



MHMC Features: Reorganization of the Collection Centre

Reorganization of the MHMC Collection Centre was made possible by a Museums Assistance Program grant from Heritage Canada. The goal was to reorganize the Collection Centre to ensure the best conditions for conserving our collection of artifacts unique to Canada. This project also allowed us to take inventory, document and number objects, resulting in a better understanding of our overall collection. This equipped us to receive, and better preserve, future donations of objects, documents and photographs.

Museum Curator, Rachel Perkins Arenstein, supported the team throughout the project and Museum Technician, Kelsey Simpson was hired to put the plan into action between January and October 2012.

The objects were treated according to their material, size and condition. All large textile objects, such as tablecloths and blankets were wrapped to keep them wrinkle and dust-free. Clothing items were placed on padded hangers, also to avoid wrinkling. Flat objects like badges and medals were placed in individual polyethylene bags, an appropriate material for conservation. Trays covered with polyethylene foam were used to store objects requiring support. Made to measure boxes were created for fragile old books. The objects were then grouped into the same categories as used in the museum database, which follows the standards of the Canadian Heritage Information Network, facilitating their location.

In total, over 1800 objects and 4500 fragile photographs have been better protected, thanks to this project. This work allows us easier access to our collection in the future, for exhibitions and on the Web. Newly documented objects can be seen at www.cjhn.ca.

To donate an object, please contact Julie Guinard, Museum and Collection Coordinator at 514-345-2605 ext. 3022.



Oral History

This summer, the MHMC digitized oral history collection from Canadian Jewish Charities Committee National Congress Archives (CJCCNCA) and the Living Testimony project from McGill University. This project was made possible thanks to a grant from the Azrieli Foundation. The second stage of this project consists of documenting and archiving these collections to make them accessible to researchers, educators and the public. One of the first interviews from CJCCNCA, documented by the MHMC was that of Barbara Makuch.

Barbara Makuch is a Polish Christian born in 1917. During the war, she risked her life to save Jews. In 1942 she was arrested because she was a member of the Polish resistance movement Zegota. After spending several weeks in prison, she was sent to the concentration camp Sachsenhausen. After liberation, she was sponsored by Rachel Litowicz, mother of one of the Jewish girls she saved, to immigrate to Canada. Barbara and her mother were designated as Righteous Among the Nations in 1979.



Please join us and share your video testimony, like Barbara Makuch!
Contact Eszter Andor by email at: eszter.andor@mhmc.ca or by telephone at (514) 345-2605.

Kristallnacht

The Kristallnacht commemoration, organized by the Remembrance Committee of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre, took place on November 8, 2012 at Congregation Beth Israel Beth Aaron. The highlight of the ceremony, attended by members of the Jewish community of Montreal, local politicians and diplomats, was a documentary film, which told the story of Kristallnacht through the recollections of four Montreal Holocaust survivors: Charlotte Lintzel, Ursula Feist, Leo Dortort and Willie Glaser. The film also included high school student and human rights activist Alexandra Cohen, who delivered the message that her generation must speak up and act to prevent human rights violations and genocide. After the film, the five participants lit the memorial candle together. The ceremony also included a musical program containing pieces presented by the Bialik High School choir and Kol Nidrei by Max Bruch, played by violinist Smadar Brandes, as well as greetings from the Consul General of Israel and Rabbi Poupko.



A Few Highlights: A busy year for the Human Rights Committee

Last spring, the Human Rights Committee adopted an ambitious action plan for 2012-2013. Two events took place this fall. As part of the Le Mood festival, the Committee hosted a workshop on the rights of refugees using artifacts from the MHMC collection. Also, during the Holocaust Education Series, the Committee organized a discussion on the challenges associated with humanitarian interventions, interventions that aim to put an end to massive violations of human rights, with experts from the Réseau de recherche sur les opérations de paix and Amnesty International Canada francophone.

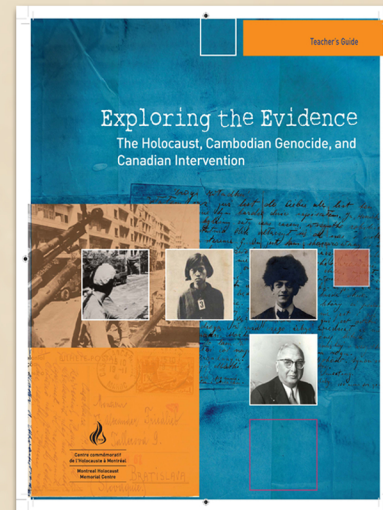


The Committee will organize a minimum of two activities over the next few months. The first will explore the question of detention of refugees and asylum seekers, a practice becoming more widespread in Canada and around the world. The second will talk about the disappearances of aboriginal women in Canada, a tragedy that affects hundreds of families across the country. You will find details about all the Human Rights Committee activities and their partner organizations in the Calendar of Events on the Stand up for Human Rights website www.mhmc-humanrights.ca.

Education Update

The MHMC is proud to announce that our new tool entitled "Exploring the Evidence: The Holocaust, Cambodian Genocide and Canadian Intervention" is currently featured on the teacher section of our website with hard copies of this tool available for loan from the Centre. This concise and rigorously researched tool - destined for Secondary V students in the Contemporary World course - teaches the history of the Holocaust and the Cambodian Genocide from the perspective of intervention, and particularly Canadian action and features many artifacts from our collection such as letters written during the Holocaust, photos from life before the war, and video testimonies from three Montreal survivors. Unique in its scope and breadth, the tool analyzes the role and impact of individuals, governments and international conventions with respect to intervention and the protection of human rights.

Education Coordinator, Jacqueline Celemencki recently presented at a conference for pedagogical consultants and educational administrators from the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) who are responsible for providing new training opportunities and tools for teachers. Eight such training sessions have been offered to different teacher groups and conferences this fall. In January, the Centre will welcome a new research intern. Currently enrolled in UQAM's Applied History Master's program, the intern will spend 12 weeks at the Centre conducting empirical and archival research on Canadian and Quebec antisemitism during the Holocaust, in preparation for a new pedagogical handbook.



Canada to Chair the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance in 2013

Formerly known as the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, IHRA is an intergovernmental body whose purpose is to place political and social leaders' support behind Holocaust education, remembrance, and research both nationally and internationally. It is a forum composed of 31 member countries and four observers. Canada became a full member in 2009. Member countries commit to upholding the Stockholm Declaration (<http://www.holocausttaskforce.org/about-the-ift/stockholm-declaration.html>). Each year, the organization nominates a member country to assume the Chair for one year and to host meetings for member states. Alice Herscovitch, our Executive Director, has been one of the Canadian delegates to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance or IHRA since December 2008.

Belgium is currently the Chair of IHRA, and in April 2013, the chairmanship will be transferred to Canada. Mario Silva, former MP and Chair of the inquiry panel of the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism, has been named as the Canadian Chair.

IHRA functions through working groups at the expert level, and plenary sessions of political Heads of Delegation. In April 2013, Alice will become Chair of the Education Working Group of this international body. It is our hope that with the commitment to Chairing the IHRA, Canada continues to show leadership both at the national and international levels, on issues currently addressed by the body including: antisemitism and Holocaust denial, the situation of the Roma and the Roma genocide, memorial sites, guidelines for Holocaust and genocide education, and challenges in Holocaust education.

As part of its chairmanship initiatives, the Canadian Government has indicated its interest in projects regarding recorded testimonies of Canadian Holocaust survivors. As a Centre, we know that in educational work, the emotional charge, the passion which can be inspired by oral history cannot be duplicated by any other means. For the 2013 year, the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre is therefore working to implement a major project in partnership with the Chaim and Sarah Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, Toronto, to assure the long-term preservation, documentation, access and pedagogical use of most collections of Holocaust survivor testimony across the country. We will keep you informed as this exciting project unfolds.

Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre

5151 chemin de la Côte-Ste-Catherine
Montréal (QC) H3W 1M6 (514) 345-2605
www.mhmc.ca info@mhmc.ca www.mhmc-humanrights.ca



Larry Nachshen - President
Alice Herscovitch - Executive Director

Susyn Borer - Immediate Past President, Helen Malkin - Vice President, Stephen Coplan - Treasurer, Silvia Kertesz - Secretary, Lily Ivanier - Honorary Vice-President, Judith Nemes Black, Frédéric-Guillaume Dufour, Hanna Eliashiv, Menachem Freedman, Nancy Maklan, Daniel Rabinowicz, Richard Schnurbach, Stephen Strauber, Julia Reitman, Akos Verboczy, Leslie Vertes

Eszter Andor
Roselyn Blacker
Jacqueline Celemencki
Dianne Fallis
Julie Guinard
Melanie Hugron
Louis-Philippe Jannard

Cornélia Strickler
Pauline Zoldan

Remembrance Coordinator
Assistant to the Executive Director
Education Coordinator
Financial Officer
Museum & Collection Coordinator
Reservations Agent
Human Rights Coordinator
Events & Communications Coordinator
Video Archivist
Secretary - Receptionist

