

# LEGACY

Keeping the History and Lessons of the Holocaust Alive



BIRMINGHAM  
HOLOCAUST  
EDUCATION  
CENTER

Fall 2019

## L'CHAIM 2019: HIGHLIGHTS



ABOVE: Holocaust survivors and descendants of survivors  
RIGHT: The Magic Shtetl Klezmer Band



By all accounts, this ninth *L'Chaim* event was acclaimed as the best *L'Chaim* to date, hitting every note in a tightly-woven, deeply meaningful program of music, video, and the spoken word produced by Deborah Layman in collaboration with Keith Cromwell and Red Mountain Theatre Company (RMTc).

The event, held in honor of Alabama's Holocaust survivors and their families, was the culmination of the BHEC's annual fundraising campaign. The audience of 600 in Jemison Concert Hall at the Alys Stephens Center included ten of Alabama's 19 living Holocaust survivors and members of their families.

[Continued on page 4]

## ALEXANDRA ZAPRUDER RETURNS TO BIRMINGHAM

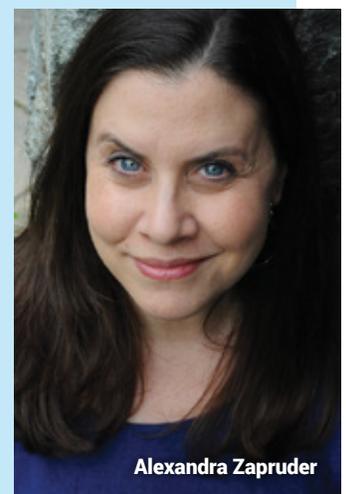
by Ann Mollengarden

The BHEC is thrilled to bring renowned Holocaust author and speaker Alexandra Zapruder back to Birmingham in November in conjunction with our commemoration of *Kristallnacht*, the "night of broken glass" in 1938 that marked the beginning of the destructive violence of the Holocaust.

Zapruder will speak at two events, both to be held at UAB's Hill Center. On Thursday, November 7, she will present a community lecture and book signing ("An Evening with Alexandra Zapruder"). On Friday, November 8,

she will lead a Teacher Workshop ("Teaching with Salvaged Pages"). Participating teachers will have the opportunity to spend an entire day with Zapruder, studying her collection of Holocaust diaries and learning their applications in the classroom.

In 2009, on the recommendation of Mortimer Jordan High School teacher Lisa Byrd, Alexandra Zapruder first came to Birmingham. Lisa had heard her speak at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and told us, "She is absolutely mesmerizing."



Alexandra Zapruder

[Continued on page 6]

## A MESSAGE FROM ANN MOLLENGARDEN, VICE PRESIDENT OF EDUCATION



Ann Mollengarden

### Who Will Tell the Stories?

The BHEC talks a lot about our Holocaust survivor stories because we must. We bear witness to the many Holocaust survivors in our state who have told us their personal accounts so that we do not forget. We must continue to tell these stories with the hope that we will impart some understanding of this cataclysmic event known as the Holocaust and keep its history and lessons alive.

One part of bearing witness is the meticulous archiving of information: stories, artifacts, photos, etc. Another part is bringing history to life through personal testimonies. While our survivors have been eloquently carrying the mantle for both themselves and their family members who did not survive, the BHEC has been developing an ongoing program

to ensure that this story-telling will continue into the future. This program is called “Guardians of Remembrance.”

Our initial Guardians were family members of survivors telling their own family stories through engaging presentations. These dedicated individuals continue to travel the state providing personal accounts of one individual—one story—and how that story has impacted them, the next generation. We greatly appreciate the work of our Guardians: Esther Levy, Denise Lewis, Dominique Linchet, Ann Mollengarden, Eli Pinhas, Abe Schuster, and James Sedlis.

But what of the stories of Alabama survivors who do not have family to continue their work? How can their stories be carried into the future? To that end, the BHEC has been training new Guardians—volunteers who learn and present the story of a local survivor with an accompanying PowerPoint that ties the personal story to its historical context. This is a labor-intensive process that doesn’t happen overnight.

Developing a presentation begins with the BHEC archives, which serve as a resource for each survivor’s history. Our annual Siegler Fellow researches the archives and works closely with

the BHEC professional staff to develop a coherent, historically accurate, personal narrative of a survivor. Then, a volunteer is selected to become the survivor’s “Guardian”—to learn and tell their story. Guardians watch several videos of their survivor giving

presentations and interviews. They also help identify video clips to add to the PowerPoints. After a period of study and supervised practice, the Guardian is ready to tell their survivor’s story at schools and community groups.

The BHEC is currently working with three dedicated volunteers to prepare them to become Guardians of Remembrance: Ging McGlaughlin (Jack Bass’s story), Linda Tilly (Martin Aaron’s story), and Floris van Os (Ruth Siegler’s story.) Every survivor’s story is unique, and each one is deserving of remembrance. The new members of the Guardians of Remembrance program have stepped up to continue this important work. If you are interested in joining our efforts, please contact the BHEC office for more details.

**Every survivor’s story is unique, and each one is deserving of remembrance.**



Julianne Jorgensen

### Julianne Jorgensen: 2019 Siegler Fellow

Julianne Jorgensen, the BHEC’s 2019 Siegler Fellow, is researching the story of Aisic Hirsch (*of blessed memory*), a Polish Holocaust survivor who settled in Birmingham with his wife Riva, who is also a survivor. Aisic passed away in 2014. His story is unique and fascinating, but as with the stories of many Holocaust survivors, no memorabilia from Aisic’s family survived the war. “Julianne has her work cut out for her,” said Kendall Chew, BHEC Outreach Coordinator. “Aisic was a light to our organization and to everyone who knew him. The story of this wonderful man needs to be preserved and shared.”

Julianne is currently a senior at Samford University with a double major in English and Classics. She currently serves as the president of Howard College Ambassadors and is the Managing Editor of the *Samford Undergraduate Research Journal*. In the summer of 2018, she interned as a researcher on the Lincoln Archives project in Washington, D.C., where she

worked in both the National Archives and the Library of Congress. She has also interned at the Birmingham Museum of Art.

“I have always believed every individual has a story that is unique, valuable, and important,” said Julianne. “Stories validate us and our experiences, so when I heard about the opportunity to work with survivors and stories from the Holocaust, I was ecstatic. I felt honored and humbled that I would be a part of this mission

#### Stories validate us and our experiences.

to preserve memories as a defense towards future skepticism and as a testament to the hardship and survival that people endured. The legacy of the survivors must never be forgotten, and I am more than thankful for this priceless experience.”

After she graduates in the spring of 2020, Julianne plans to continue to preserve people’s stories through research and writing.

### ABOUT THE SIEGLER FELLOWSHIP

The Siegler Fellowship was created in 2017 in honor of Holocaust survivor Ruth Siegler’s 90th birthday. To ensure that the stories of Holocaust survivors would be preserved for future generations, Ruth’s children and grandchildren partnered with the BHEC to create a paid summer research fellowship opportunity for a graduate or post-graduate student.

Using existing video testimonies supplemented by in-depth historical research, each Siegler Fellow works for an entire semester to create a PowerPoint presentation that tells the story of one of Alabama’s Holocaust survivors. This vital work helps ensure that the stories of our local survivors will not be lost with the passage of time.

**To learn more about the Siegler Fellowship, visit <https://bhecinfo.org/fellowships/>.**

**L'CHAIM 2019: HIGHLIGHTS** continued from p. 1...

Photos by Nik Layman

In addition, family members of many other Holocaust survivors were present.

The show opened with the Magic Shtetl Klezmer Band setting a nostalgic mood with the lively, traditional music that was the soundtrack of Jewish lives in pre-war eastern Europe. "Memories of Home," a bittersweet short film, gave the audience a glimpse into the happy past of 12 Alabama survivors who reminisced on camera about their beautiful mothers, their wise fathers, and their warm childhood memories.

Continuing the theme of memories, Cantor Jessica Roskin and



Alan Goldspiel & Cantor Jessica Roskin

guitarist Alan Goldspiel performed a lovely medley of Yiddish lullabies interspersed with the Gershwin favorite, "Summertime." The medley was arranged by Goldspiel, Music Director of the Magic Shtetl Klezmer Band. Vocalists Caleb Clark and Tracy Winborn sang "We Remember Love," a touching song about the things we remember.

The dramatic centerpiece of the program was a series of spoken word pieces woven together by "You Will Be Found," a song about acceptance and understanding. Local actors—a lesbian, a Muslim woman, a black man, a transgender boy, a Jewish girl, and a disabled man—told their personal stories of prejudice and discrimination. The Red Mountain Performing Ensemble (RMPE) performed the deeply affecting "You Will Be Found" while they reached out to each of the actors in turn, drawing each one into their group in friendship.

Robby Ballard, an educator at The Altamont School, presented a thought-provoking talk on "Teaching Moral Courage." (For the text of Robby's talk, see [bhecinfo.org/lchaim](http://bhecinfo.org/lchaim).)

In a musical finale, Caleb Clark and Tracy Winborn joined the entire cast for "Eyes of Another"—an uplifting song about sister-and-brotherhood. Along with wonderful performances by the adult soloists, speakers, and musicians, the talented young performers of RMPE brought their unique energy and enthusiasm to the stage as they made clear their commitment to the overarching theme of the day: having the moral courage to stand up against hate and treat all people with kindness and understanding.

The BHEC is grateful to *L'Chaim* 2019 Honorary Co-Chairs Karen Allen, Dr. Neal Berte, and David Silverstein and to Host Committee Chair Steve Royal and VP of Development Cathy O. Friedman for their visionary leadership in our 2019 fundraising campaign. Thanks to their efforts, the excellent work of our staff and many dedicated volunteers, and the overwhelming generosity of the Birmingham community, the BHEC is poised for another year of mission-focused programming and outreach.

See more *L'Chaim 2019* photos and videos at [bhecinfo.org/lchaim](http://bhecinfo.org/lchaim).



Andrew Brown



Co-hosts Jeff Eliasoph & Deborah Layman



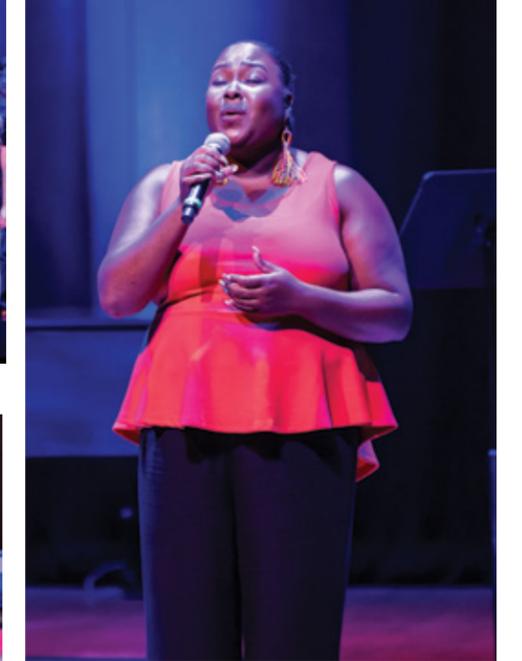
Caleb Clark



Robby Ballard



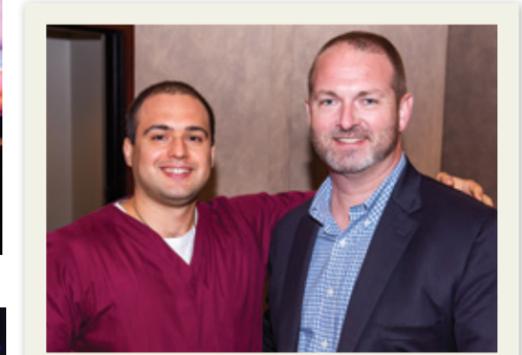
Kyra Berger



Tracy Winborn



Front right - Dan Eggers



Eli Bronshteyn & Kevin Scott

**THANK YOU TO OUR RUSSIAN TRANSLATORS**

A special thank you to Eli Bronshteyn and Kevin Clark, who volunteered to serve as Russian translators for video interviews with four Russian Holocaust survivors: Zina Golubova, Genya Safyanova, Tatyana Shitsel, and Anya Treyger. Florina Newcomb also translated for her grandfather, Leonid Shilkrot, during his interview. These translations made it possible for the BHEC to learn much more about the unique stories of these local survivors and to include them in "Memories of Home," the video produced for *L'Chaim* 2019.

View video at [bhecinfo.org/lchaim](http://bhecinfo.org/lchaim)



Markeis McLeod



Meryem Tunagur



Rachael Pike



Red Mountain Theatre Company

## ALEXANDRA ZAPRUDER RETURNS TO BIRMINGHAM

continued from p. 1...

During her 2009 visit, Zapruder spoke to the Birmingham community at-large about her book *Salvaged Pages: Young Writers' Diaries of the Holocaust*, which was awarded the 2001-2002 National Jewish Book Award in the Holocaust category. Elie Wiesel praised this compilation of "extraordinary diaries [that] will resonate in the readers' broken hearts for many days and many nights."

Zapruder also facilitated four teacher workshops in the state, visiting Monroeville, Montgomery, Birmingham, and Florence. Her visit also marked one of the BHEC's first fund raisers, "Sponsor a Teacher," coordinated by Betty A. Goldstein and Judy Abrams (*of blessed memory*). Clearly charmed by Alabama, Zapruder blogged about our southern hospitality, her first experience eating fried pickles, and the many, many churches in our state.

**Elie Wiesel praised this compilation of "extraordinary diaries [that] will resonate in the reader's broken hearts for many days and many nights."**

Alexandra Zapruder continues to set the standard for the examination of Holocaust diaries. The second edition of her book, released in 2015 with a new preface by Zapruder examining the book's history and impact, remains a seminal classroom resource. It features excerpts from the Holocaust diaries of fifteen young people, ranging in age from twelve to twenty-two, each with an introductory essay that discusses the writer and the historical context of the diary.

Zapruder was on the founding staff of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and was the writer and co-producer of "I'm Still Here," an award-winning documentary for young people based on *Salvaged Pages*. She served as a consultant for the Holocaust Museum Houston's recently completed expansion and was instrumental in the creation of their special exhibit, "And Still I Write: Young Diarists on War and Genocide."

Further information on the November events is available at [bhceinfo.org](http://bhceinfo.org).

The BHEC greatly appreciates the support of the UAB Department of History; UAB Institute for Human Rights; UAB office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; and the Birmingham Jewish Foundation for making these events possible.

## Lepa Radić

by Myra Ward Barra

*In honor of the 17-year-old Serbian girl who served in the Yugoslav resistance against the Nazis. She was captured and executed in 1943.*

Lepa Radić, as you were led toward that naked tree with gnarled limbs defiant against January winds, Were any girls in the crowd your age? Were they wearing 40's hairstyles like you were on that day, center parted, both sides pinned?

Were you thinking, you should have remained home, doing things teenage girls do, Applying red lipstick, flirting with boys? Wouldn't dresses have been more fitting?

As you stepped on the hard ground crunchy with ice, did you feel the Guard's rapid, hot breath on your stiffened shoulders? Were your camouflage knickers in step with his camouflage trousers?

Lepa, as you ambled forward, shins purple, blue, throbbing, feet swollen in your boots, Were your eyes fixed upon the scaffold haphazardly built in haste, unstable?

Did you see the rope being prepared when you refused the pardon, not to betray your comrades, As you shouted, "Evildoers, my comrades will avenge me!"

Lepa, what were your last thoughts as you climbed those creaking steps toward the noose? Were your last thoughts about yourself? You were thinking of the women and children you protected from the Nazis, weren't you?

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Thank you to writer and BHEC Board member Teresa K. Thorne, who made the suggestion to include relevant poetry by local poets in Legacy. She put out a call for poems on the subject of the Holocaust to the members of the Alabama Poetry Society; this poem was selected from the submissions.*

## Eva Kor, My Friend and Inspiration

by Brielle Hill, BHEC Summer 2019 Intern



Brielle Hill & Eva Kor at Auschwitz. Eva is pointing to a picture showing herself and her twin sister Miriam at liberation.

Eva Mozes Kor passed away on July 4, 2019 while on a trip to Poland—the same journey I have taken with her twice. For me, her loss has been truly heartbreaking.

Eva touched hundreds of thousands of people over her 85 years through her message of overcoming tragedy, finding forgiveness, and healing. She and her twin sister, Miriam, lost their entire immediate family at Auschwitz and were subjected to the horrific and

**She challenged me to take the lessons I had learned and the anger I held and turn it into positive energy—and to let that positive energy drive me to change the world.**

inhumane experiments of nazi doctor Josef Mengele. Eva never allowed the darkest moments of her life to define her, but instead moved forward into a life of purpose. She told her story all over the world and founded a museum in Terre Haute, Indiana that continues to grow every year: CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Education Center (*Children of Auschwitz Nazi Deadly Lab Experiments Survivors*). Eva blazed trails for Holocaust education, bringing the story of Dr. Mengele's experiments into the international spotlight.

In 2016, the BHEC and St. Luke's Episcopal Church brought Eva to

Birmingham to speak to adults and to students. The impact on those who were fortunate enough to hear her message and talk with her afterward is still felt today.

I have been fascinated by the history of the Holocaust since I read *The Diary of Anne Frank* as a young girl. In January 2015, I went to Auschwitz for the first time in a group of 80 people led by Eva. I was overwhelmed by what I saw. I couldn't stop thinking: "How could something like this happen? How can I help? What can I do?"

My first conversation with that little lady in blue completely changed the trajectory of my life. Eva told me that crying and wallowing do no good; that we must turn that anger, that pain into determination and motivation to fight the good fight. She challenged me to take the lessons I had learned and the anger I held and turn it into positive energy—and to let that positive energy drive me to change the world. She said, simply, that we all have the power and responsibility to make our corner of the world a better place.

Throughout that trip and my subsequent trip with Eva in the summer of 2017, her words and her example shaped me and inspired me to pursue a career in Holocaust education and genocide prevention. My summer internship at the BHEC was an invaluable experience. Currently, I am working on a master's degree in Nonprofit Management and Leadership at the University of Georgia.

Now I challenge you, as Eva challenged me. Eva's legacy and the legacy of all Holocaust survivors must not fade away. It is my responsibility; it is your responsibility; it is OUR responsibility to be keepers of that flame.

## SPEAKERS BUREAU UPDATE

### MAY 2019

Denise Lewis  
Fayetteville High School, Sylacauga  
Esther Levy  
Westminster School of Oak Mountain

### JUNE 2019

Robert May & Ann Mollengarden  
UAB Creative Workshop  
for High School Students

### SEPTEMBER 2019

Robert May  
Shades Mountain  
Baptist Church Group, BHEC

Riva Hirsch  
Delta Kappa Gamma Retired Teachers,  
Brookdale Senior Living

Esther Levy  
Lawson State Community College

Denise Lewis  
Bearing Witness Series, BHEC

### OCTOBER 2019

Abe Schuster & Ann Mollengarden  
Mountain Brook Junior High School

### NOVEMBER 2019

Riva Hirsch  
Helena United Methodist Church

### DECEMBER 2019

Denise Lewis & Abe Schuster  
Goshen High School

### APRIL 2020

Ann Mollengarden  
Spain Park High School—  
Professional Development

Other engagements to be  
scheduled for 2020:  
Locust Fork Elementary  
Moody Jr. High School  
Thompson High School

To schedule a speaker,  
visit [bhceinfo.org](http://bhceinfo.org)

# Where Personal Stories and History Intersect

by Ann Mollengarden

In my work documenting the stories of Alabama survivors, I recently worked with Paia Kimerling Ehrenwald to record the story of her mother, Holocaust survivor Rosa Altmann Kimerling, who lived in Birmingham for many years. In the process, I discovered that Rosa had witnessed one of the iconic degradations of Holocaust history: her father was forced to scrub the street with a toothbrush.

Born in Vienna, Rosa was 12 years old in 1938 when the Nazis annexed Austria in what became known as the "Anschluss." The persecutions, restrictions, and humiliations inflicted on Jews that had been occurring in Nazi Germany since 1933 were enacted with rapid fire, and Austria erupted in a frenzy of street violence.



Rosa & Gaston Kimerling in 1996



Jews cleaning a street in Vienna

In her biography of her mother, Paia wrote:

"Everything changed with the German annexation of Austria on March 12, 1938. Hitler Youth surrounded and attacked [the school Rosa and her sister attended]. Rosa remembered her mother fighting her way into the angry mob surrounding their school in order to carry the girls home safely.

"Rosa remembered seeing people shot on the street from her window. She spoke about how her father and other Jews were forced to clean the streets with toothbrushes."

The accompanying photo is from the archive of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and shows Jews cleaning the street in Vienna. It has long provided an excellent teaching tool and discussion starter about the interplay of victims, perpetrators, and bystanders in the Holocaust. Now, the photograph of this historical event has become very personal and even more powerful because of the experiences of one of Alabama's Holocaust survivors.

Paia has generously provided the BHEC with photos, documents, and a brief biography of her mother's Holocaust experience that can now be found on the BHEC website:

<https://bheinfo.org/survivors/kimerling-rosa-altmann/>

As we continue to research other survivors in our state, we hope you will share any information you might have. Old stories become new teaching tools in our continued quest to keep the history and lessons of the Holocaust alive.

## BRIEFS

### BHEC Relocation News

For the past 15 years, Bayer Properties has provided a home for the BHEC at no charge. The overwhelming generosity of Jeffrey Bayer and David Silverstein over these years made it possible for the BHEC to develop, grow, and gain its reputation as an exceptional Holocaust and human rights education hub for the state of Alabama.

With the impending sale of the Bayer Properties building, the BHEC will be moving by year end to a new location. Stay tuned for further announcements and details.

### History Buffs: Join the USHMM "History Unfolded" Project

What did American newspapers report about Nazi persecution during the 1930s and 1940s? You can help the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum answer this question.

Under the direction of BHEC staff, volunteers will examine local newspapers on microfiche at the Birmingham Public Library to look for news and opinions on specific Holocaust-era events. This research will reveal what ordinary people in Birmingham knew about the Holocaust as it was happening and how they responded.

Findings will be posted on the BHEC website and submitted to the USHMM's "History Unfolded" project. For more information, contact the BHEC.

### Announcing Our New Media Page

Visit [bheinfo.org/about/media](https://bheinfo.org/about/media) to see stories about the BHEC and Holocaust survivors in local media outlets. Currently, you can view short videos about Riva Hirsch, Ruth Siegler, and Max Steinmetz produced for WVTM-13 by news anchor and *L'Chaim* co-host Jeff Eliasoph. You'll also find a *B-Metro* article about VP of Education Ann Mollengarden, and an *Over the Mountain Journal* article about Guardian of Remembrance Esther Levy.

## COME LEARN WITH US!

### COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The BHEC Community Education Series, now in its third year, has a loyal following and continues to attract new learners. This program is designed for people with different levels of Holocaust knowledge and interest – from the just curious to the serious student, from the one who diligently completes the assigned readings to the one who just wants to come for an evening of stimulating learning and conversation. All are welcome. While we encourage participants to sign up for the entire series, drop-ins are always welcome, and the text is not required.

This year is part two of a series based on the anthology *How Was It Possible?*, a publication of the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous edited and introduced by Peter Hayes. The text is organized around key issues of the Holocaust and includes contributions from top scholars in the field. It covers the full gamut of Holocaust history: from the historical context for antisemitism to the impediments to escaping Nazi Germany, and from the logistics of the death camps and the implementation of genocide to the subsequent struggles of the displaced survivors in the aftermath. Last year, we focused on half of the articles in each chapter; this year we will study the remaining articles in each chapter.

We thank our knowledgeable cadre of facilitators who keep us engaged and learning. Each session offers a different perspective and presentation style.

**All sessions are held at the BHEC office, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

**Participants may purchase the text for \$40.00. (A limited number of copies are available for use by drop-ins.)**

**If you are interested in joining us, please call the BHEC office (205.795.4176) to reserve your place.**

**Thursday, October 3:**  
**The Context**  
*Ann Mollengarden,*  
*BHEC*

**Tuesday, November 12:**  
**Nazism in Power**  
*Dr. Clark Hultquist,*  
*University of Montevallo*

**Thursday, December 12:**  
**Impediments to Escape**  
*Robby Ballard,*  
*The Altamont School*

**Tuesday, January 14:**  
**The New Order in Europe**  
*Jeremy Brown,*  
*Oakman High School*

**Tuesday, February 11:**  
**Jews in the Nazi Grip**  
*Dr. Jonathan Wiesen,*  
*UAB*

**Thursday, March 12:**  
**The German Killers and Their Methods**  
*Logan Greene,*  
*Calera High School*

**Thursday, April 16:**  
**Collaboration and Its Limits**  
*Rabbi Steven Jacobs,*  
*University of Alabama*

**Tuesday, May 12:**  
**Rescuing Jews— Means & Obstacles**  
*Amy McDonald,*  
*Shades Valley High School*



## Plundered Wedding Rings

by Rachel Lopez, BHEC Archivist

The BHEC Archives has over 8,000 inventoried items and continues to grow. Our large and varied collection shows us that the Holocaust was a complex series of interrelated events, not a singular, unilateral incident. The experiences of Holocaust survivors and victims were immeasurably diverse, a fact which is sometimes lost

### Concentration camp victims, typically ordinary men and women, were stripped of their possessions, from dishes and linens to coins and jewelry.

in the magnitude of the numbers. Some of our recent Archives acquisitions help us visualize the individuals behind the statistics.

One such acquisition came from Kelly Skelton Stafford, who donated 15 gold wedding rings from the private collection of her late father, Dr. William Skelton. These rings were confiscated from concentration camp victims and were collected by a survivor, according to Kagins' Numismatic Auctions. Nazi plunder has remained in 21st century headlines thanks to Hollywood productions, but



the thievery was not limited to renowned artwork. Concentration camp victims, typically ordinary men and women, were stripped of their possessions, from dishes and linens to coins and jewelry.

While the exact circumstances of these rings are unknown, there are multiple accounts of bartering as

a means of survival in concentration camps and in the tumultuous aftermath of liberation. Barter among prisoners and barter between prisoners and guards has been reported in survivor testimonies. Dr. Nikolaus Wachsmann explains in his comprehensive work, *KL: A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps*,

“Each concentration camp had its own underground economy, where inmates offered pretty much anything up for sale. . . survival turned even more on the prisoners’ ability to improve their lot through barter. . . Barter was always on the minds of the prisoners, even if they had nothing to trade. . . they kept their eyes fixed on the ground, hoping to see something—a button or a piece of string—that could be exchanged later.” (p. 381-2)

Certainly there was the temptation, if not necessity, to collect items of value that had been stolen from fellow victims in the frenetic and tragic chaos of life in the camps. The rings are a chilling reminder of the atrocities of the Holocaust and the desperation of its victims.

Seeing the rings, some intact and some visibly cut to be removed from the hand of the wearer, is a visceral experience. These rings—symbols of love and family—were intended to be worn always. How must it have felt to have such a precious memento roughly removed from one’s hand?



L TO R: Haley Walker, Mindy Walker, Brenda Friedman, Kelly Sorrell, Logan Greene

## Brenda & Fred Friedman 2019 Teacher Scholarships

Five Alabama teachers were honored at a BHEC reception on September 8 for their participation in this year’s Friedman Scholarship program. The teachers attended advanced workshops presented by The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR) and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM):

**JFR Summer Institute**  
Kelly Sorrell,  
*Pizitz Middle School, Vestavia Hills*

**JFR Advanced Seminar**  
Rachel Hartsell,  
*Isabella High School, Maplesville*  
Rachel Povlacs,  
*Carroll High School, Ozark*  
Mindy Walker,  
*Holt High School, Tuscaloosa*

**JFR European Study Program**  
Mindy Walker,  
*Holt High School, Tuscaloosa*

**USHMM Belfer Conference**  
Haley Walker,  
*Irondale Middle School, Irondale*

The teachers all expressed their deep appreciation for the professional

development opportunities provided by the Friedmans.

Kelly Sorrell said that at Pizitz Middle School, where there are only five Jewish students out of 1,200, her students are “good kids who don’t know what they don’t know.” Her JFR experience better equipped her to teach them to be “upstanders – not bystanders.”

Haley Walker, who teaches at Irondale Middle School—a Title I school—said she came home from the Belfer Conference with “a new heart and mind.” Haley has been studying the Holocaust since 6th grade. When she was a student at Shades Valley High School, she participated in Amy McDonald’s Holocaust Studies elective. Amy, a well-known local Holocaust educator and member of the BHEC Teacher Cadre, is a Fellow at the USHMM and has been a recipient of the JFR’s Robert I. Goldman award for exceptional dedication to Holocaust education. Today, her student Haley Walker is continuing the important work of teaching the history and lessons of the Holocaust.

At Holt High School in Tuscaloosa, Mindy Walker explained, ten percent of the students are homeless. Her goal is to teach students to “step up and be

## ABOUT THE FRIEDMAN TEACHER SCHOLARSHIPS

The Brenda and Fred Friedman Teacher Scholarship program offers opportunities for educators to attend advanced national and international training workshops presented by renowned Holocaust scholars at institutions such as the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous, and Yad Vashem.

Open to English and Social Studies teachers in grades 6 through 12 throughout the state of Alabama, the scholarships cover 100% of registration fees plus travel, lodging, and per diem. Participants must have completed at least one BHEC professional development program, must currently be teaching the Holocaust in the classroom, and must commit to Holocaust studies in the classroom curriculum for a minimum of three years after the scholarship. To date, 73 Holocaust educators have received scholarships.

**For more information about the program, visit [bheinfo.org](http://bheinfo.org).**

the hero.” She has done extensive research into military and community complicity in the Holocaust, focusing on the community near Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria, which she visited as part of JFR’s European Study Program. Mindy will present a lesson based on her research at the BHEC Teacher Cadre on February 18.

Logan Greene, a Fellow at the USHMM and a past recipient of Friedman Scholarships, spoke about the diversity at Calera High School, where he teaches. “The friction based on socioeconomic issues makes it a great place to teach the lessons of the Holocaust,” he said.

In other news about BHEC-trained teachers, Tricia Skelton of Opelika Middle School has been selected by the JFR to receive their 2019 Robert I. Goldman award for exceptional dedication to Holocaust education. She will receive the award at JFR’s annual benefit in New York on November 25. Tricia is a past recipient of Friedman scholarships.

## THANK YOU TO OUR *L'CHAIM* 2019 SPONSORS AND DONORS!

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# THE HOLOCAUST IN FILM 2020

SUNDAY 01/16 AT 6:30 P.M.  
THURSDAY 01/23 AT 6:30 P.M.  
SUNDAY 01/26 AT 2:00 P.M.  
SUNDAY 01/30 AT 6:30 P.M.

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# BEARING WITNESS: STORIES OF THE HOLOCAUST

DEC. 5, 2019  
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FEATURING STORIES OF LOCAL SURVIVORS  
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## LEGACY

A semi-annual publication of the Birmingham Holocaust Education Center

**EDITOR:** Deborah Layman

**COPY EDITORS:** Ann Mollengarden • Teresa Thorne

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:** Myra Ward Barra • Kendall Chew  
Brielle Hill • Rachel Lopez • Ann Mollengarden • Dan Puckett

**GRAPHIC DESIGN & LAYOUT:** Claire Cormany



## Alabama Holocaust Commission Update

by Dr. Dan J. Puckett, Chairman

During this last legislative session, the Alabama legislature passed the largest education budget in our state's history. The Alabama Holocaust Commission received a \$10,000 increase as part of the budget, raising our total allocation from the state to \$70,000 for 2019-2020.

Holocaust education in Alabama will greatly benefit from the increase in state support. As you know, educational programming throughout the state is conducted through our two excellent education centers, the Birmingham Holocaust Education Center and the Gulf Coast Center for Holocaust and Human Rights Education. They will receive the majority of these state funds to facilitate their important work.

If you have the opportunity, please thank Representatives David Faulkner and Danny Garrett, and Senator Jabo Waggoner, Birmingham residents who all serve on the Alabama Holocaust Commission. It is through their hard work and support for Holocaust education that the Commission, and subsequently

the education centers, will be able to carry out their mission with greater effectiveness.

Along with supporting the work of the BHEC and the Gulf Coast Center, the Commission also provides grants to support community education projects, as well as teacher education. These grants are open to the Alabama public at-large, and range from \$300 to \$3,000. See below for more information.



Dr. Dan J. Puckett and Holocaust survivors Riva Hirsch, Max Herzel, Max Steinmetz, Ruth Siegler, and Leonid Shilkrot at the annual Yom HaShoah Commemoration at the Alabama State Capitol on April 30, 2019.



## ALABAMA HOLOCAUST COMMISSION

*The Alabama Holocaust Commission (AHC) was established in 1999 by the Alabama Legislature in order to foster remembrance of the horrible atrocities committed during the Holocaust and other times in human history as the result of bigotry, discrimination, and the abuse of power; and to foster understanding, through education and awareness, of the basic principles of human rights and equal protection under the law.*

### STATE HOLOCAUST EDUCATION CENTERS

Birmingham Holocaust Education Center

Gulf Coast Center for Holocaust and Human Rights Education

### ALABAMA HOLOCAUST COMMISSION (AHC) EDUCATION GRANTS

The AHC accepts grant proposals for Holocaust education programs and projects which:

- Educate the community
- Educate educators
- Educate students
- Are Alabama-based
- Benefit the people of Alabama
- Are free and open to the public

Grant requests are reviewed and awarded on a rolling basis throughout the AHC fiscal year (October 1-September 30). Requests received after July 1 will fall into the next fiscal year.

Grants generally range from \$300 - \$3,000.

To apply, visit [alabamaholocaustcommission.org](http://alabamaholocaustcommission.org).



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our 2020 incoming Board members:

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*Come visit with us:*

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10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and by appointment

## Dates to Remember

### NOVEMBER

**Nov. 7 - An Evening with Alexandra Zapruder**,  
6:00 - 8:00 p.m., UAB Hill Center, Ballrooms B, C, D  
**Nov. 8 - Teacher Workshop** with  
Alexandra Zapruder, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.,  
UAB Hill Center, Ballrooms B, C, D  
**Nov. 12 - Community Education:**  
Nazism in Power, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., BHEC  
**Nov. 14 - Teacher Cadre**, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m., BHEC

### DECEMBER

**Dec. 5 - Bearing Witness:** Stories  
from the Holocaust: James Sedlis,  
5:30 - 7:30 p.m., BHEC  
**Dec. 12 - Community Education:** Impediments  
to Escape, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., BHEC

### JANUARY

**Jan. 6 - Teacher Workshop:** Teaching with  
Stories, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., UA Gadsden Center  
**Jan. 13 - Teacher Workshop:** Teaching with  
Stories, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Troy Phenix  
City Campus  
**Jan. 14 - Community Education:** The New  
Order in Europe, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., location TBA  
**Jan. 16 - Holocaust in Film**, Title TBA, 6:00 p.m.,  
Emmet O'Neal Library  
**Jan. 23 - Holocaust in Film**, Title TBA, 6:00 p.m.,  
Emmet O'Neal Library

**Jan. 26 - Holocaust in Film**, Title TBA, 2:00 p.m.,  
Emmet O'Neal Library  
**Jan. 30 - Holocaust in Film**, Title TBA, 6:00 p.m.,  
Emmet O'Neal Library

### FEBRUARY

**Feb. 11 - Community Education:** Jews in the  
Nazi Grip, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., location TBA  
**Feb. 18 - Teacher Cadre**, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.,  
location TBA  
**Feb. 20 - Bearing Witness:** Stories from the Holocaust:  
Jack Schniper, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., location TBA

### MARCH

**Mar. 12 - Community Education:** The German Killers  
and Their Methods, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., location TBA  
**Mar. 17 - Teacher Cadre**, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.,  
location TBA

### APRIL

**Apr. 16 - Community Education:** Collaboration  
and Its Limits, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., location TBA  
**Apr. 26 - Birmingham Yom HaShoah  
Commemoration**, 2:00 p.m., Temple Emanu-El

### MAY

**May 12 - Community Education:** Rescuing Jews -  
Means and Obstacles, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., location TBA  
**May 14 - Bearing Witness:** Stories from the  
Holocaust: Esther Levy, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., location TBA

The mission of the Birmingham Holocaust Education Center (BHEC) is to educate the people of Alabama about the history of the Holocaust so that new generations will apply the lessons of the Holocaust to the construction of a more just, humane, and tolerant future. By preserving and sharing the stories of local Holocaust survivors and commemorating the events of the Holocaust and the lives of those who perished, the BHEC seeks to promote a moral and ethical response to prejudice, hatred, and indifference for the benefit of all humanity.