

child survivors of the holocaust

CONNECTIONS

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Dear Child Survivors,
Thank you so much for supporting the first forum in our Child Survivor series *Children Surviving Hurt*.

On the coldest winter day in 25 years child survivors and their family and friends streamed into the auditorium at the Jewish Holocaust Centre and filled the room to capacity.

Our panelists, Dr Paul Valent, Richard Rozen OAM, Bernadette Gore and Floris Kalman, stood before the microphone and shared their thoughts, personal experience and feelings 70 years on. The audience responded telling us all of their experience, adding comments and personal details as they confirmed how similar in many ways their life's journey had evolved.

We are preparing the next forum in this important series *Children Remembering Hurt* scheduled to take place March 2016, we hope you will once again come together to share and contribute for all our benefit.

There is a DVD of the Forum available from Philip Maisel at the JHC. If you would like to order a copy, please contact Phillip on 9528 1985.

We are advised by the World Federation of Jewish Child Survivors that it is not too late to register for the CSH Conference in Houston, 9-11 October, 2015. To register online, go to the website www.holocaustchild.org.

On behalf of the Child Survivors Group we wish you all a Shanah Tova! May the New Year bring peace, good health and happiness to you and yours.

Viv Parry, Chairperson, CSH

Claims Conference Update

Jewishcare confirm there has not been a final cut-off date advised as yet for submitting your application for the one-off Child Survivor Compensation.

For those still thinking about filling in the application form, Jewishcare ask that you contact them for assistance and they are ready to help you. Please phone 8517 5999 and ask for the 'Child Survivor Compensation' support team.

Jewishcare also confirms "Officially some child survivors worldwide have received their payment but they are not aware of any Jewishcare clients being paid at this time. "



Jewish Children in the Drancy internment camp, France 1942. Photo: Memorial de la Shoah

Child Survivors Forum: *Children Surviving Hurt*



CSH Chairperson Viv Parry.



Head of the JHC Testimonies Department filming the forum.



Panelist Dr Paul Valent and Julie Valent.



Panelists Floris Kalman, Bernadette Gore, Richard Rozen OAM and Dr Paul Valent.



Members of the audience and the Forum.

All photos taken by CSH official photographer Margarita Riaikenen

World Federation of Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust & Descendants

President Stefanie Seltzer; Exec.Vice-President Max Arpels Lezer
Exec.board members: Anita Ekstein, Jacques Fein, Melissa Hacker; Isaac
Kot; Rene Lichtman; Daisy Miller; Henri Obstfeld; Charley Silow;
Melta Svob; Elisheva Van der Hal;

A WORLD FEDERATION NEWS UPDATE

The 2015 annual meeting of the Claims Conference was convened in New York July 13-16th. Our WFJCSHD was represented by Stefanie Seltzer and Max Arpels Lezer.

There were extended discussions on the accusations that have been circulated by journalists about the accusations by the Ombudsman Shmuel Hollander with regard to the termination of his contract and his allegations of mismanaging.

The board, comprised of representatives of many, international Jewish organizations, dismissed such accusations as unfounded. Such scandalous reporting by journalists in fact hurts us Jews, and particularly us survivors, as we know it negatively impacts our negotiations with Germany.

The Claims Conference has made significant gains in funding in the recent past. Home care allocations have been increased by 45%, to EU 205million in 2015. That means needy survivors who need help receive more hours of help each day. 63,000 survivors receive home care assistance.

Article 2 Fund:

Eligibility for payments, with regard based on time spent in ghetto, has been reduced from a requirement of 18 months in ghetto to 3months under the new program.

The income limits were raised from \$16,000 to \$25,000.

Also, our negotiators were able to reduce the requirements for time spent in hiding or under false identity in Nazi-occupied territories from 18 months to 6 months, affecting primarily survivors persecuted in Hungary, Italy, France, Greece, and Slovakia.

Child Survivor Fund:

It was particularly meaningful for us Child Survivors to hear Ambassador Stuart Eisenstat credit our 2014 Conference in Berlin, and the presentations by us Child Survivors after the conference in front of over 100 German government officials, as helping significantly in the negotiations for the **Child Survivor Fund of a one-time payment of \$2500**. Amb. Eisenstat said the Germans have wanted to focus on mental issues and physical problems, but after our presentations agreed that **all CS** had experienced trauma and difficult times

The fund became effective Jan 1st, 2015, and first payments were made in May, to 22,000 Child Survivors. Further payments will be made in 2016 and 2017, after further funding from Germany to the **Child Survivor Fund**. The Claims Conf. received about 90,000 applications, of which probably 20% are not eligible.

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Amb. Eisenstat spoke at length about how difficult these most recent negotiations had been; he credited Roman Kent for his "special chemistry", in the negotiations with the German officials.

On the last day of the Claims Conference meetings, we also heard from a representative of the French Jews on the current situation in France. He said that so far in 2015, there has been an increase of 80% in anti-Semitic acts. 10,000 police have been added to protect the population.

There are now 7 million Muslims in France, as compared to 1/2 million Jews. The number of Jews leaving France has shown a dramatic increase, from 2000 in 2012 to 7000 in 2014. Most Jewish families do not send their children to public schools any more, because they are subject to discrimination and danger. They go instead to private schools, even Christian schools.

He also said that France needs our help on the internet.

We also want to inform you about the availability of a Polish pension for all those who were former Polish citizens and survived Nazi persecution in ghettos and concentration camps. The amount of this monthly pension is \$ 130 p.m.

Friends, let us show our common purpose once again in our meeting in Houston 2015, and in our continued goals to work together with Second Generation and Third Generation so that our history, our legacy, our efforts at Tikkun Olam are carried forward.

We urge you NOT to wait to register; after August 31 registration fee goes up with \$ 35 per person. Go to registration- and hotel link below.

<https://www.hmh.org/ConferenceRegistration.aspx>

<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/events>

May you enjoy good health and best wishes for the New Year.

August 2015
Stefanie Seltzer
President

Max Arpels Lezer
Executive Vice President

The Jewish Holocaust Centre presents

Jewish Refugees and Shanghai

犹太难民与上海

A travelling exhibition from the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum

The incredible Holocaust story about 20,000 Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi-occupied Europe who made a home and life for themselves in Shanghai.

31 August – 1 November 2015
www.jhc.org.au



Patrons:
Janita and Danny Seltzer
Eileen & Frederick Family
Ron & Sarah Tatarsky & family
together with Scott Winton Insurance Brokers

Supporter:
Eva Light

Friends:
Glen Eira City Council

Chinese Co-sponsors:
Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum

Lessons I have learned



Roza's mother, Sara Lamdanskaja, her rescuer Maria Bakshene, Margarita and Roza, in the year 1969, in Palanga, Lithuania. Palanga is a Lithuanian resort town by the Baltic sea.

After the last meeting of CHS group at the Holocaust Museum, and then reading Paul Valent's thought provoking book "In Two Minds", my mind returned to the question that I started asking many years ago: "What was the purpose of me going through such harsh experiences, being one step from death yet rescued, and becoming one of only six rescued children from the Kaunas Ghetto?"

For all these years, by meditating on this question and searching for answers, I found out that experience by itself is a great human treasure. Through experience we can learn and receive understanding. We can understand what we should do to make the world a better place for the children of the future. And we can pass our understanding on to our children and grandchildren.

So what lessons have I learned from my Holocaust experience? I learned a lesson of gratitude to the people who participated in my rescue and liberation. Without them there was no chance of me surviving. I am grateful to the men of the ghetto who carried me from one hiding place to another in a sack. And to my grandmother who went to meet death for the sake of not compromising my safety. I am grateful to my courageous and inventive mother who secured my survival throughout three German "actions", hid me in the ghetto and led me out of the ghetto through the barbed wire fence, to entrust me to a Lithuanian couple who agreed to hide me in their house.

And of course, I am endlessly grateful to my rescuers Maria and Kazimeras Baksha who fulfilled their mission of saving a Jewish child risking their own lives, with all love and courage possible. They didn't care that I was not a Lithuanian and not a Catholic. For them I was just a child who should live!

I suppose there was a mixture of Jewish and non-Jewish rescuers in the history of any child-survivor. It would be impossible to survive without their help. Recognized or not, all of them in reality are the Righteous among the Nations, an example for all of us. From them, we can learn a priceless lesson of putting the life and well-being of a child above all the considerations of states, nations and religions. And above our own fears and insecurities.

I am also not impervious to the impact of the life in ghetto and in hiding. I suffer from anxiety and become easily stressed out, and have to work with these aspects of my life and my health. And my family is also affected by this. Nevertheless, I am not an orphaned child anymore, I am an adult. As an adult, I am responsible for the children of today and of tomorrow.

I feel responsible for my own grandchildren – what kind of people they will grow up. I feel responsible for the children who are around and especially in the so-called underprivileged families. These children will make tomorrow's Australia together with my grandchildren. And I am particularly concerned about the children in detention. As an Australian citizen, I feel responsible for that what is done to these innocent beings in my name: they are imprisoned without guilt like I was in the ghetto, in a situation that inevitably leaves them with anxiety and all the other consequences similar to those from which we are suffering right now.

The third lesson I learned is that everything has its continuation. Like us before them, the children of today will become adults of tomorrow. Their mindsets will very much depend on their childhood impressions. So, by neglecting or even worse oppressing them today, we are showing them one model of behaviour. By loving and helping them unconditionally, we are promoting a completely different pattern. And we are sending a message to the future of our children and grandchildren, wherever they will live.

Roza Riaikenen

JHC Calendar of Events

Monday 31 August - Sunday 1 November
Exhibition

Jewish Refugees in Shanghai

Smorgon Auditorium

Enquiries: 9528 1985 or admin@jhc.org.au

Thursday 17 September, 11.15am
JHC Social Club

Guest Speaker: Walter Rapoport

A History of Interfaith Dialogue

Enquiries: 9528 1985 or admin@jhc.org.au

Sunday 20 September, 1.00pm
JHC Film Club

'Shanghai Ghetto' (2002): 95 mins

Entry: \$10

Online bookings: <http://www.trybooking.com/155826>

Enquiries: 9528 1985 or admin@jhc.org.au

Sunday 11 October, 4pm-5:30pm

'Photos and Memories with Horst Eisfelder'

Horst Eisfelder, as a young boy in Shanghai, having fled Germany with his parents, chronicled his time in Shanghai by photographing day-to-day life in the ghetto.

Enquiries: 9528 1985 or admin@jhc.org.au

Sunday 25 October 7pm-8:30pm

'Jewish refugees in Shanghai:

reflections on seventy years after liberation'

Guest Speaker: Andrew Jakubowicz

Professor of Sociology, University of Technology (Sydney)

Producer of interactive website on the Jews of Shanghai

'The Menorah of Fang Bang Lu'.

His family arrived in Australia from Shanghai in 1946, having escaped from Poland in 1939.

Sunday 13 September

Erev Rosh Hashanah

MUSEUM CLOSED

Monday 14 & Tuesday 15 September

Rosh Hashanah

MUSEUM CLOSED

Tuesday 22 September

Erev Yom Kippur

MUSEUM CLOSED FROM 1.00PM

Wednesday 23 September

Yom Kippur

MUSEUM CLOSED

Sunday 27 September

Erev Sukkot

MUSEUM CLOSED

Monday 28 & Tuesday 29 September

Sukkot

MUSEUM CLOSED

Sunday 4 October

Erev Shmini Atzeret

MUSEUM CLOSED

Monday 5 October

Shmini Atzeret / Erev Simchat Torah

MUSEUM CLOSED

Tuesday 6 October

Simchat Torah

MUSEUM CLOSED



***Wishing you and all your family
a L'Shana Tova***