SEARCHING FOR SURVIVORS AND VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

Books

How to Search for Holocaust Victims


This is the only book I have been able to find that is specifically dedicated to finding and documenting people who were lost during the Holocaust, both victims and survivors.


This tells the story of the Jewish survivors who pioneered Holocaust research in the immediate aftermath of World War II. The author analyzes the motivations and rationales that guided survivors in chronicling the destruction they had witnessed, while also discussing their research techniques, archival collections, and historical publications.

How Other People Succeeded in Finding Information


When the German Remembrance Foundation established a prize to commemorate the one million children murdered during the Holocaust, they named it after Marion Samuel. All that was known of her was her name, her age and date of deportation. She was an eleven year old girl that was killed in Auschwitz in 1943. When the author received the award, he decided to find all the information he could about her. This is an account of his search of the records and the people that helped him uncover the short life of Marion Samuel.


In 1997 two bundles of 86 letters, postcards, and a telegram were found hidden in a building being demolished in Amsterdam.  They were written by Flip (Philip) Slier to his parents from a forced labor camp.  This book contains not only the letters, but all the research--extraordinary photographs, annotations and the story of what happened to the Slier family.


**Location**

Location is one of the key elements to tracking the history of any family or family members and it is even more important in Holocaust research.  The following books may help visualize locations.  Here you may find enough information to lead to a successful search or to a better understanding of the lives lived, what was lost and what is to be gained from your research.

**Documents on the Holocaust: Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews in Germany and Austria, Poland, and the Soviet Union.**  Edited by Yitzhak Arad, Isreal Gutman, and Abraham Margaliot; Translations by Lea Ben Dor; introduction to the Bison Books edition by Steven T. Katz.  8th ed.  Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press; Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999.  *940.531 D65A*


This work provides the history of the shtetls and cities of nearly every country in continental Europe.  (Exceptions are Bulgaria, Finland, Portugal, Spain, and Switzerland.


Mokotoff, Gary, Sallyann Amdur Sack, and Alexander Sharon.  **Where Once We Walked: A Guide to the Jewish Communities Destroyed in the Holocaust.**
Revised ed. Bergenfield, NJ: Avotaynu, 2002. R 940.531 M72W [Reference books are on 1st floor just outside the Reference Office door]

This work is key to finding the location of Jewish communities in Europe. It not only gives you town names, but alternative names, nearby towns, and town names using the Daitch-Mokotoff Soundex System. This system groups town names phonetically, by how the names sound. This may be the only way you can find a town whose name has been misspelled. Read the explanatory text (pp. xi-xxvi) before using this book.

Cohen, Chester G. Shtetl Finder: Jewish Communities in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries in the Pale of Settlement of Russia and Poland, and in Lithuania, Latvia, Galicia, and Bukovina, with Names of Residents. Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1989. 929.1 C66S

The Holocaust in German Occupied Soviet Territories


Bartov begins his journey with the intention of finding out more about how his mother and other Jews of her generation from the Ukraine lived and how they died. His intentions change when he discovers, and then goes on to document, how Ukrainian nationalists are systematically expunging any evidence of the existence of Jews in the Ukraine. Locations listed in the Contents include L'viv, Sambir, Drohobych, Stryi, Bolekhiv, Ivano-Frankivs'k, Kolomyia, Kosiv, Kuty, Horodenka, Husiatyn, Chortkiv, Zolotyi Potik, Buchach, Monastyrys'ka, Ternopil, Berezhany, Zolochiv, Brody, and Zhovokva.


Combining forensic evidence, interviews with living survivors, and information found in newly accessible Russian records of Jewish testimony and war crimes trials, Father Desbois uncovers hidden mass gravesites of murdered Jews in the Ukraine. Father Desbois arranges for the reading of the Kaddish over each discovered gravesite. By telling their stories he also makes certain these victims are not forgotten.


Combining research in the recently opened archives of the former Soviet Union with holdings in the Holocaust Memorial Museum in the United States, the story of the extermination of over 1.4 million Ukrainian Jews is told.


These territories include Ukraine, Belorussia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and the Crimea. This work consists of newly translated testimonies of Jews who survived German atrocities in the occupied areas. The stories were collected near the time of liberation by reporters and soldiers who spoke the language of the survivors and who were survivors themselves—people who had fought the Germans and who had lost loved ones. There was a bond between the interviewer and the interviewee. The stories are raw, immediate, and ultimately about those who did not survive, as Joshua Rubin calls them in his Preface, “the shadows on the page.”

**Location -- The Comprehensive History of the Holocaust (Series)**

Ancel, Jean. **The History of the Holocaust in Romania.** Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press and Jerusalem: Yad Vashem. 2011, 940.531 A53H

Arad, Yitzhak. **The Holocaust in the Soviet Union.** Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press and Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2009. 940.531 A65H


Rothkirchen, Livia. **The Jews of Moravia and Bohemia: Facing the Holocaust.** Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press and Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005. 940.531 R74J

**Languages**

Some people are daunted from any research that involves foreign languages. Yet once a person becomes familiar with the way particular forms are constructed, using these documents becomes easier, even when in a foreign language. Jonathan Shea has written four books that should help with this process.


Languages include: German and Swedish (the Germanic Languages); French, Italian, Latin, Portuguese, Romanian, and Spanish (the Romance Languages); and Czech, Polish, and Russian (the Slavic Languages). Two other languages included are Hungarian (Magyar) and Lithuanian.


Shea emphasizes the importance of the Polish language and devotes the entire first chapter to it.


For those who would like to investigate online translation tools, I have included the above link.

**Personal Narratives**


Gruenbaum, Michael with Todd Hasak-Lowy. **Somewhere There Is Still a Sun.** New York: Simon and Schuster, 2015. *940.531 G92S*


Rutka Laskier, a fourteen year old girl from Bedzin, Poland, kept a diary for four months in 1943. She was Jewish and knew she was going to die. She kept the notebook so eventually others would know. She died in Auschwitz in 1943. A friend survived the Holocaust and kept the notebook for 60 years in secret. At the age of 82 her friend released it and it was published in 2006. It was then translated into English and published in 2008.


Found at Auschwitz in 1945 and published seventy years later. Originally published by Jewish Family and Children’s Services of San Francisco.

**General Works**


**Children in the Holocaust**


Heberer, Patricia. **Children During the Holocaust.** Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2011. *940.531 H35C*


**Additional Information**


**Articles**

*Please note that Avotaynu can now be found in Special Collections on the first floor of the library. The magazine is located immediately to your right as you go into the room. Below is just a sampling of the articles available in this publication.*

2007


Having been denied direct access to the records at the International Tracing Services in Bad Arolsen, Germany in 1989, the author describes her visit in September of 2007. She discovers a much more welcoming climate and a complete reversal of earlier policies.


This article describes the holdings and resources at the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen, Germany.

2011


2014


2015


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**Useful Internet Sources**

**Key Internet Sites**

International Tracing Service and Archive Information

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.
[http://www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)
Yad Vashem's Online Repository of Holocaust Victim's Names
http://db.yadvashem.org/names/search.html?language=en

"About Yizkor Books" from the Library of Portland State University
library.pdx.edu/research/special-collections-university-archives/yizkor-collection/about-yizkor-books

Yizkor Book Translations
http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/translations.html

Holocaust Encyclopedia from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
http://www.ushmm.org/learn/holocaust-encyclopedia

A List of Holocaust Records Based on German Records
The German Federal Archives Memorial Book (in German and English)
From the JGSGB 11 November 2015
http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch/directory.html

Societies That Can Help

Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston
P.O. Box 610366
Newton Highlands, MA 02461-0366
Telephone: (617) 796-8522
http://www.jgsqgb.org

International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies
Post Office Box 1094
Agoura Hills, CA 91376
http://iajgs.org

YIVO Institute for Jewish Research
15 W. Sixteenth St.
New York, NY 10011- 6301
Telephone: (212) 246-6080
http://www.yivoinstitute.org

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