hersh Adler, the



father of Hana and her brother, Ben-Zion, was the only survivor of the family. He remarried a woman, whose name was also Charlotte (nee Kaufman). From this marriage, **Preeva Adler Tramiel (pictured)** was born. Roni had 4 more sisters, and they did not know that Charlotte's husband had survived and started another family. Roni put me in touch with Preeva, who lives in Palo Alto, California. Preeva wrote a book about her half-sister, called **"The Girl on the Wall."** The book was published in March 2015 and reads as follows:

"Why wouldn't Preeva's parents tell her about the mysterious girl in the picture? Why had her brave and noble father--Adler Hershi, also known as Samuel, Harry, or Herman Adler--hung that girl's portrait above his bed instead of Preeva's?

Preeva was raised in New York on her father's tales of adventure and heroism. But she needed more information about him and his clan of taxi-driving brothers from Mukacheve in Transcarpathia. No one living seemed to have the answers she sought.

Years later, using modern genealogy tools and old-fashioned deduction, researching on the Web, and journeying through Israel, Ukraine, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, she **set out to discover the truth about her father's stories.** Join Preeva on her exciting, interesting, funny, sad, and brutally honest journey as she learns the history of her ancestors and in the process becomes more sure of herself and her Jewish identity." How small our world is...

Link to read the book: <https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/29397585-the-girl-on-the-wall>

3. The Stories of Yehuda Misgav (Moskovich) (Danylovo [Khust District], Solotvyno and Dubove [Tyachiv District])

Yehuda is the son of Yitzhak and Leah Moskovich. His mother, a daughter of Yehuda Fogel, was born in 1919 in Dubove. His father Yitzhak (born 1912) was the son of Naftali and Blima, residents of Danylovo.

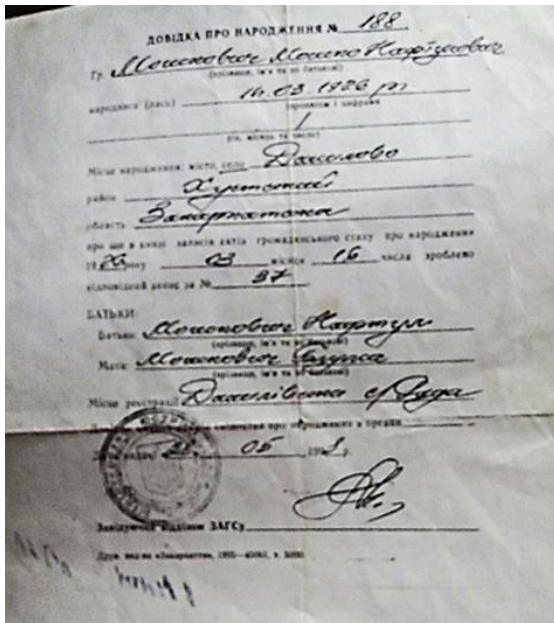
Each side of Yehuda's family has a story that sheds light on the nature of life in Carpatorus (Maramuresh) before World War II – and in Transcarpathia after it.

I'll start with the Moskovich family: Yehuda's grandparents, Naftali and Blima, had 6 sons and a daughter. They owned a farm. Their daughter, Esther, perished with her parents in the Holocaust. The sons: Shabtai emigrated to Argentina in the 1930s; Yitzhak is Yehuda's father, recruited to Hungarian labor camps during the Holocaust; Natan was among the partisans, very close to Yitzhak, left the Czech Republic during the Dubcek era - for Germany; Meir died of an illness before the Holocaust; Yaakov remained in the family home in Danylovo and emigrated to America with the fall of the USSR; Moshe lived in Solotvyno. We will focus on Moshe's brother, about whom Yehuda knew nothing, as if his memory had been erased and Yehuda had never heard of him from his father. In 1992, Yehuda visited Danlovo. An elderly woman villager, who knew the family, told him about Moshe, his father's brother, who lived in Solotvyno. The surprise was great because Yehuda only knew the story of the other brothers...

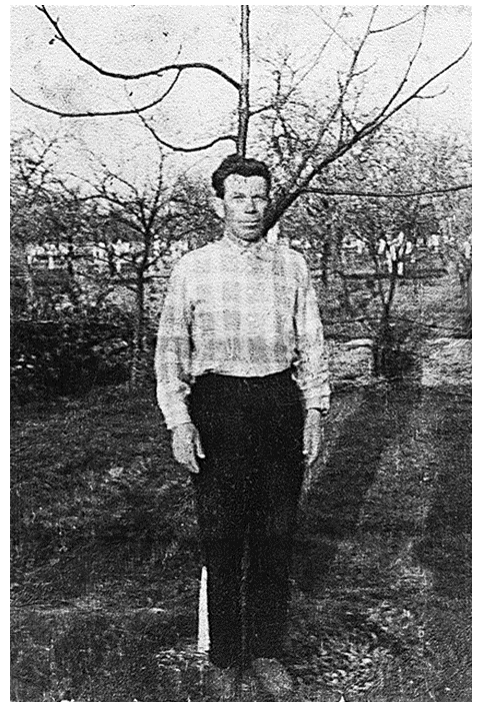
It turned out that Moshe had been hidden during the Holocaust by residents of Solotvyno and had stayed to live there. Moshe's nickname, as Yehuda was later told by people from Solotvyno, was "The Blind One" [Der Blinder] - because he had glasses with a high number.

In 2016, Yehuda visited Solotvyno and went to his uncle's grave.

Moshe's birth certificate, March 16, 1926, Danylovo



Moshe Moskovich



Moshe Moskovich's daughter and son near his grave of their father in the cemetery of Solotvyno





Right: Moshe's daughter, Yehuda Misgav, Moshe's son, Simcha (Siku) Neimt, a resident of Solotvyno, who guided (in Yiddish!:) Yehuda on his visit to Solotvyno in October 2016

And now let's return to the Fogel family, the family of the mother Leah, who was born, as mentioned, in Dubove:

The family consisted of parents, 6 daughters and a son. It was a wealthy family, with land, forests and houses. Only 4 daughters remained after the Holocaust.

After the war, Yehuda's parents moved to the town of Aš near Karlovy Vary in western Czechoslovakia - and from there they fled to Argentina in 1950. He was 3 years old when they arrived there. Yehuda immigrated to Israel alone in 1965 and arrived in Jerusalem to the Gold Institute, [Institute for the Training of Jewish Religious Teachers for the Diaspora named after Rabbi Zeev Gold].

In this context, he was asked to write an article for the students' magazine and chose to tell a story, that circulated in his family, about his grandfather's mother, Zelda Fogel.

But before that, a little about the family lineage. Yehuda Fogel, his grandfather, was the son of Moshe Fogel, who was the son of Isaac Fogel. This is what is written in the book of Maramuresh, pages 312-313: "In that generation, Rabbi Isaac Fogel also stood out in Dubove, an owner of property, land and livestock. He would give out a lot of money on loan, according to a business permit, at low interest, as required by state law. If the borrower was harmed - he did not collect the interest. He ran his household miserly but was very careful not to be deceived by any dust of injustice and deceit. He was almost always engaged in Torah. His son was Rabbi Moshe Fogel, one of the greatest Hasidim of Vizhnitz, and engaged in public needs in faith and was a man of good deeds".

And the book also says: "In Dubove there was an important focus and center of the Vizhnitz Hasidim for the entire surrounding area".

Fogel Yehuda, grandfather of Yehuda Misgav, Dubove

Moshe Fogel (second from the right (with the umbrella) and a group, including Rabbi from Ternove, Rabbi Shlomo Eliezer Wiesel.





Moshe Fogel's grave,
on which is inscribed:
He passed away in purity
while providing aid to
victims of the terrible
typhus epidemic on the
2nd of Nissan 1921
(April 1921)

The grave of Yitzhak Isaac
Fogel, the one who stabbed
Rabbi Menachem Mendel
Hagar, who was the first
Rebbe and founder of the
Vizhnitz dynasty and whose
nickname was the "Tzemach
Tzadik["



The following story was written by Yehuda Misgav, who was then still called Moskovich, as mentioned, for the newsletter of the Gold Institute, where he studied. The editor of the newsletter slightly changed the wording, but the story itself remains authentic and is presented here with minor changes: "

Unbelievable Because It's Told" / Yehuda Moskovich, Nissan 1965

"In a remote town, Dubove in Czechoslovakia, lived Zelda, an honest and righteous widow, with her sons and grandchildren, but she is sickly. Her husband Moshe zt"l died at a relatively young age of typhus, from which he had contracted while helping other patients. He was a staunch follower of the Rebbe of Vižnitz, Rabbi Yisrael Hager, known as the "Love of Israel," who lived in Romania. The holy Rebbe would occasionally come to the town to visit and stay at their home, and continued to do so even after she became a widow. Crowds from all over the area flocked to Dubove to see the holy Rebbe, who was received with pomp and circumstance befitting a president of a country. People stood on both sides of the main street, and the route of the procession was decorated with flowers. Not only Jews would welcome him, but also the Christian notary, pharmacist, and doctor. The wagon entered, followed by a very long procession of Chassidim, who had come from all over the region. Zelda's house always held a royal feast for all the Chassidim, and many attended because of the importance of the guest, and the house was too small to accommodate them all.

Once, when the Rebbe was in a nearby town and was teaching Torah to his Chassidim, Zelda felt unwell, and suddenly fainted and collapsed. The people of the house immediately noticed this and laid her down. They quickly called the pharmacist. He examined her and after a few minutes ordered the doctor to be brought.

Everyone was frightened. They immediately went to call Zelda's closest son. All the people of the place highly regarded her son Yehuda, and considered him in every matter. He was a wealthy man and was considered the head of the family. When he arrived at the house, the doctor had already finished his examination, and was shaking his head in complete doubt. He asked that the second doctor, who was more knowledgeable in medicine than he, be called. The two doctors, together with the pharmacist, concluded that there was nothing to be done and that the patient was already in a dying state.

Upon hearing the bad news, a great and bitter cry broke out in the house. In view of the serious situation, the family members began to gather, and a loud argument began. Some said that

they should call the Rebbe because he would surely know what to do, while others argued that why bother him in vain? After all, he would not be able to do anything! Soon she passed away Jewish!

Finally, and in light of the insistence, his son Yehuda decided that they had to call the Rebbe, after all. He quickly rode a cart to the Rebbe's whereabouts.

At the Rebbe's table, everyone was happy and singing. In a large, crowded house. There was no room to step foot. Everyone wanted to see the Rebbe's face, everyone wanted to taste the songs...

Yehuda wanted to go in, but outside there were people who hadn't had time to push their way into the house. He didn't know how he would approach the Rebbe, how the Rebbe even knew he was here, and was looking for him?

Suddenly everything fell silent. A buzzing began to break out among the crowd.

-Let him in! The Rebbe is calling him!!

As he approached, the Rebbe said:

-Yehuda, please come in and sit by my side. I know you have something very important to tell me. How does Zelda feel?

The man stopped dead in his tracks. He couldn't stop wondering: "How is this possible? How did he know I was sent to him?" "No one came before me!"

Not more than two hours passed and a large and very long convoy began to move to Dubova. All the Hasidim who had gathered for the celebration in the nearby town traveled after the Rebbe from Vizhnitz.

The old Rebbe and his son got out of the carriage and entered the house - they took the doctors out of there. The Rebbe ordered everyone present to be removed from the room, only he, his son and the dayan remained inside, and they closed the door behind them so that no one could see what was happening there. No one saw or heard anything. But after a long hour someone heard from under the window:

-Zelda, get up already. The Hasidim are impatiently waiting for the delicious borscht that you know how to prepare so beautifully for Shabbat.

And indeed, Zelda recovered and got up. And this was one of the wonders that that generation saw. Everyone was very happy - especially the family members.

About 9 years passed. One Holy Sabbath, the children in the house hear Zelda's scream. They were frightened and ran quickly to find out what it happened. The old woman, crying, told them that she had lost the amulet that the Rebbe had given her on that famous day.

Immediately, everyone in the house began to search in every nook and cranny, under every bed, table, and cupboard, and above them, and there was no place they did not search - but no one found the amulet.

A few days later, Zelda's funeral was held.

Then the people said that the amulet's time had already ended, and therefore they did not find it, and at the end of this additional period allotted to her, she passed away peacefully.

It would be natural if you thought that the story was imaginary. However, I am sure that you would be convinced of its truth if you knew that it was told to the writer by his mother, who was present at the time of this miracle of resurrection. Yehuda Vogel, after whom I am named, was my mother's father and was murdered in the Holocaust. I also received various testimonies about that day from other places. The son of the Rebbe of Vizhnitz, the Shlita, is still alive and lives in Bnei Brak. Indeed, they are miracles from heaven, only performed by exceptional individuals"...

This is the quote from the 1965 student newsletter.

Yehuda Misgav has treated this matter with skepticism throughout the years, as if it were a nice legend passed down in the family.

He recently contacted me about the family photos that appear here and asked for more details.

I connected him with Moshe Raz, our friend, and Moshe connected Yehuda with the Vizhnitz archive, where Yehuda, to his amazement, found a treasure: it turns out that **the same story, with a few minor changes, mainly about what the rabbi did to help her recover, was also published in the book "Kodush Yisrael" by the rabbis of Vizhnitz...**

The rabbi in question was the Rebbe Israel Hager, known after his book as "Ahavat Yisrael." He is the third of the Rebbes of the Vizhnitz dynasty. The story of the miracle of Yehuda's grandmother was also published among the Vizhnitz Hasidim in Monsey, USA, where there is a large Haredi concentration, by the grandson of the "Ahavat Yisrael"; **there is even a version in Yiddish.**

Another version reads: "And the whole city trembled with the deed, and it became known throughout the world, all of Maramuresh trembled."...



The grave of Zelda Fogel in Dibove, daughter of Rabbi Avraham Zvi "Av Beit Din Dikehilat Kodesh" Yassin [Rachov District]

And that's not all: Yehuda did not return to Argentina, he studied at Bar Ilan and got married. He and his wife had 2 children, a son and a daughter. The eldest, Amiad (Ami), z"l, went to the pre-military preparatory school in Beit Yatir after graduating from high school. He was in its first class in 1991 and from there he enlisted and served in the Magelan. All the preparatory school students were divided into "adopting" families in the town. Ami was an "adopted son" of the head of the preparatory school. Ami died 6 years ago from an illness.

How great was Yehuda's surprise when he recently learned, as he delved into the Vizhnitz lineage, that the head of the preparatory school who adopted Ami into his family's bosom with great love and warmth, Colonel Rabbi Moshe (Moishe) Hager, was the great-grandson of "Ahavat Yisrael." **Closing the circle!**

Yehuda studied optometry in Israel and owned an optical store in Kiryat Ono, where he has lived since his days in Bar Ilan. His two children followed in his footsteps and also graduated in optometry and worked in the family business.

Yehuda's parents, Yitzhak and Leah Moskovich, read the newspaper "The Yiddish Zaytung" in Argentina

Congratulations, Yehuda, for sharing your family stories, which shed light on life in Carpatorus in the last century!



4. About Israel-Dov Weiss / Esti Cohen, his granddaughter (Munkacs)

The words in memory of the grandfather were written by Esti Cohen, a 3rd generation member. Esti began volunteering in the association's activities a few months ago and we are very happy and appreciative when 3rd generation members join our efforts. She also organizes "Remembrance in the Living Room" evenings and tells the grandfather's story in the framework of "Ambassadors of Memory in the First Person". May G-d bless you!

Israel-Dov Weiss was born and raised in Munkacs, a vibrant Jewish town, in a warm and loving family. He was the eldest son, a smart, responsible and lively boy, who grew up on the values of tradition, Zionism and faith.

His home was established and vibrant – full of animals, fruit trees and childhood memories of a safe routine. He studied at a Hebrew gymnasium, took pride in his ability to read and pray in Hebrew, and was very close to his parents, brothers and sisters.

But in May 1944, on the eve of Shavuot, his world changed suddenly. The rumors of what was happening to the Jews in Europe became a cruel reality. German and Hungarian soldiers burst into the city, and the family – along with thousands of other Jews – was expelled from their home. Israel, who saw himself as responsible for his younger siblings, held their hands and tried to convey reassurance, despite the immense fear he felt.

They were first gathered in the synagogue, which became a makeshift ghetto, and then transferred to the brick factory. From there, they were crammed into crowded freight cars, without humane conditions, for a long and agonizing journey. Throughout the journey, Israel clung to his family, especially his father – a strong figure, who was an anchor for him.

But upon their arrival in Auschwitz, amidst the chaos of shouting, dogs and black smoke, the family was brutally separated. Israel and his father were sent to one side, while his mother, brothers and sisters – to another. This was the last time he saw them.

In the concentration camp, Israel became a prisoner. His head was shaved, his identity was taken from him, and he was forced to deal with inhuman conditions of hunger, cold, humiliation, and daily death. He lived in severe overcrowding with hundreds of prisoners, stood in long lineups, and suffered constant violence. One of the duties imposed on him was to evacuate the bodies of his comrades – an unbearable experience, that became part of his daily routine.

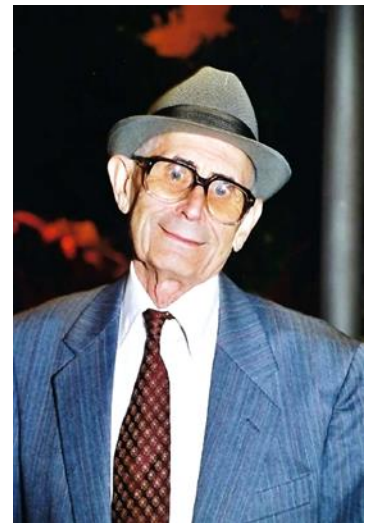
Despite everything, he clung to memories of his home, his family, and his faith. The image of his father continued to accompany him in the camp as well – his father risked his life to smuggle him some food when he fell ill with typhus, thus saving his life. Small moments of humanity in the inferno gave him the strength to continue.

Towards the end of the war, he was also separated from his father and was forced to survive alone. He moved between camps, marching on a death march in unbearable conditions, until liberation.

When the war ended, he found himself a 19-year-old young man – alone in the world, having lost almost his entire family.

Israel returned from the camps and received a moving letter from his father who wrote: **"I am alive, I am whole, I am waiting for you at home, please come home."** And although he wanted to reach the Land of Israel, he returned to Munkács. Despite the immense pain, he chose not to break down.

Out of the loss, he chose life.



He immigrated to the Land of Israel, started a family and continued to build his future out of faith and hope. For many years, he carried his story in his heart, and only later did he begin to share, out of a sense of mission – so that future generations would remember and not forget.

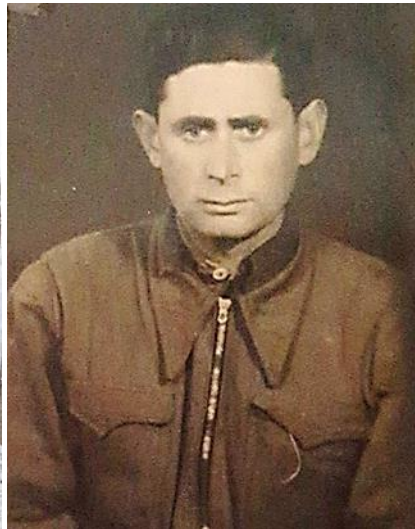
Israel-Dov Weiss was a symbol of extraordinary human strength – a man who lost everything, but did not lose his spirit. His life story is a testament to the great pain of the Holocaust, but also to the triumph of the spirit, faith and the choice of life.

His legacy to future generations is clear: to remember the past, to tell the story, and to always believe in a better future.



The family house

Israel-Dov Weiss's family



Israel-Dov Weiss

Israel-Dov on the horse



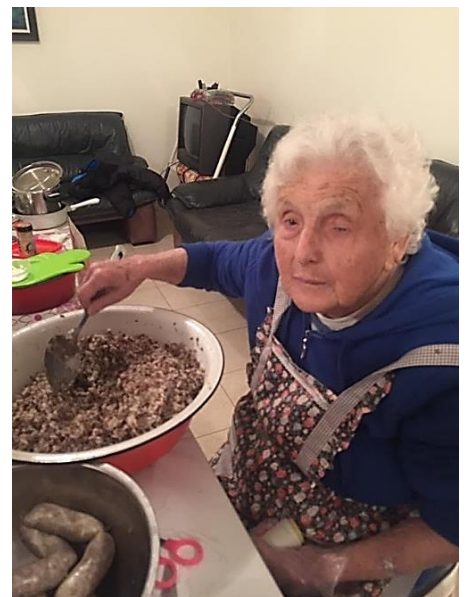
Nettie Weiss' recipe] for hurko... [Amount – by eye...]

Cook rice. Cook lungs. After everything has cooled, combine together and add black pepper, salt and lots of garlic. In a frying pan with oil, fry onion and add to rice with lungs.

Take a kishke and fill with the mixture. Place in a pan in the oven for about 50 minutes—on low heat, about 100 degrees.



Nettie Weiss,
Israel-Dov's
wife





Weiss clan: Hermina Greenberger, Toby Kleinman and Zvi Weiss, children of Nettie and Israel-Dov Weiss [Esti is the daughter of Toby and Tibi Kleinman]

5. Righteous Among the Nations in Carpatorus: Weiss Nusin / Garay Joseph – Keretsky [Savlyava District] The rescue operation took place in Pishtany, Slovakia

Joseph Garay (born Nusin Weiss) was one of the Weiss couple's seven children. The family moved to Piešťany in 1928 and the father worked as a tailor. The father died in 1940.

When the deportation of Jewish youth took place in 1942, Garay left the house and went to a yeshiva in Nitra. There, he received the news that his mother and six siblings had been deported.

Fearing that the yeshiva students would share a similar fate, Garay returned to Piešťany. Early one spring morning, Weiss showed up at the home of the Paserins, whom he knew, and asked them to afford him refuge. Like Garay's late father, Jozef Paserin was also a tailor and his workshop was located in their house. Jozef and Mária Paserin had no children. After consulting with each other, the Paserins agreed to shelter Garay. Jozef and Mária placed him in the cellar and in the evenings, he was permitted to come up to their apartment to dine with them, stretch his legs, and to learn about developments in the outside world. A few months later, they allowed him to move into their apartment and to walk around it freely. When a stranger entered the house, Garay hid in a hiding place that was prepared for him.

The situation eased in early 1943 and Weiss obtained false papers and found a job in a factory manufacturing leather coats for the army. However, with the renewal of the threat of deportation towards the end of 1943, Weiss returned to hide at the Paserins' house.

One day, while compelled to hide in the yard, he was seen by a neighbor. The neighbor informed Jozef that a partisan was hiding among the bushes. Jozef and Mária decided to move with their ward to their friend's cabin in the Tatra Mountains. When the uprising broke out, the Paserins joined the rebels, but when the uprising was suppressed, they returned to the cabin, where they awaited liberation. They were liberated in March 1945.

After the war, and even after he immigrated to the United States, Garay remained in contact with Jozef and Mária. In 1997, he visited Piešťany with his two sons, his daughters-in-law, and his grandchildren. They found Jozef living in the same house where Garay had hidden during the war.

Mária had died in 1991. After an emotional reunion, Jozef was asked by one of Garay's sons why he risked his life to save their father. His simple and instinctive answer – **“because he is a human being”** – touched everyone's hearts.

The information about Weiss Nusin on the Yad Vashem website states that he was born in Keretsky, Svalyava District. This is how I was able to locate pages of testimony that Nusin/joseph filled out about his family members.

His mother's name was Fanny/Frida, born in 1890, from Svalyava; his father was Moritz/Moshe-Zvi, born in 1895, from Bereznek [Svalyava District]; murdered in 1940 "from German humiliation."

The six brothers and sisters were murdered in gas chambers at Majdanek in 1942;



Heinrich-
Hanucho, born 1924



Ychok/ Aizik, born 1931



Yosef-Dov, born 1933



Henche, born 1934



Chaya-Shura, born 1929



Miriam, born 1925



The family of Nusin Weiss, later Joseph Garay. Joseph is first on the right.

The images are from a film commemorating Joseph's 100th birthday; [See below]

Rescuer Joseph Paserin with survivor Joseph Garay, 1997 near the house where he was hidden





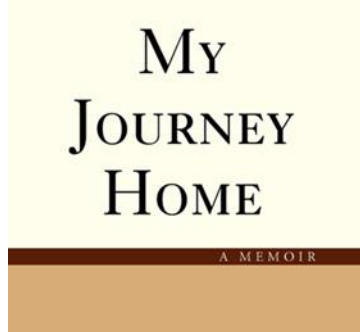
Joseph with the Righteous Among the Nations and his family member [daughter?]
On October 18, 1998, Yad Vashem recognized Jozef Paserin and Mária Paserinová as Righteous Among the Nations.

Joseph and his wife, Olga, near the grave of his father, Moshe-Zvi, who was killed in 1940 [Pištany, Slovakia]



Commemorating all of Joseph's family members, who perished in the Holocaust

The book that Joseph wrote about his experiences. The book's cover states: "A remarkable and fascinating story of a Jewish boy coming of age during World War II, his survival, and ultimately, the transformation of his life as an American. The story of Joseph Garay is an



object lesson in perseverance in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles - from losing his entire family in the concentration camps, to his survival in the Jewish underground in Bratislava and elsewhere; from his joining the partisan underground and being drafted into the Czechoslovak Division of the Romanian Red Army to fight the Nazis, to his meeting and

marriage to his wife. It is also a lesson in the remarkable deeds of a single man, Joseph Paserin, who protected Garay during those turbulent war years despite grave risk to his own safety and that of his family. Paserin's actions ultimately allowed Garay to start over in New York - to build a new family and enjoy the safety and security of American freedom".



Joseph and his wife, Olga, born in 1928 in Munkacs, née Gottesman, celebrating their 75th Wedding anniversary.

In 2021, the grandson, Joshua (Josh), produced a film on Joseph's 100th birthday. From there, we learned that Josef was born on September 16, 1921 in Keretsky; at the age of 10, the family moved to Pištany [was it in 1931 or 1928, as documented on the Yad Vashem website?]

Joseph was a famous fashion designer, who quickly established a thriving business, the Jsg Media Group.

He lived in Florida, in Boca Raton.

He and Olga had 3 sons: Stuart (1948), Kenneth (1952) and Andrew.(1961)

Olga died on March 26, 2024.

Link to the birthday video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLZdAMxiSOo>

In an interview with Josh Garay, the filmmaker, it was written: "It is a unique combination of patience, determination, genes, love and luck that allows any married couple to reach their 75th anniversary. They deserve awe and respect.

Given this truth, what to do with two Holocaust survivors — one 93, the other about to turn 100 — who celebrated 75 years of marriage on January 6?

Joshua Garay, who grew up in Tenaflly, where his parents still live, is fascinated by the story of his grandparents, which, he believes, has many less obvious lessons to teach about resilience and hope, as well as inevitable lessons about grief, horror and betrayal.

He plans to turn the story of Joseph and Olga Garay into a documentary; as he embarks on the task, he details their lives.

"Joseph Garay's entire family was killed in the Holocaust," Josh Garay said. "Most His brothers were killed at Majdanek. Born in 1921 and raised in Piešťany, a small town in what is now Slovakia, Joseph was the eldest in a large family. When he was 19, he heard that the Germans were coming to pick up the Jews; the operation was planned for Friday evening, 'because they knew all the Jews would be at home.' Joseph Garay decided that he was not going to get on that transport; he did not know exactly where it was going, but he knew that it was not a good place.

Joseph's own father, who was already dead, had a non-Jewish friend, and this friend, Josef Paserin, 'took him in,' said Josh Garay. 'He protected my grandfather until the end of the war. When they

felt they were no longer safe in the city, they went to the mountains and took my grandfather with them'.

Mr. Paserin had a wife and a daughter [the original Yad Vashem article said that the couple had no children. His daughter is evidently in the picture]. 'I don't think his daughter liked what her father did,' he said Mr. Garay. 'She was afraid.' But Joseph Garay stayed with the family until the end of the war. Later, Mr. Paserin was honored, first in Bratislava - and then at Yad Vashem. He explained why he took the risks, which endangered both himself and his family. **'He said he had no choice,' Mr. Garay said. 'This was another human being, with a life. I never thought twice about it. There was nothing else to consider. I had to save people'.**

During the war, Joseph Garay 'wasn't exactly a partisan, but he was a bit of an underground man,' his grandson said. 'He helped get a few people out of danger, including a famous rabbi.' Most of the time, his own hiding place was safe, but 'a few times the Nazis came looking for him, and he had to come out the back door'.

The families kept in touch. 'My grandfather would send the family's money - not because they asked for it; they didn't — and occasionally, in the 1980s and 1990s, he would visit," Josh Garay said.

Olga Gottesman and Joseph Garay went through a wide range of experiences, first separately and then together.

Olga Gottesman was born in 1928 in Munkács; she lived a comfortable life until the Nazis rounded up the Jews. They were fairly safe until 1944, near the end of the war, when they were sent away with brutal thoroughness. Most of his grandmother's family died, Mr. Garay said; his grandmother and her sister, Goldie, were sent to Birkenau. In 1945, when the Nazis lost, they sent their prisoners on a death march. "A lot of people just dropped dead," Mr. Garay said. "You didn't dare look back at the Germans, because they would kill you".

Eventually his grandmother and her sister joined the group, which had managed to break away from the march; their vigilance became desperate self-defense. The Jews found a small house, with a chimney, and smoke coming out of it. They were afraid, but they were frozen and had no good options, so they went in - and here the story begins to sound like a bleak version of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. The people in the house panicked and fled, leaving a fire in the fireplace and food on the table. The Jews ate and slept; in the morning there was a knock on the door. 'It was the Russians.' They were safe.

Now that the war was over, the half-starved, traumatized survivors had to figure out what to do next. Their understanding of the world had shattered. Many of them tried to find survivors among their family, friends, or community. Olga and Goldi Gottesman traveled to Budapest, as did Joseph Garay. They met at the train station while searching - unsuccessfully - for survivors they knew.

'This It wasn't love at first sight," Josh Garay said. "First, they became a little friendly. It took them a while to fall in love." But eventually they did. Soon Olga and Joseph were off to Prague ... and they were married by the chief rabbi there.

Then Joseph went to America. "He managed to buy one ticket on the ship, so he went first," Josh said. "He said, 'I'll come back for you.' It happened a few months later.

Meanwhile, Goldie Gottesman made her way to Brooklyn, where she married and owned a dry-cleaning shop. She died in the mid-1990s.

In 1997, Joseph Garay put his arm around his rescuer, Josef Paserin, who was honored at Yad Vashem. The Garays settled on the Lower East Side. Mr. Garay's father was a tailor, and taught his son some of his trade. Joseph Garay started at the bottom and worked his way up through various companies until he founded his own clothing line, Gar Fashions, where he made and sold high-end women's

clothing to stores, such as Bergdorf Goodman, Neiman Marcus, Bonwit Teller, and Sak's Fifth Avenue. They had three sons: Stuart, Kenneth, who is Josh's father, and Andrew, who grew up in Searingtown, Long Island.

Mr. Garay traveled frequently on business, going to London, Paris, and all over the country. 'He was very ambitious... '.

Throughout this period, perhaps more accurately, throughout that period and to this day, **the Garay couple were active philanthropists and in the Jewish community.**

Then, 'in the late 1970s, early 1980s, my grandfather got tired of the industry, and he moved away from it,' Mr. Garay said. "He got into real estate" - the business Josh Garay runs today, "and he became even more involved in various Jewish organizations and charities," including the Museum of Jewish Heritage in Lower Manhattan and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

The Garays sent items to the museum in Manhattan. "One of them is a stool, which was hidden in the Paserins' house," Josh said. "They put an address on the bottom of it for a relative of [Joseph's] in New York, so that after the war he would have somewhere to go. He forgot about the stool, until about 20 years ago." Then the family sent it to the museum.

The Garays have also been active in documenting their story, including for the Spielberg Foundation. Kenneth Garay and his wife, Carol, moved to Tenaflly; Josh attended Moriah School and the family belongs to the Ahavat Torah congregation in Englewood.

The family celebrated Olga and Joseph's anniversary with a celebration during a [corona] pandemic, it's strange - on Zoom. "My grandparents are not happy about the pandemic, but they are optimistic," Josh said. "They are optimistic about a brighter tomorrow, and they believe we will get there sooner rather than later".

The Holocaust could harden people or sensitize them, he continued, and his grandparents were sensitive. "They are very generous," he said. "They are very good at taking care of other people." If his grandmother cooks and has leftovers, she gives them to the keeper. They remember many people's birthdays - not just close friends or family - and send flowers. Still, Josh said, getting older is hard. "It's a blessing and a curse," he said.

Josh Garay decided he wanted to make a documentary about his grandparents' experiences. "I want it to be a powerful piece of work, and I want my grandparents to be a part of it," he said. He wants to travel to Europe and film himself talking to descendants of the people, who were there, so he can hear the stories as they were told. He plans to hire professional filmmakers to work with him, and he has started a GoFundMe campaign to do so.

This work is urgent, Mr. Garay said. Anti-Semitism and intolerance are on the rise. And as for his grandparents, "time is of the essence".

As they, of course, knew, looking back on 75 years "Marriage."

On a Ukrainian website I found the article from May 1999: "'I'm sorry that my friend Josef Paserin couldn't come here. I brought you, at least, a picture of him so you could see who this golden man is,'" said Joseph Garay in an excited voice yesterday, holding up a large yellowing photo above his head. Joe Garay comes from Piešťany and has lived in New York for 53 years. The golden man he mentioned saved his life during World War II. 'My whole family perished in the Auschwitz [and Majdanek] concentration camp. The Hlinkova Guard searched for me three times, but thanks to Josef Paserin and his wife, Maria, I finally survived,' he added in broken Slovak. [Hlinka Guard: Militia,

which was the military wing of the far-right Slovak People's Party. The Hlinka Guard was formed during the Sudetenland Crisis in the summer of 1938. The militia operated in Slovakia against Jews, Czechs, and dissidents the anti-Semitic regime.]

Yesterday, at Bratislava Castle, the senior ambassador of the State of Israel to the Slovak Republic, residing in Vienna, Nathan Miron, presented twenty-six Slovaks with the Yad Vashem Righteous Among the Nations award for saving Jews persecuted by the Nazis during World War II".

I contacted Josh Garay and received his permission to upload photos from his Facebook site – for which I am very grateful!

January, 27, 2021
In honor of National Holocaust Remembrance Day, below is a photo of my Grandmothers family from before the war. All of these people were exterminated at Auschwitz Concentration Camp with the exception of my great Aunt Goldie and brother Arnold, both in this picture.



November 18, 2019: Josh with his grandparents,
Joseph and Olga
They are an inspiration to all." [06 January 2022]

"Happy 76th wedding anniversary to my Grandparents and Holocaust Survivors, Joseph & Olga Garay.





24.6.2021: "This article below is from the front page of the Jewish World, written in 2000. My Grandparents are both Holocaust survivors and married for more than 75 years. They survived the Holocaust only to build a new life for themselves in America. **They are a blessing and true role models for millions of people throughout the world.** In business, it's important to focus on transactions but equally important to be an ethical individual. **I owe my Grandparents that trait."**

20.9.2021

"100 years young. Happy Birthday to my Grandfather, Joseph Garay, on this incredible milestone. As a Holocaust Survivor, he rebuilt his life, raised a family and achieved his dreams. **He is a remarkable individual and true hero to all of mankind.** Many more years of great health and happiness."



Link to the "Yad Vashem" website:

<https://collections.yadvashem.org/en/righteous/4035527>

6. Israelis born in Carpatorus: Mermelstein (Shoham) Moshe (Munkacs)

Several months ago, I began collecting testimonies from Holocaust survivors, born in Carpatorus, which are documented on the Yad Vashem website. That's how I came across a testimony, titled "Memoirs of Moshe Mermelshtein, a native of Transcarpathia, recorded on January 1, 2004.

Link to the written testimony: <https://collections.yadvashem.org/he/documents/5089442>



In the testimony, it was not clear where Moshe was from. I managed to find information on the Internet, and I understood that Moshe lives in Kibbutz Ramot Menashe. I contacted him. It turned out that he was born in **Munkacs**. And so, on a winter day, February 16, 2025, we went, with Zeev Milbauer, to visit Moshe, with his son, Yitzhak (Itzik) accompanying us for the visit.

Moshe arrived from work in the kibbutz garage, riding a scooter. We were excited to see him, 97.5 years old [born in October 1927], still active and contributing his abilities [and so are these days].

We heard his life story, we presented him with a certificate - a tribute from the second generation to the first generation - and we also met Itzik, his son, who turns out to be an active and special volunteer [more on that in the "Ours" section]. Moshe's parents were Esther and Yitzhak. The father was a boot manufacturer and many of his customers were Swabians [Germans], who lived in the area.

From left: Itzik and Moshe, Zeev Milbauer and Ruthi Fixler



They had 9 children. Moshe's 3 sisters were: Hanna, Metuka and Zipporah - all of whom were murdered in Auschwitz; Brothers: Shmuel lived in England; Eliezer immigrated to the US after the war; Uri immigrated to Israel in 1941; Meir immigrated to Israel after the war; another brother was murdered with his parents in Auschwitz, along with the older sister's husband - and their baby.

Moshe studied at the Hebrew Gymnasium in Munkacs, so he knew Hebrew.

In April 1944, the family was deported to Auschwitz and Moshe survived the first selection. After about a week, he jumped on a train car, not knowing his destination. That's how he arrived in Warsaw and was employed in dismantling the destroyed houses and collecting the bricks, from which they were built. While dismantling, he found money and gold jewelry, which were hidden in the walls, and thus he could buy a loaf of bread or a coat

In August 1944, as the Russians approached Warsaw, he was marched with 5,000 prisoners to Dachau, a distance of about a thousand kilometers. Due to the intense heat, hunger and thirst, many of the walkers died, including from German gunfire. The Germans also shot prisoners, who entered the Vistula River and the river water turned red... Only about 500 prisoners reached Dachau.

From Dachau, Moshe arrived at Camp No. 4 of 11 subcamps, which were affiliated with Dachau, the Landsberg district, called Kaufering. The conditions were very difficult: working in the snow, living in tents half underground, diseases, severe starving, no protection for the body, so that many casualties fell "like flies". His uncle, Shmuel Spiegel, who was a doctor, also arrived at the camp and arranged for him a job in the officers' camp. In his testimony, Moshe said that he did not know how he survived all the illnesses, the cold and the hunger. He spoke of his ability to survive and the strictness of washing himself daily in ice water near a tap in the camp.

On April 27, 1945, the Dachau concentration camp was officially liberated by the American army. Moshe had a single friend named Zvi, who together managed to survive Dachau.

After the liberation of the camp by the Americans - an American Jewish officer wanted to adopt Moshe as a child, but Moshe wanted to return "home", to see who was left of his family - and to immigrate to the Land of Israel.

After Moshe and Zvi, his friend, recovered from hunger and weakness, they looked for their home in Munkács - and there also they parted ways. Moshe found his home destroyed. He realized that there was nothing left - and began to search for his older brothers. This is how he ended up in Bucharest and Budapest. Later, he contacted with other young Zionists, and under the guidance of emissaries from the country, they formed a group, the goal of which was to reach Israel and build a kibbutz. After a training period in Italy, which lasted several months, he immigrated to Israel on the ship "Dov Hoz", which left La Spezia.

The ship "Dov Hoz" arrived in Israel in May 1946. Along with it also arrived the ship "Elijah Golomb",

which carried 2 natives of Carpatorus, who fell in the War of Independence: Wolf Mordechai-Shmuel of Chop and Heizler Bezael of Wolowitz.

Moshe is listed as 19 years old, destined for Kibbutz Ramat Hashofet.

On the La Spezia affair – see the following documentation: Article about Moshe's visit to La Spezia, Italy, the port city from which he immigrated to Israel:

Between Ramot Menashe and La Spezia – May 8, 2014 / Sarah Ozacky-Lazar Ramot Menashe

<https://www.sarahozacky.com/1158/%D7%91%D7%99%D7%9F-%D7%A8%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%9E%D7%A0%D7%A9%D7%94-%D7%9C%D7%9C%D7%94-%D7%A1%D7%A4%D7%A6%D7%99%D7%94-8-%D7%91%D7%9E%D7%90%D7%99-2014/>

העליה של הסוכנות היהודית לא"י
שכנת העליה חיספה

רשימת עולים שבאו לא"י

19.5.46 האניה / משפחה / מדינת / גיל / סוג / מס' / מקור / הערות

המספחה	השם	גיל	סוג	מס'	מקור	הערות
מוסקוביץ	ברכה	23	ג	רומניה	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מוסקוביץ	דוד	22	ג	רומניה	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מוסקוביץ	חיה	19	ג	צ'כיה	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מוסקוביץ	יטעיה	23	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מוסקוביץ	חיה	17	3-ב	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מיכלביץ	רולף	21	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מיכלביץ	ישראל	26	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מיקולבנסקי	משה	23	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מירנסקי	הרצל	32	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מירנסקי	מרים	25	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מירנסקי	סוניה	24	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מכסי	אליסלך	20	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מליק	בן-ציון	32	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מנגל	לוטץ	19	ג	רומניה	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מנגל	חנה	21	ג	רומניה	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מנוסביץ	משה	20	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מנסלס	מרצל	20	ג	רומניה	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מזקר	חנה	18	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מירנסקי	סימון	33	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	
מירנסקי	משה	19	ג	פולין	הקרובים בא"י ובתחום	

"In May 1946, 1,400 illegal immigrants, who were Holocaust survivors, left the port of La Spezia in Italy, after a long struggle, which included a hunger strike, on their way to the Land of Israel. Before saying goodbye to the residents of the city, who had helped them during their six-week struggle, they stood on the small pier and loudly sang "Hatikva," with the city orchestra accompanying them, and its residents waving goodbye to the sailing ships.

68 years later, on May 8, 2014, we stood on the same pier and the Ramot Menashe Choir, together with the La Spezia Children's Choir, sang "Hatikva" together with great emotion, and many of us shed a tear.

There was one man in the audience who was privileged to participate in both ceremonies. Moshe Mermelstein-Shoham, one of the founders of Kibbutz Ramot Menashe, was then about 18 years old, suffering hardships. After losing his family and his youth and joining the group "Builders of the Negev", who trained for a year in Italy, with the aim of establishing a kibbutz in Israel. The group was among the immigrants on the ships "Dov Hoz" and "Elijah Golomb". Many other ships sailed from La Spezia, which has since been called "Gate of Zion", because it opened its gates and the small port it contained, to thousands of Jews who wanted to leave Europe and reach Israel on the "Second Aliyah".

Moshe returned to the pier, this time accompanied by local media teams and second and third generation members of Ramot Menashe, and told his moving story over and over again. He told them that until the age of 70 he chose not to talk about what he went through in the Holocaust, because he wanted to become an Israeli citizen and give his children a normal and happy life. However, after they grew older, and since he had given detailed testimony as part of Spielberg's testimony collection project, he decided that he could no longer remain silent. "Now I will not stop talking," he told the large audience that listened to him, "because soon there will be no one left

"The ceremony on the pier was the culmination of a visit by a large delegation from Ramot Menashe, who arrived in La Spezia at the invitation of the mayor, Massimo Federici, to present the "Exodus" Prize for Peace and Tolerance to the kibbutz, an award that has previously been received by people such as Yossi Harel, commander of Exodus (whose sabbath Ronit lives in Ramot Menashe), and the writer David Grossman. The connection between the two communities was re-established two years ago and became even stronger following the visit. The award ceremony was also attended by the Italian Ambassador to Israel, Francesco Talò, the Deputy Ambassador of Israel to Italy, Dan Ha'Ezrachi, the Governor of the Liguria region, to which the city of La Spezia belongs, the rabbi of the small Jewish community, and many, many dignitaries of the city and its residents, including local students and teachers. That morning, a film made about the affair several years ago, in which friends from Ramot Menashe were interviewed, was shown to hundreds of high school students in the Dante Alighieri Hall. Some of whom are no longer with us today. It was a surreal feeling to see them on the big screen talking about those fateful six weeks in the city, during which they were warmly



assisted by its residents, who themselves lived lives of deprivation and hardship after the war.

In his speech at the award ceremony, the mayor said that through our visit they are relearning an important chapter in the history of the city

and the shaping of its identity, which some of its residents today are unaware of.

Giora Retz, the community director of Ramot Menashe, thanked the city's residents on behalf of the kibbutz - both for the solidarity they showed then - and for the heartfelt hospitality and the award we received today, and promised to continue to strengthen the ties between the communities. Dan Ha'Ezrachi from the Israeli Embassy thanked La Spezia on behalf of the entire State of Israel, saying that the ceremony is taking place shortly after the commemoration of Holocaust Remembrance Day and Independence Day - and a month after we celebrated Passover, which is a symbol of the departure from slavery to freedom.

The writer of these lines told those present that her parents, who stayed in Italy for about three years after the war and engaged in organizing the second wave of immigration, saw Italy as a place of freedom and liberty, a country that had restored their joy of life and hope after the loss and suffering they had experienced.

Moshe Mermelstein, once again, moved the audience when he told his personal story and described how the residents of La Spezia installed toilets and showers on the small pier, brought them food and begged them to stop the hunger strike so that no harm would befall them.

After the award ceremony, the Ramot Menashe Choir, conducted by Merav Ravid, amazed everyone by singing in Italian and Hebrew and received loud applause.

The Ramot Menashe delegation, which numbered 19 people, was treated to enthusiastic Italian hospitality, which included meals, excursions and getting to know the city and was accompanied throughout its three-day stay by Luca Bondelli, the mayor's personal assistant, who spared no effort to make our stay pleasant."



When he arrived in Israel, Moshe changed his last name to Shoham – at the request of David Ben-Gurion. But when he found his brothers in Israel and realized that they had kept their original name – Moshe returned to the name Mermelstein, with the addition of the name Shoham. Upon his arrival, Moshe wanted to study, especially he loved mathematics and physics. That is how he came to Kibbutz Ramat Ha'shofet. When the War of Independence began, Moshe enlisted and went with his unit to Kibbutz Yechiam, in a

supply convoy. The Yechiam convoy was a supply convoy of the Carmeli Brigade that left on March 27, 1948 from Nahariya to Kibbutz Yechiam, which was cut off. The convoy was ambushed and attacked by gangs and Arab villagers near El-Kabari. In the attack on the convoy, 47 people were killed, including 3 natives of Carpatorus, who were documented on our website: **Hoffman Max Moshe**, born in Volove, **Wolf Mordechai-Shmuel** (Muki), born in Chop, and **Cohen Nachman**, born in Tiszauljak. They are buried in a mass grave.

From the Eitan section's investigation into Yechiam's convoy, conducted by Arik Tibon, Moshe is documented as having survived the escorting tanks.

Moshe was wounded above his eyes by shrapnel. With some of his friends, they walked on foot towards Acre - and from there to Kiryat Haim, from where many fighters left. The second time they went out in a caravan - they managed to reach Yechiam, stayed there and defended it.

In Yechiam, Moshe met Pnina, a sabra from a Yemenite family, who served as a liaison in the defense trenches. They were carried and led on a tractor around the kibbutz.

Moshe shared with Pnina his experiences in the Holocaust. When she asked how you didn't object, a question that many sabras asked holocaust survivors - Moshe remained silent - until the age of 70 and did not share the tragedy he experienced.

Moshe and Pnina wrote a book called **"The Victory of the Spirit"**; **How symbolic it is that on the same day the book was published in 2021 - Pnina, Moshe's wife, passed away...**

Pnina and Moshe had 3 children: Itzik [named after his father], Esther [named after his mother] and Dganit.

They were among the first founders of Kibbutz Ramot Menashe, which was founded in 1948 in the area of the kibbutzims Ein HaShofet, Dalia and Ramat HaShofet.



In July 1996, Moshe was interviewed by Spielberg's Testimony Project.

Link to the testimony: <https://youtu.be/89QificTF70?si=ZXAirfP-dZpnNgpZ>

I will upload several photos from the testimony:



Moshe Mermelstein, 1996



The five brothers of the Mermelstein family, who survived the Holocaust:
From the left: Shmuel, Uri, Eliezer, Meir and Moshe



Moshe's father, Yitzhak



From the top right: Hagar, the late, Itzik's wife, Deganit, Pnina, Moshe and grandchildren Mor and Alon

Moshe's 98th birthday: From the right: Dganit, Itzik, Alon and Mor [Itzik's children]

Next month he will turn 99! We wish Moshe and health and many more years of activity!

7. Ours: Shoham Yitzhak (Munkacs)

Yitzhak (Itzik) is Moshe (Shoham) Mermelstein's son, about whom I wrote in this newsletter. But beyond that – he is a model man, who volunteers and contributes to the weak in society in many important and moving areas of assistance.

After combat military service, and after a long trip around the world, he studied sports, movement and dance teaching. He worked for several years in schools and nursing homes. Due to the need for a better livelihood, he moved, together with his wife and their daughter Mor, to São Paulo, Brazil. At that time his wife was pregnant. There he worked in the security sector. Shortly after their arrival, their son, Alon, was born.

In Israel, they built a house in Alon HaGalil, and the family lived there after several years of working in Brazil.

Upon arrival in Israel, Itzik started a new job as the director of sports and rehabilitation at the "Beit HaLohem" in Haifa. Over the years, Itzik had many experiences with disabled athletes, such as: sports championships for severely disabled people in basketball, badminton and cycling, which took place in various European countries; A challenging journey on hand bikes for amputees and paralyzed people - and tandems, which allow the blind to ride with an escort; A journey in memory of those who fell in the Twin Towers disaster - from New York to Washington, D.C., about 500 km and more, over 3 days, with riders from America and other countries.

In February 2017, Itzik's wife, Hagar, passed away from cancer. Itzik experienced a difficult period and a lot of grief, following which he decided to move to Haifa. Today, his two children Mor and Alon live in the Haifa area and Itzik lives with his spouse, Amira.

Since his retirement, Itzik has **volunteered for several organizations**. One of them is **"NATAN Worldwide Disaster Relief"**, which is an Israeli voluntary humanitarian organization, specializing in

providing medical and psychosocial assistance to victims of natural disasters, humanitarian crises and armed conflicts around the world and in Israel. The association is based on a network of many volunteers, experts in the fields of medicine, mental health and logistics. He operates a dental clinic in Haifa, which treats, free of charge, people without civil status, street dwellers, drug addicts and more.

Another association in which Itzik volunteers is the **"Ha'Atalf Association"**, which is an association of graduates of Shayetet 13, whose purpose is to maintain an active and supportive community of members and to help its members integrate, lead and contribute to Israeli society in the spirit of Shayetet values. Since its establishment until today, the association has been operating among Shayetet 13 unit, its regular and reserve soldiers, assisting in the establishment of the unit's legacy, supporting bereaved families and those injured in Shayetet service (physically, mentally and injured by the Kishon River)." In this framework, they clean the homes of those in need, hold meetings and home activities, in groups of victims, combat drills, called **"Chevel Zug"** [two people connected to each other by a rope] - sailing, diving, boats, surfboards, saps, and more. There are currently about 8 such groups, some of which have been operating successfully for about 3 years or more.

As part of the **"Ha'Atalf"** association, Itzik visits the homes of Holocaust survivors, helps solve electrical, plumbing, door, window, and shutter problems - and provides instruction in using the telephone and television, distributing food to the homes of survivors on Fridays and holidays.

Itzik participated in a sailing club, which took part in the flotillas to salute the victims of the Dakar submarine, held annually in the Haifa port.

Itzik adopted a soldier, who is dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder. They meet, as a group, once every two weeks at sea.

If I had to give a name to the picture, I would say: As big as the opening of the hands - the size of the opening of the heart and giving to society!

Blessed are you for daily volunteering, as a way of life and as a symbol of characteristic values!



Itzik and Hagar z"l with their children Mor and Alon



Itzik with his spouse, Amira





Itzik with table tennis players from the Haifa Beit Ha'Lohem



Itzik accompanies a disabled IDF soldier on a hand bike ride



Itzik (left) with Beit Ha'Lohem athletes in a highly accomplished sports activity



Itzik (front) with one of the youth teams



Itzik (left) with the Beit Ha'Lohem Haifa wheelchair basketball team, which won the championship and the state cup

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