

child survivors of the holocaust

CONNECTIONS

VOLUME 5 NO. 4

DECEMBER 2017



Welcome to the CSH 'A Point in Time' Anthology Launch edition of *Connections*.

We had a truly wonderful afternoon on Sunday 5 November. All our contributors were present and honoured for their support in this our third Anthology. Julia Reichman, JHC

Librarian and Editor of the anthology was joined on stage by Danielle Burns who was the main writer for the anthology. We have included photos from the event taken by our official CSH Photographer Margarita Riaikkenen, daughter of CSH Roza Riaikkenen. We are very grateful to Margarita for her support.

We were delighted to have the company of CSH Eva Marks

who made a great effort to be with us. Eva has suffered illness for the past years and has been assisting me in the back ground, I really appreciate her support and that of her husband Stan Marks. Marietta Elliot was not able to be with us but sent her warm regards to all child survivors.

Dr Paul Valent our founding President was our keynote speaker, a transcript of his words are included for everyone to appreciate. Floris Kalman a contributor to the anthology, and a past CSH President joined the others on stage.

Copies of 'A Point in Time' are on sale at the JHC for \$30.00. To all Child Survivors of the Holocaust or their family members who may not be well at this time, we are thinking of you and send our best wishes for your well being.

Happy Chanukah! Warm regards.

Viv Parry, Chairperson, CSH

Launch of Anthology - A Point in Time

Thank you for the honour of allowing me to speak at the launch of A Point in Time, the third anthology of our Melbourne child survivor group. I believe that we are unique among child survivor groups around the world to have produced three anthologies.



Keynote speaker, Dr Paul Valent.

I believe that our anthologies also demonstrate a unique progression, and together they tell a story. Each anthology speaks differently to the world.

Look at our first anthology, *Silent No More*, edited by Nina Stone published in 1999, updated by Floris Kalman in 2012. The book is stark, black and white. In large black fonts we tell our stories, fragments of our hearts.

We published *Silent No More* at the turn of the century. A time of peace, when people were hungry to hear our

stories. They wanted to learn from the catastrophes of the 20th century in order to not repeat them in the new millennium.

And we, in 1999, having recognised ourselves for only a decade, we wanted to reach out, to be recognized, to speak, in fact to be silent no more.

Our second anthology was *Heirloom*, edited by Marietta Elliot-Kleerkoper, Helen Gershoni, and Floris Kalman. It was published in 2006. The book is larger, finer, more organized, more colourful, with pictures and poems. The stories, still speaking from the heart are longer.

The title *Heirloom* suggests that we had gone beyond just not being silent. We had something to bequeath to our descendants and to the world, which by now wasn't quite as peaceful as everyone had hoped.

Which brings me back to *A Point in Time* compiled by Vivian Parry and Julia Reichstein, and edited by Julia.

It is impressive, you'll agree. It is larger than the previous books. It is tactile, colourful, pleasing to the eyes.

But I must confess that when I first saw the book I was taken aback. What were those maps doing there? What about the historical contexts? And those coloured pictures of normal smiling children, pictures of poignant fulfilling times, and of children having grown into heads of families with children and grandchildren? Where were the pictures of children with hands raised under machine guns, in clothes in ghettos, in striped pyjamas against barbed

wire?

I was worried that my experiences would be downplayed by photos of me smiling at either end of my story. That the photos suggested that the dead have been replaced? That 'Am Yisrael chai! The people of Israel live!?' But what about my story, which wasn't all happy?

No! Our heartfelt stories were still present in all their genuine pain. But the editors and interviewers had a perspective that we survivors couldn't own. You see, the book is not only impressive in its own right, but also in that it is the first of our anthologies inspired, compiled, edited, and produced by others - the next generation. It is others who nominated the title, the format, and who interviewed us.

It is others who felt that our stories were precious and had to be recorded. They realized that we were a disappearing breed, perhaps the last 100,000-200,000 around the world who remained of nine million Jews in Europe at the outbreak of World War Two, of whom six million were murdered, including one and a half million children. We were the 10% of children who survived, and now even those numbers have suffered attrition.

We are very grateful that others were inspired and interested to listen and write our stories, genuine and printed as told from the heart.

Time was running out. Our voices had to be captured for the future. But how?

Which bring me back to the question: What is the point of A Point in Time? Let me diverge for a moment.

I can relate to a point in time. My point in time as I relate in the book was as a four-year-old being abandoned in a street in Budapest while my parents were led away by two men in trench coats, to be imprisoned, to be handed back over the border, to be loaded on to a train bound for Auschwitz.

We all had points of time. For Bernadette it was when men in black pointed a gun at her father's head and she saw her father's terrified face. For Paul Grinwald it was when a librarian screamed, 'We don't lend books to people like you,' and she tore up Paul's library card and threw the pieces into the waste paper bin. For Floris it was suddenly finding herself in a strange place with strange people. For Irma it was Kristallnacht and seeing her school on fire. For Roza it was bombing and move to the ghetto. For Joe it was receiving an identity card with a J, signifying a plethora of restrictions and humiliations. For Bep, even if she has no clear memories for it, it is her father being killed and her being taken into hiding. For Henry, also too young to remember clearly, it was being carried in a parcel out of the ghetto. For Cesia, Richard, and Joe, idyllic childhoods suddenly came to an end by Nazi bombings

rapid occupation of Poland and immediate persecution of Jews.

For all of us these points in time were both culminations of earlier fears and precursors of many other traumas. But the significance of these points was that we children experienced them as being catapulted from our previous worlds of love and security into a nightmare world. It was as if the index finger of Fate pointed irretrievably into a darkness where the sun never shone and flowers never bloomed.

Even after the war we carried our nightmares deep in our bones and deep inside our skulls.

Still, in the last 70 years we have healed to various degrees. Like our anthologies, our stark black and white lives have gained colour and texture. Love has reentered our lives, as you can see in the pictures of us with our families in our latest anthology.

Which brings me back to A Point in Time. This book is not us opening our mouths for the first time, nor an heirloom for our children. It is a universal message for posterity.

Imagine if anthologies similar to this one had come down to us from the time of the Roman genocide of the Jews, or from the time of the Inquisition. What would we want to know from those anthologies?

We would want to know where these tragedies occurred. Maps would help. We would want to know the different contexts of the tragedies. Historical contexts would help. We'd want to know who were these people? What was important to them? Pictures of them and poignant moments in their lives that were important to them would help.

That is what our current editors understood. The book portrays ordinary people, children happy before being persecuted, then striving to regain their humanity and love, celebrating their achievements on the way. That speaks to later generations.

Why A Point in Time? Whole catastrophes cannot be absorbed. But points where life changes forever everyone can identify with. Everyone fears such points. Here we depict such points. We describe them from the heart. We demonstrate that these points must never be reached in the future, and lines that must never be crossed.

A child must never be officially relegated to an inferior alien contemptible status. A child must never see its house or school maliciously burned down. It must not see his or her parent threatened by a gun. A child must never be bombed or shot at. A child must never be thrown out of home and cooped up in miserable circumstances. A child must never be torn away from loving parents to save its life or because its parents are likely to be killed. A child must never lose its loving carers and must never have to hide its true self. Beyond these points of no return not only is the child's



Julia Reichstein and Danielle Burns.

This book indicates to posterity what must be prevented and avoided at all costs.

It speaks in the language that will be understood by future generations. It could have been compiled only by those who resonate with our plights and are simultaneously a bridge to the future: the next generation. It is appropriate that this, probably our last anthology, be compiled by that generation; that we hand over the baton to them.

I reiterate: A Point in Time is a very important book. It contains the poignancy of experience, alongside its context, in language that speaks to future generations. It highlights points in time when children's lives are altered forever. It warns of such points for future generations. I commend this book to you all, and to a general very wide readership.

Dr Paul Valent

world irretrievably lost, the world too loses its innocence and has become irretrievably awry.



CSH contributors sign copies of anthology.



Roza Riaikenen, Danielle Burns and Julia Reichstein.



Irma Hanner and Joe Szwarcberg.



Abe Goldberg & Viv Parry.



CSH Contributors on stage.



Viv Parry & Eva Marks.



Floris Kalman, Past President of CSH.



Henry Buch & Bernadette Gore.



Richard Rozen and Roza Riaikenen.

JHC Calendar of Events

20 November 2017 - 31 January 2018

Special Yad Vashem Exhibition

"Am I My Brother's Keeper"

Honouring the Righteous Among the Nations

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

Friday 22 December

MUSEUM CLOSED

Monday 25 December

Christmas Day

MUSEUM CLOSED

Tuesday 26 December

Boxing Day

MUSEUM CLOSED

Sunday 31 December

New Year's Eve

MUSEUM CLOSED

Monday 1 January 2018

MUSEUM OPEN: 12.00PM - 4.00PM

Friday 26 January 2018

Australia Day

MUSEUM OPEN: 10.00AM - 2.00PM

Saturday 27 January

UN Holocaust Remembrance Day 2017

Sunday 28 January, 6.30pm

UN Holocaust Remembrance Day 2017 Commemoration

Venue: City of Glen Eira Town Hall

Corner Glen Eira and Hawthorn Roads, Caulfield South

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

Thursday 19 February, 11.15am

JHC Social Club

Colin Golvan QC

"Iran - Off the Beaten Track"

Enquiries: Barbara Sacks on 0404 224 498

or barbaras9@bigpond.com

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



*Wishing you all a
happy Chanukah and
a happy New Year*

*from the Staff, Guides and Volunteers
of the Jewish Holocaust Centre*

Jewish  Holocaust Centre

JHC Social Club: George Golvan QC



Guest Speaker

GEORGE GOLVAN QC

"Iran - Off The Beaten Track"

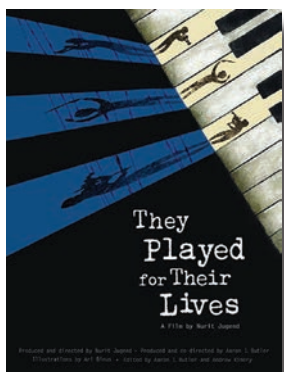
Thursday 15 February 2018

Time: 11.15am

George Golvan QC will present a fascinating illustrated talk of his journey to Iran 'off the beaten track'.

George Golvan QC is a barrister, who has also been an active litigator, mediator and arbitrator for over 45 years. He is a law graduate of Monash University, Melbourne, and has the Degree of Juris Doctor (JD) from Arizona State University (USA). George served as the Independent chairperson of Sydney's Desalination Plant Project Dispute Resolution Board, (DRB), one of Australia's largest and most successful infrastructure projects. He also acted as the independent chairperson of Sydney's South West Rail Project DRB, a large infrastructure project to construct a new rail line to service the South West suburbs of Sydney. George's late parents were both Holocaust survivors from Poland.

JHC Film Club: "They Played For Their Lives" (2017)



Sunday 25 February 2018

"They Played For Their Lives" (2017) 52 mins

Directed by: Nurit Jugend & Aaron I Butler

Speaker: TBC

During their darkest hours, music provided hope and escape... the extraordinary story of eight musicians whose lives were saved by music.

Through intimate interviews and live performances, *They Played for Their Lives* artfully portrays how music saved the lives of young musicians. Playing music in the ghettos and concentration camps not only fostered spiritual strength within themselves and others, but often proved a bargaining tool that spared their lives. The documentary follows the personal narratives of eight survivors. Chaim recounts how he saved his father from beatings, by teaching an SS officer to play the harmonica. Anita, who played cello in the Women's Orchestra in Auschwitz, was spared inhumane forced labor. And little Hellmuth whistled with the band in exchange for extra food and clothing. Each of these unique stories illustrate the power of music to sustain the human soul. At the end of the war their lives unfold in surprising ways, yet music remains at the core of their memory and legacy. Charcoal illustrations, a live piano performance by 106-year old Alice, and a moving reunion of two boys who searched for each other for 66-years, make this compelling viewing.



I AM MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

EXHIBITION DATES:
20 NOVEMBER 2017 – 31 JANUARY 2018

Many Jews who survived the Holocaust owed their lives to the incredible courage of non-Jews who, at the risk of their own lives, defied the Nazis and their accomplices. These people were subsequently awarded the title of **RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS** by Yad Vashem.

More than 26,000 people world-wide have been named **RIGHTEOUS**. This travelling exhibition from Yad Vashem tells just a few of their stories, stories which have a post-war Australian connection.

HONOURING THE RIGHTEOUS
AMONG THE NATIONS

JEWISH HOLOCAUST CENTRE
13 – 15 SELWYN ST, ELSTERNWICK
JHC.ORG.AU

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YAD VASHEM

Jewish Holocaust Centre

FRIEND: Kamener Foundation. PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY Glen Eira City Council. THIS EXHIBITION WAS PRODUCED BY YAD VASHEM, WORLD HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE CENTER