



The Full Museum's Guiding Information

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Guidebook Introduction

The content of this Guidebook is based on extensive research and the collection of written, oral, and photographic sources, as well as archival databases from the museum's website and historical publications from Israel and around the world devoted to these subjects. This research and documentation project has been carried out over more than twenty years by the founders and partners involved in the establishment of the museum, including the museum's chairman, Major General (Res.) Chaim Erez; the museum's Director General, Brigadier General (Res.) Zvika Kantor; Prof. Yoav Gelber, Chairman of the Public Council; Prof. Moshe (Misha) Arens; Dr. Yitzhak ("Tolka") Arad; Dr. Benny Michelson; Dr. Moti Kfir; Dr. Tzilla Hershko; Dr. Tamar Ketko; and many others. Writing and Editing: Dr. Tamar Ketko, Museum Curator, with the assistance of a team of historians and teacher trainers from the Department of Cultural Studies and Humanities Education and the Institute for Historical Education at Kibbutzim Seminary College, July 2022.

Welcome

Welcome to the Chaim Herzog Museum of the Jewish Soldier in World War II, named after the sixth President of the State of Israel. President Herzog enlisted in the British Army during World War II and served as an intelligence officer in several campaigns until the liberation of Berlin and the defeat of Nazi Germany. After immigrating to the Land of Israel, he continued his military service — this time as a Jewish fighter in the struggle for statehood and independence. He later rose to the rank of Major General in the Israel Defense Forces, served as Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, and ultimately became President of the State of Israel. The Government of Israel, the Herzog family, and additional donors partnered in establishing this museum as both a national and international enterprise — a center for learning, research, and the preservation of Jewish and Israeli heritage. Visitors are invited to pause beside the display portraying Chaim Herzog as a British officer, accompanied by the following quotation: "Throughout my life I have been involved in many things — I have been a statesman, diplomat, businessman, commentator, lawyer, and family man — but above all, I have always seen myself as a soldier."

*Chaim Herzog, *Derech Chaim* (1997)

“The Time Elevator”

World War II shook both the Jewish people and humanity as a whole with an unprecedented eruption of evil. The war, fought between 1939 and 1945, exacted devastating human costs whose consequences continue to shape the world today. While nations fought over territory and ideology, the Jewish people fought for survival itself. The Jewish experience of the war is often associated primarily with persecution, helplessness in the face of Nazi occupation, and the implementation of the Final Solution, alongside only limited accounts of armed resistance. This museum seeks to broaden that historical narrative. Here, visitors encounter the often-overlooked story of Jewish mobilization across the armies of the world, the participation of Jews in resistance movements and uprisings, and their vital contribution to the defeat of Nazi Germany and its allies. From this point forward, you embark on a journey through time, discovering individuals and stories of courage, sacrifice, and combat that are far less known to the public.

Approximately 1.5 million Jewish men and women fought in World War II — in every theater of war, in every branch of service, and in virtually every military role. They were among the first to volunteer and serve wherever fighting occurred: on land, at sea, and in the air. They demonstrated extraordinary courage and sacrifice, from privates to generals, representing Jewish communities from across the globe. More than a quarter of a million Jewish fighters fell during the war. The time has come to present the full historical picture. The exhibits before you and the personal stories they reveal illuminate the scale of Jewish participation in the struggle against Nazism. During your visit, you will come to understand the profound responsibility we share to study and teach all chapters of World War II to complete the story of the Jewish people and recognize their contribution on both the national and international stages.

Entering the Exhibition

Visitors start the exhibition by going through a spiraling passage symbolizing the world’s descent into war. On September 1, 1939, World War II began. The world was shattered. Civilization has descended into chaos. Human freedom and independent thought were placed in grave danger.

Wing 1 – The First Years: 1939 – 1941

Introduction and Background

- Displaying a digital map of the combat zones
- Data: Number of Jewish soldiers in the British Army — approximately 65,000
- Number decorated: 2,245; Number fallen: 2,763

During the Second World War, which was the cruellest war in human history and exacted unimaginable costs while seeking to erase the natural rights of human beings, it was also a war for the very existence of the Jewish people. 1,500,000 Jewish fighters, women and men, took part in the war, and more than 250,000 fell in the various campaigns. The Jewish people produced the highest percentage of fighters among all nations. Jews fought on every front, in every army and branch of service, and wherever resistance against the Nazis and their collaborators erupted — in partisan and underground frameworks and in every uprising. They were among the first to volunteer and join the fighting forces out of loyalty to the army of their homeland, but also from a sense of mission and commitment to their people. They understood the dual significance of their enlistment as the war progressed, and even more so when, as Jewish soldiers, they discovered the horrors of the Holocaust in Europe and encountered their brothers and sisters who were the living dead in the camps.

Among the civilian populations in territories occupied by the Nazis, partisan resistance groups emerged and underground activities began to organize. Among them were thousands of Jewish men and women who managed to escape from ghettos and labor camps into the forests and survived under inhuman conditions. The contribution of the partisans greatly assisted the Allied forces in every country in which they operated. Their story is known only partially and one-sidedly, in a way that excludes from national consciousness the heroism of fighters, men and women alike, who were prepared to charge forward at any cost and against all odds.

In 1940, after declaring its entry into the war against Nazi Germany, Britain found itself wearing two hats. On the one hand, it was defending its own homeland, while on the other it still controlled vast territories around the world. The British Army consisted both of British soldiers and soldiers of the “British Empire,” such as India, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, and Palestine. Jews served under the British flag both in the British Army itself and in its formations, such as the Jewish Brigade. Among them were commandos, pilots, and intelligence personnel. Some were native Britons, some residents of territories under British rule, and some were even German Jewish refugees who mainly served in intelligence because of their knowledge of the German language and the certainty that, given the circumstances, they were not German spies.

In March 1939, Britain and France signed an agreement with Poland in which they committed themselves to come to Poland’s aid should Germany attack it. On September 1, 1939, Germany

invaded, and Britain remained largely alone in the campaign. Within less than a year after the outbreak of the war, Britain found itself almost the only country in Europe not occupied by the Nazis. Britain, the great empire, found itself under attack in its own homeland when on July 10, 1940, the “Battle of Britain” began, during which the German Air Force attacked Britain. At first these were light attacks intended to test and familiarize themselves with the terrain, followed later by terrifying assaults involving thousands of aircraft in a single attack. Until the beginning of September 1940, the Germans focused on strategic attacks, such as against the English Channel and important crossings; later they shifted to radar stations, airfields, and squadrons.

At the beginning of September, the Germans launched a continuous Blitz lasting almost two months, during which they attacked primarily the civilian population in London in order to damage British morale and break their spirit. In retrospect, the British proved to possess great endurance and the courage to survive without surrender. Italy became an ally of Germany and declared war on Britain. On June 11, 1940, the war in Africa broke out when the Italians invaded British-controlled Egypt from Libya, which was under Italian control. The attack initially succeeded, but about half a year later Britain launched a counteroffensive and pushed the Italians some 800 kilometers westward. The Italian defeat was halted only because Churchill ordered forces to be sent to aid Greece and considered this more important than conquering all of North Africa. The Italians also suffered repeated defeats against the British in Eritrea and Ethiopia.













From late October until June 1941, the Axis powers attempted to conquer the Balkans. During the campaign, Italy sent approximately 150,000 soldiers to Greece, which defended itself with roughly half that number. Britain sent reinforcements to assist Greece, while the Germans sent reinforcements to assist the Italians. In April 1941, the British withdrew from Greece to the island of Crete, and Greece was occupied. Some time later Germany attacked Crete, capturing many British soldiers, while the remaining forces — approximately 27,000 men — were evacuated from Crete (some of them prisoners from among the volunteers of the Yishuv). As mentioned, alongside the British forces fought many troops from all the countries and territories subordinate to the British Empire. African and Middle Eastern forces, Australian and New Zealand forces, as well as Jewish fighting forces from Palestine and Jewish citizens of Britain and its territories. Britain later fought in the Pacific and in Europe itself and remained free until the end of the war.

Exhibition Design

The first section of the wing is designed with a deliberately low ceiling to create a sense of oppression, confinement, and discomfort — reflecting the atmosphere of occupied Europe under Nazi rule. In the second part of the wing, the ceiling rises significantly, symbolizing liberation, the spirit of the free Allied armies, and the growing hope of freedom from Nazi occupation.

Displayed Items and Installations:

Generic equipment standpoint

Image	Item	Image	Item
	Chaim Herzog's Monument at the entrance to the museum as a British Army officer		Chaim Herzog Herzog's Scarf/tablecloth artifact
	Herzog's British military decorations		Herzog's Military cufflinks
	Herzog's British military insignia Herzog's Royal Decorations		Herzog's Recruitment and rank registry
	Zigle's uniform		Sten submachine gun
	Military water flask		Morse code transmission device
	Military field radio		British military combat helmet
			Diorama depicting the London Blitz bombing campaign

Selected Characters

Chaim Herzog

Chaim (Vivian) Herzog was born in Belfast in 1918. When he was 13 years old, his family immigrated to the Land of Israel. While still a student at Hebron Yeshiva, he joined the ranks of the Haganah. His father, Rabbi Yitzhak Isaac Halevi Herzog, served at the time as the first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Yishuv.

When the Second World War broke out, Herzog was in London studying law. He completed his degree and in 1942 enlisted in the British Army, underwent formal training, and graduated from an infantry officers' course. Later he became an intelligence officer and specialized in interrogating prisoners of war. In the summer of 1944 Herzog participated in the Normandy campaign as a brigade intelligence officer. He also took part in the campaigns for the liberation of France and the Netherlands. Herzog was present at the surrender of a large German force numbering 140,000 soldiers. On April 15, 1945, Herzog arrived at the gates of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. He entered one of the barracks and introduced himself to the prisoners as a Jewish officer from the Land of Israel. Everyone around burst into tears, including Herzog himself. Lola Felder, one of the prisoners present at the event, said throughout her life that this was the moment when she felt she had become Jewish again. Herzog also took part in the capture and interrogation of Heinrich Himmler. After the war he continued serving as an intelligence officer in the British command in Germany. In 1947, on his way back to the Land of Israel, Herzog passed through Egypt, where he met his future wife, Ora Ambash. When the War of Independence broke out, he again found himself at war — this time as the intelligence officer of Brigade 7 in the Israel Defense Forces. Before enlisting, he received the blessing of his father, the Chief Rabbi of the State of Israel, Isaac Herzog: "If you will not be a rabbi in Israel, then there is nothing more honorable and greater in the life of a young Jew today than being an officer in the army."

Herzog participated in the battles for Latrun and took an active role in the efforts to break through to Jerusalem. In 1949, in light of his experience in the British Army, he was appointed head of the IDF Intelligence Directorate. He laid the foundations for Israel's military intelligence system. After leaving the IDF, he served as a Member of Knesset, Military Governor of the West Bank, Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, and the sixth President of the State of Israel.

Chaim Herzog died on April 17, 1997, and was buried in the Great Leaders of the Nation section on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem.

Vera Atkins

Vera Maria Rosenberg was born in the city of Galați, Romania, in 1908. She was the only daughter of a successful Jewish businessman from Germany named Max Rosenberg. Max settled in Romania at the beginning of the twentieth century in order to manage his brother's shipping business in Galați, Romania's principal Danube port, and in Constanța. Vera's mother, Hilda Atkins, was born in London. In 1931 Vera was sent to Britain, where she studied in a senior secretarial course, including touch typing in English and French. In 1933 Vera's father died, and in her aspiration for a neutral British identity during the 1930s, she adopted her mother's middle name, Atkins, as her surname, partly to avoid the fate of the Jews that had cast a shadow over the family since the Kishinev pogroms. The change of name also assisted her later intelligence work. Major (Squadron Leader) Vera Atkins-Rosenberg served as the intelligence and counterintelligence officer of the French Section of the Special Operations Executive and as the principal assistant to the head of the section, Colonel Maurice Buckmaster. For her achievements during the war, she received the following decorations: Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE), the French Croix de Guerre, and the French Legion of Honour.

Her activities during the Second World War captured the imagination of the public. Two biographies were written about her, and writer Ian Fleming, author of the popular James Bond series, drew inspiration for the character of Miss Moneybags, assistant to "M," from Vera Atkins's personality. As a resident of a foreign country, Vera was not granted a work permit, and after the outbreak of the war she was even forbidden from volunteering for any role in the security services. During this entire period, she maintained connections with acquaintances from British intelligence from her years in Romania. When Vera Atkins was invited for an interview at the War Office in February 1941, almost a year after the fall of France, it seemed that clandestine activity on French soil had reached a dead end. Not a single British agent had yet succeeded in infiltrating France, and the feeling in Britain was one of complete disconnection from the European continent. Here Vera found a suitable role in which to integrate herself as an active agent and perhaps prove her loyalty to Britain. Vera was appointed to a crucial role as the central controller of 470 agents operating in European countries. She coordinated preparations for their infiltration and possessed information regarding every secret mission assigned personally to each agent. She bore personal responsibility for the activities of each of her "children," as she referred to them. In particular, she identified with the women agents whom she operated beyond enemy lines.

One of the greatest achievements of her agents came during the Allied landings in Normandy, when they worked to sever German communications networks in the landing zones and cut many German units off from reporting or receiving instructions from their commanders. After the war, when 118 of these agents failed to return from their missions, Vera undertook a nearly single-handed effort to search across Europe, locate them, and understand what had happened to them. Among those missing were also 16 women. She succeeded in 117 cases. Overcoming the chaos of bombed Germany after the war, Vera followed the traces of her agents into concentration and extermination camps and helped capture many war criminals who had tortured and murdered the agents. She provided testimony that enabled many Nazis to be brought to trial and convicted for their crimes. For most of the war years, despite serving in the Special Operations Executive, Vera still had not received British citizenship, and from December 1941, the date Britain declared war on Romania, she was officially considered an enemy alien.

Only later, after intensive efforts by her commanders, did the British Home Office approve her citizenship. This finally allowed her to be officially recruited into the armed forces until then she had served as a civilian into the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF), with the rank of Squadron Leader. Only in 1997 did the British Ministry of Defence decide to award her the decoration of Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE).

Roland Robert Stanford Tuck (“Lucky Tuck”)

Robert Stanford Tuck was born to a Jewish family in London in 1916. He served in the British Merchant Navy. In 1935 he joined the Royal Air Force, and during one training exercise he was nearly killed in a mid-air collision. In 1938 he became one of the first British pilots trained to fly the Spitfire. During the Dunkirk evacuation operation, Tuck took part in several aerial battles in which he shot down several German aircraft. For this he received the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) from the King of England for his initiative and personal example. Around the same period, his squadron commander was wounded and Tuck assumed command of the squadron. In June 1940 he received the First Bar to DFC, and a year later the Second Bar. In 1940 he participated in the Battle of Britain, during which he commanded Squadron 257. Because of his exceptional leadership, courage, and outstanding personal ability, he received the Distinguished Service Order (DSO). In June 1941 he was shot down over the English Channel but was rescued after two hours in the water. Tuck was promoted to the rank of Wing Commander (Lieutenant Colonel equivalent) and was given command of the Duxford air base. After completing this role, he was sent to the United States as a liaison officer. A few months later he returned to Britain and received command of another fighter wing at Biggin Hill. In January 1942, during a flight over northern France, Tuck succeeded in destroying a German alcohol refinery, but anti-aircraft fire hit and downed his aircraft. On the ground, the Germans recognized the famous flying “ace,” were astonished by his achievements, and expressed their respect for him. Tuck spent three years in a prisoner-of-war camp. During captivity he attempted to escape but was transferred from the camp only days before carrying out the plan. On February 1, 1945, he succeeded in escaping captivity together with a Polish pilot and reached Red Army forces, with whom he fought for two weeks. After the war he reached the British Embassy in Moscow and from there returned to Britain. During the Second World War he shot down 30 enemy aircraft. After his release from the Royal Air Force, he continued flying as a test pilot. On June 14, 1946, he was awarded the American Army's Distinguished Flying Cross. Because of his exploits, he earned the nickname “Lucky Tuck.” Robert Tuck died on May 5, 1987, at the age of 71.

Additional Figures In This Wing

Eddie Myers

In the summer of 1942, British High Command launched a daring operation to destroy the Gorgopotamos Bridge in occupied Greece, aiming to disrupt Axis supply lines in the Mediterranean theater. Leading the mission was Eddie Myers, an engineer officer who had previously fought in the Western Desert and later served in Mandatory Palestine as an instructor at the Middle East Command Staff College in Haifa. On September 29, 1942, Myers and his commandos parachuted deep into occupied Greece. Establishing themselves in a cave overlooking the heavily guarded bridge, they began coordinating with local resistance organizations. Despite

lacking reliable wireless communication, Myers succeeded in forging cooperation between two bitterly divided Greek partisan factions - communist and liberal resistance groups — uniting them for the operation. On the night of November 25, 1942, the mission was launched. After intense fighting, 180 kilograms of explosives detonated beneath the bridge, halting railway traffic for six weeks and severely disrupting Axis logistics supporting German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's forces. Myers remained in Greece after the operation and worked to strengthen cooperation between rival resistance movements. Thanks in part to his efforts, the two major Greek partisan factions signed a cooperation agreement in 1943. He received numerous decorations for his wartime service, though he reportedly valued most the recognition he received from fellow Jews and resistance fighters.

Solomon Goldfarb

The port of Antwerp in Belgium, one of Europe's largest ports, was liberated from Nazi control in September 1944. Yet German forces still held the island of Walcheren, effectively blocking Allied access to the harbor. In November 1944, a small British-led force entered Middelburg, the island's capital. The unit consisted of only a single tank and eleven soldiers, commanded by a Norwegian officer known as Pedro Goering whose real name was Solomon Goldfarb.

Goldfarb had grown up in Bergen, Norway, among the fjords, dreaming of becoming an artist. After the Nazi occupation of Norway, he escaped to Scotland aboard a fishing boat and enlisted in the Norwegian Brigade. On that stormy morning in Middelburg, Goldfarb led his tiny force through the city's defenses undetected. Confronted by the unexpected penetration of Allied troops and fully aware of Germany's collapsing military position, the senior German commander chose to surrender. The liberation of Walcheren opened access to the port of Antwerp, a crucial logistical achievement for the Allied advance into Europe.

After the war, Solomon Goldfarb fulfilled his childhood dream and became one of Norway's most celebrated cartoonists.

George Maduro

"Madurodam," the famous miniature city in the Netherlands, stands today as one of the country's most beloved landmarks. Behind its creation lies the remarkable story of George Maduro - a story that began far from the Netherlands, on the Caribbean island of Curaçao. George Maduro was the only son of Joshua and Rebecca Maduro, descendants of a Sephardic Jewish family of Spanish origin. After completing his studies, he traveled to the Netherlands to study law at Leiden University. His plans, however, were interrupted by the outbreak of World War II. Maduro enlisted in the Dutch Army and was stationed in The Hague during the German invasion of the Netherlands in May 1940. During fierce street fighting, he led his platoon in a daring assault under heavy fire, stormed a fortified building, and captured an elite German paratrooper unit. Only five days later, the Netherlands surrendered, and Maduro was forced to lay down his arms. Refusing to accept defeat, he joined the underground resistance. For over a year, he helped smuggle downed British pilots out of occupied Europe and back to Britain. Eventually, he was betrayed and arrested by the Gestapo. In late 1944, the prison in which Maduro was being held was bombed during an Allied air raid. The walls collapsed, allowing many prisoners to escape. Maduro chose not to flee. Instead, he remained behind to rescue prisoners trapped beneath the rubble. That decision cost him his life. He was recaptured, subjected to brutal imprisonment, and died in February 1945 inside Dachau concentration camp. After the war, George Maduro was posthumously awarded the Netherlands' highest military decoration for bravery. Streets and public squares throughout the country were

named in his honor. Yet his greatest memorial was created by his parents, who donated “Madurodam” to the Dutch people in memory of their son. To this day, visitors entering the park can see a miniature replica of the Maduro family home in Curaçao, where George spent his youth.

Victor Mirkin

Some individuals accomplish more in a few short years than others do in a lifetime. Victor Mirkin was one of them. Born in Russia, Mirkin later completed officer training in France, studied and practiced law in Britain, and eventually settled in the Land of Israel, where he established his family life. In 1937, he moved to Haifa and became Director General of the PICA organization founded by Baron Edmond de Rothschild. Mirkin was a man of extraordinary talents and energy. He became a national fencing champion, served as a jiu-jitsu instructor, and held a black belt in judo. Following the fall of France in 1940, Mirkin was among the first volunteers to join General Charles de Gaulle’s Free French Forces. During the campaign to liberate Damascus, he was wounded in battle and awarded the Syrian Medal of Honor and Merit making him the only Israeli ever to receive an official Syrian decoration. Mirkin fought in the Western Desert campaign and later participated in the Allied invasions of Sicily and Italy. In November 1944, he returned to France as part of the effort to liberate the port city of Toulon. Advancing ahead of the main Allied force, Mirkin gathered five lightly armored vehicles and drove directly toward the German positions while ordering his men to fire continuously in all directions. Exploiting confusion and creating the impression that the city had already fallen to the French Army, he entered negotiations with the German commander. Fourteen minutes later, approximately 800 German soldiers emerged and surrendered. The port of Toulon was liberated without a single additional shot being fired. On November 24, 1944, near the German border, Victor Mirkin was killed by gunfire from inside a church. He was awarded numerous decorations for bravery, including the Legion of Honour and the Order of Liberation, but he never returned home to his family in Israel. He was thirty-five years old at the time of his death.

Mordechai Frizis

Across Greece, more than twenty-five cities bear streets named after Mordechai Frizis — the Jewish officer remembered as the heroic commander on horseback.

Born in Chalcis, Greece, Frizis began his military career in 1916. By the outbreak of World War II, he had risen to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Admired deeply by his soldiers, his men proudly referred to themselves as “Frizis’ Men.” During fierce defensive fighting in the Kalama sector, Frizis and his unit succeeded in halting the Italian invasion of Greece and forcing enemy forces into retreat with heavy losses. His troops later continued advancing toward Albania. On December 5, while crossing the Bistrice River, they came under attack from Italian aircraft. Although wounded, Frizis continued riding among his soldiers on horseback, encouraging them by shouting “Aera!” the Greek battle cry meaning “Courage!” or “Forward!” Moments later, another burst of enemy fire struck him directly. Frizis was killed instantly while still mounted on his horse.

When a local priest approached to close the commander’s eyes, the soldiers informed him that Frizis was Jewish. Without hesitation, the priest placed his hand upon Frizis’ head and recited:

“Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is One.” After his death, Frizis was awarded Greece’s highest military honors and remains a national hero in Greek memory to this day.

Paul Cullen

In the dense jungles of Papua New Guinea, along the legendary Kokoda Track, battles were fought that would determine the fate of Australia during World War II. Among the officers who played a decisive role in that campaign was a Jewish commander named Paul Cullen. Born Alfred Cohen in Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia, Cullen enlisted in the Australian Army in 1927. With the outbreak of World War II, he volunteered for the First Australian Imperial Force and was deployed to the Middle East. In 1940, Cullen arrived in the Land of Israel, where he trained at the British military base at Camp Julis before being sent to North Africa. There, he participated in Operation Compass and fought in the capture of Tobruk and other key battles against Italian and German forces. According to accounts from the campaign, Cullen entered the Libyan town of Bardia to the sound of bagpipes playing “Over the Rainbow.” After the North African campaign, Cullen and his battalion were transferred to New Guinea to confront advancing Japanese forces. The fighting along the Kokoda Track took place under extraordinarily harsh conditions — in mountainous jungle terrain plagued by mud, exhaustion, disease, and malaria. Despite these challenges, Cullen and his men succeeded in driving back the Japanese advance. The Allied counteroffensive ultimately forced Japanese forces out of Papua New Guinea and removed the immediate threat to Australia. Paul Cullen retired from military service with the rank of Major General and became one of the most decorated Jewish-Australian soldiers of World War II.

Baruch Steinberg

On September 1, 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland from the west. Two weeks later, the Soviet Union invaded from the east. The dual invasion was carried out under the terms of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, the agreement between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union that divided Poland between the two powers. Approximately 180,000 Jews served in the Polish armed forces during the campaign. Among the most senior Jewish officers was General Bernard Mond, commander of the Kraków Infantry Division. Following the Soviet invasion, hundreds of thousands of Polish soldiers were taken prisoner. Ordinary soldiers and lower-ranking personnel were generally released, while officers were transferred to NKVD prison camps.

In April 1940, on the orders of Joseph Stalin, thousands of Polish officers were systematically executed in the forests of Katyn, Mednoye, and Kharkiv. Among the murdered were more than four hundred Jewish officers, including Major Baruch Steinberg, Chief Rabbi of the Polish Army. Born into a distinguished rabbinic family, Steinberg served as Chief Military Rabbi of the Polish Army for three years before the outbreak of war. He was captured by Soviet forces on September 17, 1939, and transferred to a detention camp. One fellow prisoner later recalled:

“How great was the sense of unity and the need for communal prayer. On Friday evenings, we descended into the basement of a dilapidated hut and joined hundreds of Jews praying with warmth and devotion, led by Rabbi Steinberg.” On April 12, 1940, Rabbi Baruch Steinberg was murdered together with thousands of other Polish officers in the Katyn Forest massacre.

Royal Navy

Since the late seventeenth century, the Royal Navy of the British Empire had been regarded as the most powerful naval force in the world. During World War II, the British Navy played a decisive role across multiple theaters of war. Alongside the battle fleet, the Merchant Navy supplied Allied forces around the globe, while the Coast Guard operated as an independent maritime branch. Many Jews served in the fleets and specialized units of the Royal Navy, contributing in combat, intelligence, logistics, and rescue operations.

Thomas William Gould

Thomas William Gould became renowned for extraordinary bravery while serving aboard a British submarine. Risking his own life to save fellow crew members trapped underwater, he displayed exceptional courage under impossible conditions. For his heroism, Gould was awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest military decoration for valor in the British armed forces.

Ewen Montagu

Ewen Edward Samuel Montagu served in British Naval Intelligence and became one of the principal architects of one of the most famous deception operations of World War II: Operation Mincemeat. The operation successfully misled the German High Command regarding Allied invasion plans in the Mediterranean, contributing significantly to the success of the Allied campaign. For his wartime service, Montagu was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire. Many Jews served in British intelligence organizations during World War II. Some were refugees from Germany or Austria; others were chosen because of their fluency in German and familiarity with European culture. Their loyalty to the Allied cause was unquestioned, and they became an essential source of intelligence expertise. Jewish personnel served throughout the intelligence community, including in signals interception, codebreaking, aerial-photograph analysis, espionage operations, prisoner interrogation, and operational intelligence.

John Miles Henry

Walter Eytan

Walter Ettinghausen, later known as Walter Eytan, served in British intelligence as commander of a unit responsible for deciphering German and Italian naval communications encoded through the Enigma system. After the war, he immigrated to Israel and became the first Director-General of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Joseph Gillis

Joseph Gillis was a mathematician who served in British intelligence, where he worked on deciphering Nazi Germany's military codes. Following the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, he immigrated to Israel and helped establish and lead a team of codebreakers within Unit 2 the organization that later evolved into Unit 8200 of the Israel Defense Forces.

Special Operations Executive (SOE)

The Special Operations Executive (SOE) was established in July 1940 under the direction of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Its purpose was to organize underground resistance movements throughout Nazi-occupied Europe and assist guerrilla warfare against German forces. The SOE recruited local resistance fighters and specially trained agents to conduct espionage, sabotage, communications, and propaganda operations behind enemy lines. Many Jews participated in SOE missions, including volunteers from the Jewish community in Mandatory Palestine.

Royal Air Force

Large numbers of Jews served in the Royal Air Force during World War II. Beyond the dangers faced by all air crews operating deep inside enemy territory, Jewish pilots and airmen also carried the additional risk of capture as Jews by Nazi Germany. Despite these dangers, they served with distinction in every major aerial campaign of the war.

Reginald Leonard George Merrick

Reginald Leonard George Merrick commanded a transport squadron responsible for ferrying thousands of aircraft from the United States to Britain during World War II, a vital logistical effort that strengthened Allied air power throughout the war.

George Ernest Goodman

George Ernest Goodman, born in Haifa, served as a fighter pilot in the Royal Air Force during the campaigns over France and Britain. He participated in numerous aerial engagements, successfully intercepting German aircraft, and was awarded high military honors for distinguished service and bravery in combat.

Peter Stevens

Peter Stevens was a bomber pilot who carried out dozens of operational sorties. He fell into German captivity after his aircraft was hit over Berlin. He was awarded the War Cross.

Michael “Mike” Weizmann

In November 1942, Michael “Mike” Weizmann went out on an attack mission against German vessels and submarines in the Bay of Biscay, from which he did not return.

Weizmann was a combat pilot in No. 502 Squadron of the RAF Coastal Command. He was the son of Chaim Weizmann, who later became the first President of the State of Israel.

Ground Forces and Special Units of the British Army

Many Jews fought in the ground forces and in the special units of the British Army. One of these units, “**X Troop**”, was established on the initiative of Winston Churchill. It recruited German-speaking Jews who had reached Britain from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. The soldiers of the unit adopted Anglo-Saxon names and fictitious backgrounds, and underwent training in combat, escape, camouflage, mountain climbing, parachuting, and guerrilla warfare. They operated in small teams and were attached to other commando units for intelligence operations in occupied Europe.

George Lane

A fighter in **X Troop** and the **SOE**, he took part in preparations for the invasion of Europe and in operations deep inside German-held territory. He was awarded the **Military Cross**.

Keith James Griffith

The first Jewish commander in the British commando unit **X Troop**. He fell in battle in Germany in April 1945.

Harry Rixman

A soldier in **No. 2 Commando**, he operated in Sicily, Italy, Yugoslavia, and Albania. He assisted Tito and the partisans in their struggle against German forces.

Richard Hirsch Kramers

An infantry officer in the British Expeditionary Force, he was forced to retreat from Dunkirk to Britain. He later took part in the battles of the Western Desert and in the invasion of Italy.

Interactive Station - Stage 1: Occupied Europe

Wall A — Poland

Tens of thousands of Jewish soldiers were mobilized into the Polish Army following the invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany on **1 September 1939**. Thousands of Jews from Warsaw volunteered to build fortifications and anti-tank obstacles in the western part of the city and joined the First Defense Brigade of Warsaw. After the Soviet Union invaded eastern Poland on **17 September 1939**, Poland surrendered. Tens of thousands of Jewish soldiers fell into Soviet and German captivity. Some perished in camps, while others were executed in the mass murder carried out by the Soviets in the Katyn Forest. Among the soldiers who managed to escape captivity, some joined the Allied armies, while others joined underground movements and partisan units.

Many decorations for bravery were awarded to Jewish soldiers by the Polish Army for their courage. In total, approximately **180,000 Jews** fought in the ranks of the Polish armed forces.

Bernard Stanisław Mond

Commander of the **6th Infantry Division of Kraków**. He defended the area of Silesia and Pszczyzna and fell into German captivity. He was liberated by the United States Army in April 1945.

Mieczysław Norwid-Neugebauer

Commander of the Polish Army reserve forces, who became Poland's Minister of Military Affairs in 1925. Between 1942 and 1947, he headed the logistical system of the Free Polish Army in Britain.

Rabbi Baruch Steinberg

Chief Rabbi of the Polish Army. Served as the chief religious' officer for Jewish soldiers and provided religious services for Catholic soldiers. After the Soviet invasion of eastern Poland, he was taken prisoner with other officers and was executed in the Katyn Forest on **14 April 1940**.

Wall B — Belgium, the Netherlands, and France

Duzha Levy

A company commander in an infantry battalion of the Belgian Army. After Belgium surrendered, he reached Britain and joined the **7th Free Belgian Brigade**. He served as a British liaison officer during the liberation of Belgium, and in the campaigns of Arnhem and the Battle of the Bulge. He later served as president of the Jewish community in Brussels.

The Netherlands

Approximately **5,000 Dutch Jews** served in the Dutch Army in its various branches. The German army invaded the Netherlands on **9 May 1940**, and five days later the Netherlands surrendered. After the occupation, many Jews took part in underground activity and joined the resistance movement in occupied Holland.

France

Tens of thousands of Jews fought in the French Army, which was considered one of the best armies in the world. However, despite being reinforced by around **five million reservists** and protected by the fortifications of the **Maginot Line**, the army was unable to withstand the German invasion of May 1940 and surrendered.

Avraha Bouddos

Chief artillery officer of the French Army during the Battle of France in 1940.

Pierre Brisac

Served in the French **Fifth Army** on the Maginot Line. After the surrender of France, he joined the French Resistance and commanded partisan forces in the Grenoble region. Later, under the underground name "**Colonel Brachet**," he served as chief of staff of the French underground army.

Paul Bloch-Dassault

One of the founders of the French Armored Corps and one of the commanders of the first tank battalions in the army. He took part in the **Saar Offensive** and reached the area of the **Siegfried Line**. In 1940, he was appointed commander of France's air defense. After the fall of France, he joined the French Resistance and received the nickname "**Dassault**," which later became the family name. After the liberation of Paris, he was appointed military governor of the city.

Marcel Bloch-Dassault

One of the founders and leaders of the French aviation industry between the world wars. He designed some of the most advanced fighter and transport aircraft of his time. In August 1944, he was sent to the **Buchenwald** concentration camp. After his liberation, he returned to France and established the French aviation company known as **Dassault Aviation**. After the French embargo was imposed in 1967, he assisted Israel's production plans for the **Mirage 5** aircraft.

Wall C — Greece and Norway

Greece

Approximately **13,000 Jewish soldiers** served in the ranks of the Greek Army during the Second World War, including around **343 officers**. They fought against the army of Fascist Italy, which invaded Greece in October 1940, and against the German army, which defeated Greece in April 1941. More than **500** Jewish soldiers were killed, and about **3,700** others were wounded.

Joseph "Pepo" Baruch

An officer in the Greek Army. He fought against Italy on the Albanian front and in the defensive battles against the German invasion of Greece. After he was captured, he was sent to Auschwitz, where he was assigned to the **Sonderkommando**, the prisoner unit forced to work in the gas chambers and crematoria. During his work, he discovered that his parents were among the victims. He established an underground organization that planned the **Sonderkommando Revolt**. On **7 October 1944**, the rebels succeeded in blowing up Crematorium IV and killing or wounding several Germans. After the revolt was suppressed, Baruch was executed.

Norway

On **9 April 1940**, the German army invaded Norway. After about two months, Germany occupied the country and the Norwegian Army was disbanded. More than **140 Jews** served in the army, representing about **10%** of Norway's Jewish population.

The Free Polish Army

After Poland was defeated by Germany, on **4 January 1940** the Polish general **Władysław Sikorski** established a government-in-exile in France, as well as a Polish army. This army included Polish citizens living in France. Around **80,000** of them were recruited, including approximately **8,000 Jews**. After the surrender of France, around **27,000 Polish soldiers** were evacuated, including about **1,000 Jews**, and joined the ranks of the British Army. In addition, Polish forces served in the **Independent Highland Brigade** in Norway, and in the **Carpathian Brigade** in Eretz Israel and the Western Desert.

“Anders’ Army”

Following an agreement signed in July 1941 between Stalin and the Polish government-in-exile in London, headed by General Sikorski, it was decided to establish a Polish army on Soviet territory. The army numbered around 76,000 soldiers, including more than 4,000 Jews. In late 1942, the Soviet Union allowed Anders’ Army to leave its territory, pass through Persia, and join British command in the Middle East. After a period of training in Iraq, Anders’ Army was sent to Eretz Israel. Around 3,000 Jewish soldiers, among them Menachem Begin, deserted and remained in Eretz Israel as illegal immigrants. Many of them later joined the British Army. General Anders’ Army continued to Italy, where it took part in the battles of Monte Cassino and in the liberation of Ancona and Bologna. Around 30,000 civilians accompanied the army out of the Soviet Union, including hundreds of children without parents. Around 30,000 civilians accompanied the army on its journey out of the Soviet Union, including hundreds of children without parents. These children were gathered in a camp in Teheran and later became known as the “Teheran Children.” Later, with the assistance of the Jewish Agency and other forces, they were brought to Eretz Israel.

The Polish Free Forces

Henryk Jedwab

He enlisted in the Polish Army at the outbreak of the war in 1939 and served in the 83rd Infantry Regiment of the Polish Army. He escaped to Britain, joined the SOE, and was sent on secret missions in France. He took part in battles in Italy as a member of the Polish company of No. 10 Commando. He was wounded three times and was awarded the Cross of Valor, the Monte Cassino Cross, and the Military Medal.

Zygmunt Klein

He enlisted in the Polish Air Force in September 1939 as a pilot in No. 214 Squadron. After the surrender of Poland, he escaped to France and then joined the British Royal Air Force as a Spitfire pilot. On 28 November 1940, during an operational sortie over the Isle of Wight, his aircraft was hit. He was declared to be missing in action.

Gustaw Herling-Grudziński

One of the founders of PLAN the People's Independence Action movement. He served in Anders' Army and took part in the Battle of Monte Cassino.

The Free Czechoslovak Army

Thousands of Jews served in the Czechoslovak division established in 1940 as part of the French Army. After the surrender of France, many of them moved to Britain, while some reached Eretz Israel. With the support of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile, they were organized into a brigade force and fighter squadrons. In the summer of 1940, under British command in Eretz Israel, around 250 Czechoslovak refugees were organized into an infantry battalion. In late May 1941, they began operational activity in the Western Desert. They also took part in the Allied invasion of Syria and Lebanon. In April 1942, they returned to Eretz Israel, where the unit was converted into an anti-aircraft unit and defended Haifa's oil refineries. In June 1943, they arrived in Britain, joined a Czechoslovak armored brigade, and took part in the liberation of Western Europe. The Czechoslovak units in the Middle East numbered around 2,500 soldiers, half of them were Jews.

Peter Orton

He escaped from Czechoslovakia after the Nazi German invasion, reached Japan and then China, and enlisted together with his brother in the Czechoslovak force attached to the British Royal Air Force. He trained as a navigator in No. 311 Bomber Squadron. He immigrated to Israel in 1954 and lived in Misgav Dov.

Mordechai Spiegel

He immigrated to Eretz Israel from Czechoslovakia and volunteered for the British Army as an artilleryman in a unit that defended Haifa Port. He later joined the Free Czechoslovak Army. He arrived in England, trained as an airborne radar technician, and served as a radar operator in No. 311 Bomber Squadron. After the war, he returned to his hometown and discovered that his family had perished in the Holocaust.

Vilém / Wilem Gerth

A fighter pilot who, after the occupation of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, escaped to England. He was assigned to the 10th Czech Squadron. He fell in the Battle of Britain and was awarded the Czech War Cross.

Wilhelm Chaim Efta

He immigrated to Eretz Israel and enlisted in a Czechoslovak artillery unit. He took part in the defense of Alexandria and in the battles of El Alamein. In 1943, he moved to Britain and took part in the Normandy invasion and in the battle for Dunkirk. In 1949, he returned to Eretz Israel.

The Free Greek Army

Wall of the Free Armies - Center

The Free Norwegian Army

After the surrender of the Norwegian Army, many of its soldiers reached Britain, where some joined Norwegian ground, naval, and air units. Around 140 Jews served in the Norwegian Army and took part in the different campaigns throughout the war.

Hermann Hirsch

A navigator in the Free Norwegian Air Force. He took part in anti-submarine missions and in especially difficult special operations, including the bombing of the Gestapo headquarters in Copenhagen. On his way back to base, his aircraft was shot down and crashed into the sea.

The Free Dutch Army

After the occupation of the Netherlands, parts of the Dutch armed forces reached Britain together with Queen Wilhelmina and her government. They were absorbed by the British Army. Some served in the air force, others in the Royal Navy, and others in the ranks of the Princess Irene Brigade. They fought in the campaigns in northwestern Europe. Dozens of Jewish volunteers who came from Eretz Israel served in the Dutch Army. Some served in the Dutch East Indies and took part in the campaigns in Southeast Asia.

Mordechai Lifshitz

In 1935, he immigrated with his parents to Eretz Israel. In 1940, he volunteered for the Free Dutch Army and later took part in the invasion of Europe in the ranks of the Dutch brigade attached to the Canadian invasion force, participating in the liberation of the Netherlands. After the war, he returned to Eretz Israel and fought in the War of Independence. During Operation Dani in September 1948, he took part in the battle for Outpost 219, covered the retreat of his company, and fell in battle.

Moshe Ze'e-Liao

He immigrated to Eretz Israel in 1936 and settled in Rehovot. In 1943, he enlisted in the British Army and joined the **Princess Irene Brigade** of the Free Dutch Army. He took part in the invasion of Normandy and the liberation of Arnhem. In 1945, he returned to Eretz Israel and fought in the War of Independence.

Robert Simon Cohen

In July 1941, he escaped from the Netherlands to England, where he trained as a pilot in the Royal Air Force. He served in No. 613 Squadron and took part in many missions, including a bombing sortie over The Hague. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. He fell during an operational sortie over France on 11 August 1944.

The Free Belgian Army

After the Nazi occupation, Belgium's government-in-exile established the Free Belgian Army in Britain. The army included the 7th Belgian Division, the Piron Brigade, as well as fighters who served in the Royal Navy and in SAS units. Among them were many Jewish soldiers.

The Free French Army

After the fall of France, General Charles de Gaulle established the Free French Army in Britain the name given to the French forces that fought outside the borders of France. The size of the force grew throughout the war. By the end of the war, it numbered around 1.25 million soldiers, who took part in battles in Libya, Egypt, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Syria, Lebanon, and Madagascar, and later in the liberation of France and the overthrow of the Vichy regime. Around one tenth of all soldiers in the Free French Army were Jews. Many of them received France's highest distinction: the Order of Liberation.

Romain Gary

He immigrated to France and lived in Nice. In 1935, he enlisted in the French Air Force and served as a mechanic. After the occupation of France, he joined the Free French forces in England. He served in No. 342 Bomber Squadron of the Royal Air Force and took part in 25 sorties, including missions to destroy V-1 rocket launch sites. After the war, he became a famous writer. Max Guedj Born in Tunisia, he studied law in Paris. At the outbreak of the war, he enlisted in the French Army. After France surrendered, he reached England and joined the Free French Army. He completed flight training and was assigned to No. 248 Squadron. He fell in battle in January 1945 during an attack on an enemy convoy off the coast of Norway. General de Gaulle cited him as an example of a heroic pilot of Free France.

Michel Maurice-Bokanowski

He enlisted in the French Army and served in Morocco. After the surrender of France, he joined a French commando unit operating within the British Army. He took part in the invasion of North Africa and in various sabotage operations behind enemy lines. During the invasion of Italy, he fought in the 1st Division of the Free French Army as a liaison officer to an American armored force. After the war, he served as a minister in French governments.

Pierre Mendès France

A member of the French Parliament from 1932, and Secretary of State for Finance in Léon Blum's government in 1936. At the outbreak of the Second World War, he enlisted in the French Air Force. After the surrender in 1940, he was arrested because of his opposition to the Vichy government but managed to escape. In 1942, he reached London and joined the Free French Air Force. He took part in many bombing missions over France. In 1947, he was re-elected to the National Assembly and later served as Prime Minister of France in the 1950s.

The British Commonwealth — Left Wall

Canada

Around 19,000 Jews served in the Canadian armed forces, across all branches, roles, and professions. Most of them fought in the European theater. 429 were killed in battle, 334 were wounded, and 85 fell into German captivity. Around 200 Jewish soldiers received decorations for distinguished service.

Ben Dunkelman

He took part in the Normandy landings as a company commander and fought in France and the Netherlands. He later became one of the overseas volunteers, known as Mahal, and took part in Israel's War of Independence. He served as commander of the 7th Brigade in Operations Dekel and Hiram, which contributed to the liberation of the Galilee. Sidney Simon Shulemson A pilot in No. 404 Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force. He took part in attacks on German ships operating along the coasts of Norway and the Netherlands. After the war, he was involved in recruiting soldiers and obtaining equipment and weapons to assist in the establishment of the State of Israel.

Albert Hansuch

He served in the Corps of Engineers, building roads and forward positions for armored battalions during the invasion of Normandy. In 1944, he led patrols in France to detect and remove mines. He was awarded the Military Cross for his actions.

William Weiser

A pilot in No. 405 Squadron, he fought in North Africa, France, and Germany. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross by the King of England.

Leo Heaps

An officer in a British parachute battalion, he fought in Normandy and the Netherlands. In September 1944, he was captured by the Germans, but managed to escape to the Dutch underground and later rejoined the army.

After the war, he was among the Mahal volunteers — overseas volunteers who came to Eretz Israel — and took part in Israel's War of Independence.

Gordon Steinberg

A pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force, he fought in North Africa under Montgomery's command. He completed 92 operational sorties, with a Star of David painted on his aircraft. He fell in battle over Alexandria in February 1944.

South Africa

Recruitment to the South African Army was voluntary, but the proportion of Jewish volunteers and Jewish supporters of the war effort was high compared with their share of the country's population. More than 10,000 Jews fought in the South African Army in North Africa, the Western Desert, and Italy. 357 Jewish soldiers fell during the war. Dozens received decorations, and many later fought in Israel's War of Independence in the ranks of Mahal the overseas volunteers.

Daphne Davis

A nurse who volunteered following her brother. She served in North Africa and treated hundreds of wounded soldiers in the battles of El Alamein and Tunisia, and later in hospitals in Port Said and Alexandria. After completing her service, she immigrated to Israel.

Harold “Smoky” Simon

A bomber navigator in the South African Air Force. He took part in the battles of the Western Desert, in attacks in Italy, and in operations over the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. He was among the Mahal volunteers in Israel’s War of Independence.

Cecil Margo

Australia

Australia fought shoulder to shoulder with the armies of Britain and the United States against the Axis powers in Europe, North Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific. Of the approximately 35,000 Jews living in Australia during the war, around 4,000 enlisted in the Australian Army, Navy, and Air Force. About 134 Jewish soldiers fell during the war, and 60 received decorations and awards for distinguished service.

Julius Allan Cohen

An Australian Air Force pilot stationed in England at the outbreak of the war. He flew maritime patrols to detect German submarines and escorted convoys on their way to British ports. After the occupation of France and the escape of 27 members of parliament to Morocco, he was ordered by Winston Churchill to fly the British Minister of Information and the commander of the British Expeditionary Force to France for a secret meeting with the French statesmen in Rabat, the capital of Morocco. In a daring operation, he succeeded in extracting them from there. King George awarded him the Distinguished Flying Cross.

New Zealand

Hundreds of Jews fought alongside New Zealand’s allies, Britain and the United States, in the Middle East and in the Pacific theater.

Captain Julian Moses

A sergeant in the artillery corps. He fell in the battle for the island of Crete on 5 May 1941.

Norman Cohen

An infantry soldier who was sent with his battalion to Europe. He was among those evacuated from Dunkirk to England in the summer of 1940. He took part in the fighting in Crete and in the Western Desert. After the establishment of the State of Israel, he immigrated to Israel and served in the War of Independence as a Mahal volunteer.

The British Indian Army

Around 3,000 Jews served in units of the British Indian Army, including members of the Jewish communities of India: the Bene Israel, the Baghdadi Jewish community that came from Iraq, the Sephardi community, and the Cochin Jews.

Jack Jacob

He served in the artillery corps in North Africa, northern Iraq, and Burma. He continued to serve in the Indian Army and reached the rank of Lieutenant General.

He was active in Jewish communal life and encouraged India to establish diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992.

Benjamin Abraham Samson

A member of the Bene Israel community. He served as a lieutenant in the Indian Navy in the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, and the Bay of Bengal. After the war, he continued to serve in senior positions in the Indian armed forces and contributed to strengthening diplomatic relations between India and Israel.

Elias Raphael Emanuel Stern

A lieutenant in the British Indian Army. He served in Iraq and assisted emissaries of the Haganah in missions connected with bringing Jews to Eretz Israel, purchasing arms, and smuggling weapons. He fell in a British ambush.

Ethiopia

Yaakov Tadessa

He served in Gideon Force under the command of Orde Wingate, as part of the British and Ethiopian forces fighting against Fascist Italy. Later, he joined the British Secret Intelligence Service in Sudan and headed a propaganda unit. He subsequently held senior positions in the Ethiopian government.

British Colony: Rhodesia

Nissim Isaac Alhadeff

He served in a communications unit in the 6th South African Armoured Division, fighting in the Western Desert and in Italy.

British Colony: Kenya

Baruch Erez

He was born in Berlin and lived in Germany. He enlisted in the British Army in Kenya and served in a reconnaissance battalion during the British campaign in East Africa and the conquest of Ethiopia.

He later transferred to the armored corps and fought as a tank commander in Burma. At the end of the war, he immigrated to Israel, joined the ranks of the **Haganah**, helped establish the Israeli Armored Corps, and commanded **Battalion 79** during the War of Independence.

Wing 2 - The Soviet Front 1941–1945

Introduction and Background

A digital map of the campaign areas is displayed.









Key figures:





- Number of Jews who fought: **500,000**
- Number of Jews who fell: **200,000**
- Number of Jews who received medals for heroism and bravery: **160,772**

Exhibition Design

This wing is designed according to the Soviet climate, the battles that took place in the Russian frost until the conquest of Berlin in the spring

Generic exhibits of wing 2 - Soviet Front Exhibits

Item	Image	Item	Image
Photo of Wilenski		PPS submachine gun	
Medal of Wilenski, Hero of the Soviet Union		Soviet Army helmet	
Photo of Shalom Skops		Military Wireless Device	
Medal of Shalom Skops		Uniform of a Soviet soldier	

Food ration coupon, Siege of Leningrad		Map case of a Soviet soldier	
Watch and a handwritten note by the fallen fighter Yakov Negrov		Diorama of the Battle of Kursk	

The Second World War was the cruelest war in human history and exacted an unimaginable price. It was a war in which the natural rights of human beings were denied, and it was also a war over the very existence of the Jewish people. Approximately 1.5 million Jewish fighters, women and men, took part in the war. More than 250,000 fell on the various fronts. The Jewish people produced one of the highest proportions of fighters among all peoples. Jews fought on every front, in every army and branch of service, and wherever resistance to the Nazis and their collaborators emerged in partisan and underground frameworks, and in every uprising. They were among the first to volunteer and join the ranks of the fighting forces, out of loyalty to the armies of their countries, but also from a sense of mission and responsibility toward their people. As the war progressed, and even more so when they discovered the horrors of the Holocaust in Europe, they understood the dual meaning of their enlistment as Jewish soldiers confronting the fate of their living and dead brothers and sisters in the camps.

Among the civilian population in areas conquered by the Nazis, partisan resistance groups arose and underground activity began to take shape. Within these groups were thousands of Jewish men and women who had managed to escape to the forests from ghettos and labor camps and survived in inhuman conditions. The strength of the partisans greatly assisted the Allied forces in every country where they operated. Their story is known to us only partially and often one-sidedly, in a way that has pushed out of national memory the bravery of fighters, men and women, who were prepared to attack at any cost and against all odds.

The Soviet Union and the “Great Patriotic War”

The Soviet Army, under Stalin and the Supreme Command, called the war against Nazi Germany the “Great Patriotic War.” It began with Operation Barbarossa on 22 June 1941. The main Soviet war effort in the Second World War was directed against Germany, until the fall of Berlin and the liberation of all Eastern European countries in May 1945. At the same time, the Soviet Union fought two additional campaigns. The first took place before the German invasion, against its neighbor Finland, which later became an ally of Germany. In that campaign, from November 1939 to March 1940, the Red Army took control of territory from Finland. The second campaign took place after the end of the war against Germany, on the Far Eastern Front against Japan and its forces. It lasted six days, until August 1945. In 1939, Jews made up about 1.7% of the Soviet

Union's population. During the war, around 500,000 Jews served in the Soviet Army, about 10% of the Soviet Jewish population. They served in all branches and arms of the military.

Jewish soldiers fought with a high fighting spirit, demonstrated many acts of heroism and sacrifice, and were also driven by the desire to show that Jews, too, knew how to fight back and stand on the most forward front lines, and even beyond them, in partisan units behind enemy lines.

At first, they were motivated by patriotic feelings. After the murder and atrocities committed by the Germans against the Jews became known, these feelings were joined by a growing desire for revenge for the murder of their families, neighbors, and friends. Jews fought on all fronts. They were among the first to reach Berlin and take part in its capture, in the collapse of the Nazi Reich, and in raising the Red Flag over the German Reichstag as a symbol of the decisive victory over Hitler's Germany and its armies.

Many Jewish women fought in the ranks of the Red Army, around 80,000 of them as pilots and machine gunners, tank drivers, intelligence fighters, doctors, and medics. Around 200,000 Jews fell in the war. Jewish fighters also played a highly significant role in Soviet intelligence, especially in the story of the spy network known as the "Red Orchestra," commanded by Leopold Trepper, most of whose members were Jews. Many Jewish soldiers fell into German captivity. Many were executed immediately. Others managed to hide their Jewish identity and survived. Many also managed to escape captivity and join partisan units operating in territories occupied by the Germans, or to return to the Soviet lines. Some of those who reached the extermination camps organized uprisings there. Many Lithuanian Jews also fought in the ranks of the Red Army. When the Lithuanian Division was established, around half of its members were Jews, including many commanders. Yiddish became their second language, and Jewish identity stood out especially strongly in these units, above all because of the cruel reality of the destruction of their families.

Jewish fighters in the Red Army took a significant part in the decisive battles of Moscow, Stalingrad, and Kursk, in the siege of Leningrad, in the liberation of the extermination camps Majdanek and Auschwitz, and of course in the capture of Berlin and the defeat of the Nazi army and regime, culminating in the declaration of victory on 9 May 1945. This section, dedicated to the story of Jewish fighters in the Soviet Army, presents fascinating and unusual stories of Jewish soldiers who took part in the central battles, demonstrated heroism and courage, and even sacrificed their lives. Most enlisted out of feelings of patriotism and loyalty to "Russia, their motherland." But as the battles progressed and they were increasingly exposed to information about the Holocaust taking place in the areas they reached, its scale and scope, their motivation and fighting spirit intensified, often including feelings of revenge. Their anger grew especially strong when they discovered the fate of their Jewish brothers and sisters who had been unable to join the resistance and the fighting, and who had been trapped in the machinery of systematic and mass extermination in forests, villages, districts, ghettos, and extermination camps. Through selected male and female fighters, visitors can gain a glimpse into unforgettable military campaigns that defeated Nazi Germany and helped bring an end to the war that claimed the heaviest price in human history. Among them are: the pilot Polina Gelman, Hero of the Soviet Union; Yakov Kreizer, one of the senior commanders and a Hero of the Soviet Union who halted German forces; Arkady Timor, a commander in the Soviet armored forces who took part in all the campaigns through the capture of Berlin and was among the founders of the museum; Leopold Trepper, commander of the Red Orchestra; the brothers Mikhail, Semyon, and Yegor who took part in all the battles and were among the first to break into and capture Berlin; the decorated commander Shalom Skopas; the front-line medic Tzipora Belcher from the Lithuanian Division; and hundreds of thousands of others.

Representative Figures

Polina Vladimirovna Gelman

Polina Gelman was born on 24 October 1919 in the city of Berdychiv, Ukraine, to her parents Yelva and Vladimir. Her father, who supported the Revolution, was killed by its opponents during a pogrom in 1920, carried out by soldiers of the Ukrainian People's Republic. Her mother took part in the October Revolution and in the Civil War. After her father's death, Gelman moved with her mother to the city of Gomel, in southeastern Belarus. Gelman dreamed of becoming a pilot, and she enrolled in a flight school to fulfill this dream, but physical limitations prevented her from doing so. When the war on the Russian front broke out in 1941, Gelman was a student in the History Faculty at Moscow University. She volunteered for the Red Army. At first, she was assigned to a nursing course but later volunteered for a women's aviation unit. In the aviation unit, Gelman worked folding parachutes. After persistent efforts, she succeeded in being accepted into a navigator's course. She eventually served in the 46th Women's Regiment of the Soviet Air Force and took part in air battles over Belarus, Poland, Danzig, and Berlin. In 1942, Gelman was assigned to a bombing unit and began flying missions to bomb German targets. She bombed troop concentrations, fuel depots, anti-aircraft batteries, searchlights, bridges, vehicles, and equipment, causing the Germans heavy damage. She fought as the navigator of a light Polikarpov Po-2 aircraft, also known as the "Kukuruznik."

One night in August 1942, during air attacks over enemy territory, Gelman noticed a column of German tanks and large quantities of military equipment. Without receiving an order, she guided the aircraft toward the column and, in an acrobatic dive, bombed it with dozens of bombs until it was destroyed. Thousands of tons of ammunition and explosives went up in flames. Her operational record noted: between 1942 and 1945, she flew 857 combat sorties, accumulated 1,300 flight hours, and dropped 113 tons of bombs, destroying 42 enemy positions. In the 588th Night Bomber Regiment, in which Gelman served a regiment composed entirely of women, the pilots were nicknamed by the enemy, and later by others, the "Night Witches," because of their attacks and the destruction they caused. Gelman reached the rank of captain. For her excellence and heroism in carrying out her missions, she received many decorations, including the title Hero of the Soviet Union — one of only two women to receive this distinction in this context, the other being Lydia Litvyak. She received the award on 15 May 1946. Gelman was also awarded the Order of Lenin, two Orders of the Red Banner, seven Orders of the Patriotic War, and two Orders of the Red Star. She died on 29 November 2005 and was buried in the Novodevichy Cemetery in southeastern Moscow.

Arkady Borisovich Timor

Arkady Timor was born, the eldest son of Baruch and Esther, on 10 December 1919 in the city of Dubăsari, Ukraine. In 1939, he was sent to an armored academy and enlisted in the Red Army. A year later, he joined Tank Brigade No. 55 in Naro-Fominsk, which later became the 14th Armored Division. When the Germans invaded Russia, Timor was a tank officer and engineer. His wartime path began in the retreat battles in Daugavpils. In late October 1941, during heavy fighting, he was wounded while commanding and fighting. After his recovery, he was assigned to prepare a force composed of engineers and technicians to parachute behind enemy lines to sabotage tanks and military vehicles that had fallen into German hands. In 1942, Timor was sent to command a tank company that joined the campaign at Leningrad, during which he was again seriously wounded

and evacuated in critical condition. He was wounded again in other difficult battles, including at Taurage, Poznań, and Danzig, but continued fighting. As commander of Battalion 47, in May 1945, within the framework of Brigade 219 under the command of Yevsei Vainrub, he broke through and was among the first to reach the Reichstag in Berlin. From there, he continued toward Czechoslovakia, as far as the area of Teplice. For him, the war ended on 12 May 1945.

In 1941, together with 18,000 residents of Dubăsari, Timor's entire family was brutally murdered by the Germans who swept through the area. His father, Ben Baruch, who had been mobilized into the army in July 1941, fell in battle around Rzhev on 2 March 1943. In 1945, Timor was appointed commander of the armored school in Dresden. He knew the Sherman tanks that the Soviet Union had received under Lend-Lease, and he was part of the team that trained Jewish volunteers from the Gottwald Brigade, who were intended to be sent to Eretz Israel to fight alongside the State of Israel in the War of Independence.

In 1948, he was arrested on charges of anti-Soviet propaganda. After many trials, he was sent to the Mongolia–China border to carry out a similar role there. In 1949, he was sent to Karaganda, where he was appointed commander of a project for the repair and refurbishment of tanks. He served in this role until 1956, when he was once again accused of Zionist propaganda and slandering the authorities. He was sentenced to 50 years in prison, but because of his distinguished past, his sentence was “commuted” to 12 years of actual imprisonment. In 1959, after four years of imprisonment with hard labor, he was released and traveled to Poland with his wife Galina and their eldest son. From there, he immigrated to Israel on the ship Istanbul on 24 March 1960. After his absorption in Israel, he was granted the rank of colonel and integrated into the IDF Ordnance Corps, where he worked in the center for the restoration and maintenance of tanks. He also helped develop and adapt captured armored vehicles for the needs of the IDF.

Arkady Timor, known as the “father of the Tiran tank,” was a fighter, writer, painter, and active member of the Yad La-Shiryon association. In this capacity, he also initiated and promoted the establishment of the Museum of the Jewish Soldier in World War II at the Yad La-Shiryon site in Latrun. He died on 14 September 2005 in the city of Kiryat Arba.

Additional Figures in the Section

Yakov Kreizer

At the beginning of the war, German forces advanced at tremendous speed deep into the territory of the Soviet Union. Major General Yakov Kreizer, commander of a division on the Belorussian Front, studied the enemy's movements and noticed that the Germans moved along the main roads only during daylight. Kreizer developed a method that became known as the “dynamic defense plan.” He withdrew his forces at night, positioned them along the roads, and surprised the Germans with artillery fire. In this way, for 12 consecutive days, his forces destroyed about half of the tanks of the 18th Panzer Division, which was under the command of General Heinz Guderian. For his success, Kreizer was awarded the highest Soviet military distinction: Hero of the Soviet Union.

Israel “Ilyich” Fisanovich

Israel Fisanovich first saw the sea at the age of 12 and decided that he would become a sailor. He was only 17 when he arrived in Leningrad to try to enter the young naval officers' course. Out of 600 candidates, he was accepted. “If you love the sea, it will love you back,” his instructor in the naval cadet course told him. Fisanovich took these words seriously and graduated with distinction. With the outbreak of the war, he was appointed commander of the submarine M-172.

During the war, Fisanovich's submarine sank about 14 German vessels, received the Order of the Red Banner and the title of Guards unit, and became one of the four most decorated vessels in the Soviet Navy. Hundreds of depth charges were dropped on Fisanovich's submarine, yet he managed to bring it home safely. In one of his poems, which later became known as an anthem of submarine fighters, he wrote: "There is no greater happiness than the struggle against the enemy, and we have no firmer ground than the decks of submarines." In the summer of 1944, Fisanovich and his crew were sent on a special mission to Britain: to bring back a captured submarine. On their way back, the submarine was mistakenly sunk by British Coastal Command aircraft. To this day, Fisanovich is considered one of the great heroes of the Soviet Navy.

Yefim Diskin

On 17 November 1941, German forces reached Moscow. In one of the attacks, the Germans managed to destroy a Soviet anti-aircraft battery that had been converted, as an emergency measure, for anti-tank warfare. Only one gun remained intact, and beside it stood a wounded soldier: Yefim Diskin, an 18-year-old Jew from Moscow, who until that moment had fired a cannon only twice. Seven German tanks attacked Diskin's position. Although his body was struck by many shell fragments, he managed to destroy all seven tanks before collapsing unconscious. He was awarded the title Hero of the Soviet Union, and it was written of him: "Killed while displaying extraordinary heroism." However, several weeks later, Diskin was discovered in one of the military hospitals, gravely wounded but alive. While recovering from his wounds, he began studying medicine and later became one of the most respected specialists in the field.

Leopold Trepper

Leopold Trepper was born in Galicia, in southern Poland. In his youth, he divided his time between activity in the Communist Party and the Hashomer Hatzair movement.

In 1924, he fulfilled his dream and immigrated to Eretz Israel to build a model socialist society there. Among other things, he worked on draining the swamps near Hadera and was a member of Kibbutz Mishmar HaEmek. After the British expelled Trepper from Palestine because of his communist activity, he was sent to Paris and from there to Moscow, where he was trained for intelligence work. In 1938, he was sent to Belgium under a false identity to establish an agent network in Western Europe. Before long, he succeeded in recruiting many people who began working for him in Brussels, Amsterdam, Paris, Lyon, Marseille, and even Berlin. Information reached Trepper and was then transmitted to the Kremlin. Among other things, he passed to Stalin warnings about the date of the German attack on the Soviet Union, as well as the Nazi command's plans for the attack on Stalingrad. Hitler was furious when he learned of this. "There is a Red Orchestra playing behind our backs," he shouted, thereby giving the network its historic name. To this day, the activity of the Red Orchestra serves as a model example of how an intelligence network can operate in wartime. In 1942, the German security services detected the network's activity on the airwaves but could not locate its source. To fight the Soviet network, the Germans established a special counterintelligence unit known as "Red Orchestra Commando." After a pursuit lasting about a year and a half, they succeeded in capturing most of the network's members. Many of them were tortured and executed. On 24 November 1943, Trepper himself also fell into their hands.

But after about two months, through an especially creative deception, the master spy managed to escape from the Gestapo and return safely to the Soviet Union. Immediately upon his return, he was thrown into prison and sentenced on a false charge of collaboration with the Nazis.

When he returned home after ten years, his son no longer recognized the man standing at the door. In 1974, Leopold Trepper immigrated to Israel and spent the rest of his life in Jerusalem. After his death, his wife received the only decoration he had ever been awarded — the Medal of the Fighters of the State — a medal he himself never had the chance to wear. Trepper inspired many thriller films, and his actions and reputation became legendary even during his lifetime. It was Trepper who passed crucial intelligence to Stalin, defeated the Gestapo in a battle of wits, was responsible for the deaths of 200,000 Nazi Germans, and helped bring about several critical turning points in the war and its outcome.

Fighters Connected to Turning Points

The Battle of Stalingrad: The fierce battles that took place in Stalingrad quickly turned the city into ruins. The fighting was conducted house by house. On the night of 14 September 1942, one of the divisions that was supposed to reinforce the Soviet forces failed to cross the river. The reason was that a German battalion had taken control of a tall building known as the “House of Specialists,” preventing any possibility of crossing the Volga. The man sent to liberate this strategic building was Masury Naizberg, who had only three tanks under his command. Naizberg succeeded in taking control of the building and made it possible for the division to reach its destination. One building that held out against the Nazis for 58 consecutive days became a symbol of heroism for the entire Soviet Union: Pavlov’s House. Among the fighters who defended the building was also a Jewish machine gunner, Idel Khait. This small group, defending a single building, inflicted greater losses on the Nazis than those they suffered during the entire conquest of Paris. Khait fell beside his machine gun on the final day of the defense, moments before reinforcements pushed the Germans back. On 19 November 1942, in the middle of winter, Soviet forces launched a counteroffensive. The Nazi Sixth Army was encircled, and after a two-month siege it surrendered with all its 91,000 soldiers. The surrender of the army commander, Friedrich Paulus, was received by a Jewish officer: Leonid Vinokur. Together with several officers, he descended into the basement where the headquarters of the Sixth Army was located. When they entered, an unshaven man rose from the bed beside the wall. “Heil,” he greeted Vinokur. For a moment they stood silently opposite one another: the Jewish young man from Odessa and the defeated German field marshal, wearing a rumpled general’s uniform. At nine o’clock in the morning on 31 January 1943, after six months of continuous fighting, the Battle of Stalingrad came to an end. The Soviet Union celebrated, while in Germany three days of mourning were declared. This was a significant and decisive moment that changed the balance of power in the entire war. From this point onward, time began to run out for the Nazi regime. **Berlin:** On 20 April 1945, after crossing Europe, Soviet Army forces reached the German capital. On 25 April, the brigade of Yevsei Vainrub was the first to break into the city. Soon his soldiers joined forces with other units commanded by Jewish officers, including Hero of the Soviet Union David Dragunsky and Lieutenant Colonel Nahum Skoranda. Together with additional units, they advanced toward the heart of Berlin. On 2 May, the Red Flag was raised over the Reichstag, and on 9 May, after the last German soldiers surrendered, the war in Europe came to an end. The Soviet Union and the free world celebrated victory. People sang and danced in the streets. There was no limit to joy and the sense of liberation.

Wing 3 - The Pacific Front, 1941–1945

Introduction and Background







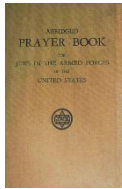
A digital map of the campaign areas is displayed.

Key figures:

- Number of Jews who fought: **550,000**
- Number of Jews who fell: **38,338**
- Number of Jews who received medals for heroism and bravery: **49,315**

The design and scenography of this section refer to the three main theaters in which the United States armed forces operated: the deck of an aircraft carrier surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, the campaign in North Africa, and the invasion of Normandy.

Generic exhibits of wing 3 - US Front Exhibits

Item	Image	Item	Image
Shmuel (Eliakim) Shwartz		Helmet	
Waterproof silk fabric combat zone map (scarf)		Carbine Gun Machine	
Military Jacket of Shmuel Shwartz with valor war medals			
Haggadah		Prayer book (Siddur)	

From 1939, with the invasion of Poland, until 1941, Nazi Germany succeeded in gaining almost total control over the European continent, as part of a planned expansion toward North Africa and the Middle East. Nevertheless, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, despite existing information about the connection between Japan and Germany, came as a surprise to the United States and led it to join the war at that stage. This significantly changed the global balance of power. The war was conducted simultaneously in several theaters: the Pacific Ocean and Southeast Asia, 1941–1943; North Africa, 1942–1943; Europe; and finally, with the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, 1944–1945. Many Jewish fighters enlisted in the United States Armed Forces, about 25% of all American Jews at the time, and fought for four years on every front and in campaigns that became decisive turning points. This section, dedicated to the story of Jewish fighters in the United States Armed Forces, presents fascinating and unusual stories of Jewish soldiers who took part in the central battles, proved their courage and bravery, and in some cases sacrificed their lives. Most enlisted out of patriotism and loyalty to America, their homeland. But during the fighting they were increasingly exposed to information about the Holocaust taking place in areas conquered by the Nazis, its scale and scope, and this strengthened their fighting spirit. As they drew closer to the concentration and extermination camps, a growing feeling of solidarity, as well as an intensifying desire for revenge, developed among them: a determination to defeat Nazi Germany at any cost. This was especially true when they discovered the fate of their Jewish brothers and sisters who had been unable to join the resistance or the fighting, and who had been trapped in the machinery of systematic extermination, deceived by a reality forced upon them. Through selected fighters, visitors can gain a glimpse into unforgettable military campaigns that defeated Nazi Germany and helped bring an end to the war that exacted the heaviest price in human history. Among them are: Barney Ross, a world boxing champion who showed heroism in battle, saved his comrade-in-arms, and shattered the image of the submissive Jew; Solomon Isquith, commander of a warship who was prepared to give up his own life, but not his men; Robert Sherman Halperin, one of the commanders of the invasion forces in Africa and Europe, one of the founders of the American naval commando, a professional football player, and an Olympic medalist in sailing; Theodore “Teddy” Bachenheimer, a courageous fighter in the United States Army, especially in Sicily and the Netherlands, known for his missions behind enemy lines and his talent for comic illustration, who later became military governor of a Dutch city and joined the Dutch underground until he encountered a German force and was killed; and Maurice Rose, known as the “Spearhead,” the first to break through the German defensive line and the first commander to invade Germany at the head of his forces since Napoleon Bonaparte. Rose demonstrated extraordinary command ability and boldness in attack and was killed in battle while making an almost solitary stand against a German assault that left him no chance.

Representative Figures

Maurice Rose

Maurice Rose was born on 26 November 1899, after his family immigrated from Poland to the United States in the 1880s. In 1917, at the age of 17, he was accepted into an officers' training course. In 1918, he was assigned to the 89th Infantry Division and ended his combat service in the First World War with the rank of captain. In 1941, he was promoted to major, and in 1942 to lieutenant colonel. He was then assigned to the 2nd Armored Division, with which he took part in the invasion of North Africa as chief of staff and defeated a large German formation in 1943.

In July 1943, he was promoted to brigadier general. In his new role as commander of an armored combat command, he took part in the invasion of Sicily and led the forces entering Palermo, the island's capital. On 7 June 1944, he led a combat force across the Channel and entered the fighting against the Germans. Between 12 June and 8 August 1944, he commanded difficult battles against German forces and emerged as one of the most daring commanders in the American armored corps, both in military tactics and in attack strategy. From the breakout from the Normandy bridgehead until the day he was killed, he led the 3rd Armored Division in all its battles in northern France, in the Hürtgen Forest, in the Battle of the Bulge, and into Germany, in a series of brilliant operations that gave this armored formation the nickname it still carries today: "The Spearheads."

General Rose was killed on 31 March 1945, when he was shot by a German tank commander with his personal weapon. He was the only American division commander killed in action during the Second World War. His decorations included the Distinguished Service Cross, two Silver Stars, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the French Legion of Honor, the French Croix de Guerre, and the Belgian Croix de Guerre. Although his father and grandfather were rabbis and Yiddish was spoken in his home, he did not enter the war as a Jew, but as an American patriot. Nevertheless, he never denied his origins.

Teddy Bachenheimer

If you open issue number 25 of the comic book Real Life Comics, you can find the story of Teddy Bachenheimer, one of the most daring Jewish heroes in the United States Army. Bachenheimer was born in Germany, which his parents left after Hitler came to power. They immigrated to the United States and made New York their home. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Bachenheimer enlisted in a paratrooper unit. After a year of training, he was sent on his first mission. Immediately after landing, he was captured by the Germans and taken prisoner. Bachenheimer knew German and understood that the Germans were confused by the American airborne assault. When they encountered another group of prisoners, he took advantage of the confusion, stepped aside under cover of darkness, and began shouting orders in German at the guards watching the prisoners. As the marching column continued, he was no longer there. Within two hours, Bachenheimer had joined an American force and returned to the fighting. In the following months, he specialized in "capturing tongues", abducting enemy soldiers to extract information from them. Remarkable stories of his courage, and of the dozens of Nazi soldiers he eliminated, spread among the Allied forces. On one occasion, he infiltrated a German base and volunteered to guard a remote position. When he and the guard were alone and talking, he drew a pistol and took the stunned soldier prisoner. In September 1944, Bachenheimer was dropped into occupied Holland. The Germans, expecting the attack, massacred many of the paratroopers. Bachenheimer escaped the inferno, found a pair of bicycles, broke through enemy forces, and reached the city of Nijmegen.

Children accompanied him on his way to the railway station, where he was surrounded by the Germans. They demanded that he surrender, but this did not deter him. He crawled beneath the railway cars and disappeared into the city's alleyways. "As the first American soldier the Dutch had seen, I simply could not leave them with a bad impression," he later explained. Bachenheimer joined the Dutch underground and soon became the leader of 300 fighters, and later the military governor of the city of Nijmegen. He continued to hold this position even after the liberation of the Netherlands. Despite his new status, he continued his famous raids beyond enemy lines, this time inside Germany itself. On his way to one such operation, he encountered a force of SS soldiers and fell in battle. He left behind his wife, Ethel, whom he had married one month before leaving for the front. Lieutenant General James Gavin wrote: "His courage was, beyond any doubt, of the highest order." Those who knew him understood that Bachenheimer was, in fact, a peace-loving man who often repeated: "I am opposed to war because I am not really able to hate anyone."

Barney Ross

Barney Ross was born in 1909 in New York as Dov-Ber Rasofsky, to Isidore and Sarah Epstein Rasofsky. His father was a Talmud scholar who had immigrated to America from Belarus after barely surviving a pogrom. The family moved from New York to Chicago. Isidore became a rabbi and the owner of a small vegetable store. Barney grew up on the tough streets of Chicago, nourished by his father's words that Jews do not fight back. His ambition was to become a Torah scholar and a teacher of Talmud, as his father expected. But his life changed forever when his father was shot to death while resisting a robbery in his small grocery store. His mother suffered a nervous breakdown, and his younger siblings, Ida, Sam, and George, were sent to an orphanage and to relatives. Dov and his older brothers, Ben and Morris, were left to fend for themselves. Following the tragedy, he abandoned religious life, joined local toughs, and was even employed by Al Capone and a group of Italian gangsters. His goal was to earn enough money to buy a house and reunite his family and to prove that Jews were strong, not only rabbis and merchants. He saw boxing to change that image and to express feelings of revenge and began to train. After winning amateur fights, he changed his name to Barney Ross and became a professional boxer. Ross became known as a smart boxer with exceptional endurance. He won the world championship several times at lightweight and welterweight. When the United States entered the war in 1941, Barney Ross enlisted in the Marine Corps and was sent to Guadalcanal in the South Pacific. One night, he and three other comrades were trapped under enemy fire. All four were wounded; he was the only one still able to fight. He collected his comrades' rifles and grenades and fought alone against about two dozen Japanese soldiers throughout the night, killing them all. By morning, two of his fellow Marines had died of their wounds, and the third remained seriously wounded but alive. Barney, who weighed only 64 kilograms, carried his third comrade, who weighed 104 kilograms, on his shoulders under fire and across open ground to safety. He was awarded the Silver Star, as well as a presidential citation, and became one of America's most famous public figures.

Additional Figures in the Section

Claude Bloch

In May 1940, the American fleet in the Pacific was transferred to the base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. The person who warned of the dangers of this decision was the Jewish admiral, Claude Bloch. After serving as commander of the United States Fleet, Bloch was stationed at Pearl Harbor as commander of the 14th Naval District. Throughout 1941, he repeatedly requested additional manpower and weapons to defend the base, but his requests were largely unanswered. When 7 December arrived and the skies filled with Japanese bombers, it was already too late.

Solomon Isquith

It is said that the captain is the last to leave a sinking ship. That is exactly what Solomon Isquith, the senior officer aboard the naval vessel USS Utah, did. The Utah was one of the first ships sunk by the Japanese in the attack on Pearl Harbor. Isquith ensured the evacuation of the sailors, and just before the ship capsized, he managed to escape through a hatch. When most of the men had already reached safety, Isquith heard muffled voices from inside the sinking ship. It turned out that more men were trapped deep inside. Isquith did not give up. He immediately organized a team of sailors who used a cutting torch to make an opening in the ship's hull and rescued ten additional sailors from drowning. Though wounded, and in a small boat under enemy fire, Isquith continued with the team and the torch to assist crews on other ships. Isquith was awarded the Navy Cross, reached the rank of admiral, and became one of the great supporters of the State of Israel.

Raymond Zussman

A tank platoon commander who took part in the battles to liberate Western Europe. For his courage in battle, he was awarded the Medal of Honor, the highest decoration of the United States Armed Forces. He fell in battle on 21 September 1944.

Ivan Goldstein

A tank crewman in the American armored forces. During the Battle of the Bulge, his tank was hit and he fell into German captivity. After suffering humiliation and torture in the prisoner-of-war camp, he was liberated in March 1945.

His tank is displayed to this day in the central square of Bastogne, Belgium.

Philip Goldstein

A pilot in the United States Air Force on the European front. On the body of his aircraft — with which he shot down German planes — he painted the inscription “Jewboy.”

Fighters Connected to Turning-Point Battles & Special Missions Fighting in North Africa

Following the United States' decision to join the war in the European theater in the autumn of 1942, it prepared, together with its allies, to land on the coasts of western North Africa — Morocco and Algeria. While British forces attacked from the east, American forces attacked from the west. Together they defeated the Axis forces in North Africa. This achievement laid the foundations for the attack on Europe from the south and for its liberation from German occupation.

Robert Sherman Halperin

Halperin was a professional football player, one of the pioneers of the invasion forces in Africa and Europe, one of the founders of the American naval commando, and later an Olympic sailing champion. Decorations: the Navy Cross and the Silver Star.

Ben Sternberg

A battalion commander in the infantry who did not hesitate to expose himself to enemy fire to encourage and strengthen his men. He took part in the battles in Tunisia, the invasion of Normandy, and the Battle of the Ardennes. He received the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star, and the Bronze Star.

Max Dragon

An infantry brigade soldier who took part in the battles in Algeria, Tunisia, Sicily, and Normandy. He fell in battle at Momignies, Belgium, in September 1944. One month later, his brother Samuel also fell in battle. Dragon was awarded the Silver Star and the Purple Heart.

Captain Lawrence Marcus

Commander of a company in the 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion, which succeeded in stopping the German 10th Panzer Division at the Battle of El Guettar in Tunisia. He was awarded the French Croix de Guerre.

The Invasion of Sicily and Italy

On 9 July 1943, Allied forces invaded Sicily in Operation Husky. The conquest of the island was completed within a month. In September 1943, the Allies landed at several points in Italy. The Italian theater drew large German forces and became strategically important in the overall Allied campaign to liberate Europe.

Irving Becker

Born in Austria, Becker was considered an enemy alien at the beginning of the war. During the war, he was drafted into the United States Army and served as a commando in the special unit FSSF, the First Special Service Force, which operated in Italy and, because of its daring operations, became known as the “Devil’s Brigade.” His command of German made him especially valuable for dangerous night patrols behind enemy lines. He also took part in the operation to liberate Norway, during which he discovered that his parents had perished in Auschwitz.

David Rosenkranz

A paratrooper who, during the fighting in Italy, fell into captivity together with a comrade. The Italian soldiers realized that the Americans were only a few kilometers away and, after consulting among themselves, asked to surrender voluntarily. The prisoners became the captors: Rosenkranz led hundreds of Italian soldiers directly into the hands of the American force. He took part in the campaign to liberate the Netherlands and fell in battle during Operation Market Garden on 28 September 1944.

Shalom “Sol” Baskin

An infantry soldier who took part in the battles in Tunisia and in the Italian campaign. After the war, he was involved in Aliyah Bet activity and became one of the Mahal volunteers. In Israel’s War of Independence, he fought as commander of a reconnaissance unit in the Alexandroni Brigade.

Sidney Goldstein

A platoon commander in an infantry division, he took part in the battles in North Africa and Italy. On 21 September 1944, in a battle near Santa Margherita in Italy, he was ordered to capture Hill 807, a strategic position in the German defensive line that stretched across Italy and was known as the Gothic Line. He captured the hill and took more than 70 of its defenders’ prisoner. For this, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Mack Bizen

A machine gunner in the United States Army. He took part in the landing in Morocco and in the campaign in Algeria. He fought in several battles on the Italian front and, although wounded three times, returned to combat.

In 1947, he immigrated to Eretz Israel and fought in the War of Independence.

**The Normandy Landings and the Fighting in Europe
D-Day and the Battles for the Liberation of Western Europe**

Operation Overlord began on 6 June 1944, when Allied forces from Britain, the United States, Canada, France, and representatives of the Free Armies landed on the shores of Normandy in France. The invasion marked the beginning of the end of Nazi Germany and the victory of the Allies. Later, this day became known as “the longest day.”

Isadore Jachman

A paratrooper who took part in the Normandy landings. When his unit encountered a German armored ambush in Belgium in January 1945, he displayed exceptional bravery and drew enemy fire toward himself, thereby saving his comrades-in-arms. He fell in battle and was awarded the highest American decoration for heroism: the Medal of Honor.

Abraham Maza

An infantry soldier who took part in the battles in France and Belgium. He fell in battle on 6 January 1945. After his death, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

William Latham

An infantry soldier. In November 1944, in a battle near the city of **Saint-Dié** in France, he succeeded in eliminating two German snipers from 75 meters. He then attacked a machine-gun position and killed the German crew with hand grenades.

He was awarded the Medal of Honor.

Edward Ellsberg

An officer in the United States Navy and an expert in underwater salvage. During the invasion of Normandy, he was among those who helped establish the artificial Mulberry Harbor, which ensured a steady supply line for the invading forces.

Robert Rosenthal

A pilot in the 100th Bomb Group, he took part in dozens of bombing missions against the Nazis. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

After the war, he served as an assistant American prosecutor at the Nuremberg Trials.

Wallace Emmer

A pilot in the United States Air Force on the European front. He shot down 16 enemy aircraft and received 14 Air Medals, as well as the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Distinguished Service Cross, and the Silver Star. During one of his missions, his aircraft was shot down. He fell into captivity and was sent to a prisoner-of-war camp, where he died.

Edward Shames

A paratrooper in the Normandy invasion in June 1944. He served as commander of the 3rd Platoon in Easy Company, which later became famous through the series *Band of Brothers*.

He fought in Operation Market Garden in the Netherlands and in the Battle of the Bulge and took part in the liberation of concentration camps in Germany.

Daniel Berdel

An engineering officer who took part in the invasion of Normandy and fought in the Battle of the Bulge and in the battles on German soil under the command of General Patton. He helped build 25 bridges in Europe. He later immigrated to Israel.

Morris Eisenstadt

An infantry soldier who took part in the battles to liberate Europe in France, the Low Countries, and Germany. In April 1945, he was among the liberators of the Dachau concentration camp.

During Israel's War of Independence, he helped send weapons to the fighting forces of the IDF.

Abe Baum

Abe Baum was born in 1921 in New York. In 1941, he enlisted in the American armored corps as a private. After training, he was sent overseas in December 1943 with the rank of second lieutenant and took part in five battles in the European theater under the command of General George Patton. Because of his excellence in combat, he was given the mission of liberating 900 American prisoners from a detention camp near Hammelburg, deep inside German territory. The rescue force was named "Task Force Baum" after its commander. It included 296 soldiers and 53 vehicles, including tanks, anti-tank vehicles, and half-tracks.

On 26 March 1945, the force advanced toward its target and encountered German armored and infantry forces. During the battle, some of Baum's men were killed, most were captured, and Baum was badly wounded. Despite his wounds, he continued fighting until he was taken prisoner. He was liberated by American forces. For his action, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. After the war, he served as a strategic adviser in the United States Department of Defense. In 1948, he came to Israel and served as an adviser to Moshe Dayan, commander of Battalion 89 during the War of Independence. He contributed to the operational concept used in the attack on Ramla-Lod during Operation Dani. He died on 3 March 2013 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

The Ritchie Boys

The Ritchie Boys were Jewish recruits of German origin who were trained at an intelligence school at Camp Ritchie, Maryland. They were German-born men who had escaped Europe and enlisted in the military intelligence branch of the United States Army during the war.

Their unique advantage was their direct familiarity with German culture and language — an important asset for American intelligence. They were deployed with front-line forces and worked to gather information about the size, movement, physical condition, and psychological state of German forces. They assisted in psychological warfare and in the interrogation of prisoners.

Hans Habe

An Austrian writer and journalist. After the German invasion, he volunteered for the French Foreign Legion and fell into German captivity. He managed to escape, reached the United States, and enlisted in the American Army. Thanks to his command of German and French, he was sent to Camp Ritchie and qualified as an intelligence officer. He took part in the Normandy landings and worked on prisoner interrogation, intelligence gathering, and undermining enemy morale.

Weapons Development

The Manhattan Project — The Scientific Race to Create the Doomsday Weapon

With the entry of the United States into the war, research into atomic energy and the ability to produce an atomic bomb accelerated. The project was placed under the command of the Corps of Engineers, and the world's leading scientists were recruited. In August 1945, two atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, leading to the surrender of the Japanese government and the end of the Second World War.

Robert Oppenheimer

Known as the father of the atomic bomb, Oppenheimer was one of the leading American scientists in the field of theoretical physics and the scientific director of the Manhattan Project for the development of nuclear weapons.

William Friedman

The chief cryptanalyst of the United States War Department, who led the effort to break the Japanese encryption machine known as “Purple.” The Japanese used this machine to encode diplomatic communications before and during the war. The crowning achievement of Friedman’s work was obtaining the Japanese attack plan for Midway in 1942. This helped Admiral Nimitz defeat the enemy and halt Japan’s attempt to dominate the Pacific Ocean.

Military Rabbis and Chaplains

In Western armies, there was an official position for religious officers: chaplains and rabbis, who helped raise morale in the Allied armies. They provided emotional support to soldiers, strengthened their spirit, helped improve morale, and made it possible to observe Jewish customs under wartime conditions.

Alexander Goode

One of four military chaplains who sacrificed their lives for their comrades-in-arms. Goode was a naval chaplain sent to Europe aboard the transport ship *Dorchester*. The ship was struck near Greenland by a torpedo fired from a German submarine. There were about 900 soldiers on board. The men tried to escape and board the lifeboats. When Goode and the three other chaplains saw that there were not enough life jackets, they removed their own and gave them to soldiers. They remained on the ship and drowned together with 674 soldiers.

The Women’s Army Corps

About half a year after the outbreak of the war, the United States Army established the Women’s Army Corps. Around 350,000 women served in a variety of technical and administrative roles: doctors, nurses, drivers, clerks, inspectors, flight technicians, vehicle mechanics, electricians, encryption and photography specialists, nutritionists, and social workers.

Frances Slanger

Frances Slanger was born in Łódź, Poland, in 1913. As a child, she witnessed the horrors of the First World War. When she was seven, she immigrated with her family to the United States, where her name was changed to Frances Slanger. As she grew up, she aspired to become a professional writer and a nurse. When the United States entered the war, she began hearing reports about the Holocaust and about what was happening to her relatives and to many other Jews in Europe.

She decided to enlist in the Army Nurse Corps in 1943 at Fort Devens, Massachusetts. After some time, she was approved of service in Europe as a nurse in the 45th Field Hospital. She landed in Normandy on 10 June 1944 and quickly learned that life as an army nurse was completely different from caring for elderly patients in Boston. Nurses were in short supply, while the number of wounded was unbearable, creating long and difficult shifts. Nothing in her previous experience could have prepared her for the deaths of so many young men on the battlefields of Europe. During her wartime service, she moved with her field hospital from France to Belgium, until they reached the town of Elsenborn, Belgium, near the German border. She was killed during an artillery barrage near Elsenborn, Belgium, on 21 October 1944. She was first buried in France and later reburied in Roxbury, Massachusetts.

Bea Arthur/ Birth name: Bernice Frankel

One of the first women to enlist in the Marines. She served as a typist in Washington and at Marine bases in North Carolina and Virginia. Later, she served as a truck driver and was discharged at the end of the war with the rank of staff sergeant. After the war, she became one of the most famous actresses in the United States.

Chava Kraus

A nurse and nutritionist in the United States Army. She served in North Africa. During the invasion of Sicily and Italy, she assisted medical teams in treating the wounded. After the battles, she cared for prisoners of war and refugees.

The Brazilian Expeditionary Force

In August 1942, Brazil declared war on Germany and Italy, becoming the first Latin American country to do so. The Brazilian Navy and Air Force took part in the fighting in the Atlantic Ocean. A large expeditionary force, the size of a division, was sent to fight in Europe alongside the Allies. Dozens of Jewish fighters fought in the Italian theater.

Waldemar Levy Cardoso

Commander of an artillery battalion in the **Brazilian Expeditionary Force** during the campaign to conquer Italy and in the Battle of **Monte Castello**.

The fighting in the Pacific Ocean

On 7 December 1941, the Japanese launched a surprise attack on the United States naval base in the Pacific: Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. This marked the beginning of the United States' entry into the Second World War. The Pacific Ocean became a major theater of war. Many Jewish fighters enlisted in the United States Armed Forces and took part in the fighting for four years.

The Battle of Iwo Jima

Iwo Jima was a volcanic island in the western Pacific where the Japanese had built three airfields. From these airfields, interceptor aircraft took off and threatened heavy American bombers on their way to attack Japan. On 9 February 1945, after two weeks of preliminary aerial bombing and three days of naval artillery bombardment, American Marines stormed the island. They captured the island in bloody and stubborn fighting that continued until 16 March. The battle cost about 7,000 American dead and 19,000 wounded. Japan lost around 18,000 soldiers in the fighting.

Tony Stein

A Marine who built a weapon from parts of an aircraft machine gun and two automatic rifles. With it, he successfully covered his comrades. During a night patrol, his team was spotted by a Japanese sniper, and Stein was killed.

The Raising of the Flag on Iwo Jima

The photograph was taken by the military photographer Joe Rosenthal and shows the American victory through the raising of the flag on the summit of the island.

The image became the American public's "victory photograph," and in 1945 it won Rosenthal the Pulitzer Prize for best photograph.

The Battle of the Coral Sea

After conquering almost all Southeast Asia within a few months, Japan reached the peak of its power. After suffering serious defeats, the Allies began preparing for a counteroffensive.

This was the first naval battle in which the Americans used their advantage in communications intelligence to locate the Japanese fleet. The battle ended without a clear decision, but it delayed the Japanese offensive toward New Guinea.

Meyer Levin

A bombardier in the Air Force who took part in more than 60 combat missions. He dropped the bombs that sank a Japanese minesweeper during the invasion of the Philippines. For this, he was awarded the Silver Star and the Distinguished Service Cross. He fell in battle on 7 January 1943 around Papua New Guinea.

The Campaign for the Central Pacific Islands

A series of battles initiated by the United States, whose goals were to neutralize Japanese bases in the central Pacific, support the Allied effort to reconquer the Philippines, and provide air bases for strategic bombing against Japan.

Benjamin Lewis Salomon

A dental officer in the United States Army who replaced a wounded doctor during the fighting on the island of Saipan. During the battle, the Japanese reached the casualty collection station. Salomon ordered his soldiers to withdraw while he covered them. After the counterattack, when the American force recaptured the position, his body was found slumped over the machine gun, riddled with bullets and stabbed by Japanese bayonets. Around him were the bodies of 98 Japanese soldiers. Only 40 years after he fell in battle was, he was awarded the Medal of Honor.

William Joseph Weinstein

A company commander in the Marines. In the battle for Saipan, his unit suffered many casualties, and he himself was wounded. When they reached a cave where Japanese soldiers were hiding, he stepped inside and shouted in Japanese: "Surrender!" After several minutes, a Japanese officer came out with 34 fighters, and they surrendered. Suddenly, one of them opened fire to him. Weinstein did not lose his composure and bravely killed him on the spot.

Milton Calvin Medwick

A platoon commander in a Marine demolition and flamethrower company. During the battles for the island of Guam, he led an attack at close range in hand-to-hand combat. He fell in battle, and after his death he was awarded the Navy Cross and the Silver Star.

Irving Schechter

A company commander in the Marines who took part in the battles of Kwajalein, Saipan, Tinian, and Iwo Jima. For the courage and heroism, he displayed in the fighting on Tinian in the Mariana Islands, he was awarded the Navy Cross.

The War in China and Southeast Asia

The Second Sino-Japanese War took place between 1931 and 1945, the so-called “Fifteen-Year War”, and was long and extremely bloody. For the two countries involved, the Second World War was only part of this wider conflict. China was an Allied power and bore the burden of the land war against Japan. The Japanese placed China under blockade. The Allies, especially the British Army, fought in **Burma** to open a logistical route to China.

Jacob Rosenfeld, General Luo Shengte

A doctor in the Chinese People’s Army who fought against the Japanese. After the war, he remained in China and was appointed medical commander of the People’s Liberation Army.

After the establishment of the State of Israel, he immigrated to Israel.

The Battle of Midway

This campaign is considered a turning point in the war in the Pacific. The Japanese planned to capture the Midway Islands, use them as a base, and draw what remained of the United States fleet into battle to destroy it completely. Thanks to the achievements of American communications intelligence, the Americans succeeded in surprising the Japanese fleet and sinking four of its aircraft carriers.

Colonel William Friedman

The chief cryptanalyst in the Signal Intelligence Service. His contribution to the war effort included obtaining the Japanese attack plan for Midway in 1942. This helped Admiral Nimitz defeat the Japanese force and halt the Japanese offensive in the Pacific Ocean.

The Battle of Okinawa

The Battle of Okinawa, fought between Allied forces and the forces of the Japanese Empire, took place about 550 kilometers from the Japanese home islands. It lasted from early April to mid-June 1945 and was the final campaign with the highest number of casualties among the battles in the Pacific theater. The outcome of the battle influenced the further course of the war, including the decision to abandon a ground invasion of Japan and instead drop the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Ed Lenart

A Marine pilot who took part in the battle for the island of Okinawa. He carried out missions such as attacking radar positions and stations, supporting ground forces, and escorting bombers and reconnaissance aircraft. He was later among the Mahal volunteers — overseas volunteers who came to Eretz Israel — and took part in Israel’s War of Independence as commander of the four-aircraft formation that attacked the Egyptian force near the “Ad Halom” bridge.

Gene Jerome Schiff

A medical officer in an infantry division who served on the front lines in the Pacific theater. Many times, he evacuated wounded soldiers under fire. He was wounded four times. On 18 April 1945, during the Battle of Okinawa, while attempting to rescue a wounded soldier from a shellfire zone, he was hit and killed. After his death, he was awarded the Bronze Star.

Pierre Emil George Salinger

A naval officer and commander of a submarine chaser. During the Battle of Okinawa, he rescued sailors who had become trapped after running aground near the shore. For this action, he was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal. He later served as White House Press Secretary under Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson and also served as a senator from the state of California.

Ralph Verne Hepner

An electronics technician aboard the American submarine USS Swordfish. He perished with the entire crew of the submarine on 12 January 1945, after it was hit by a Japanese depth charge near the island of Okinawa.

Sidney Swedman

An electrician aboard the submarine USS Grayback. In February 1944, the submarine sank 44,000 tons of Japanese equipment, as well as several enemy ships and boats. On 26 February 1944, while sailing on the surface, the submarine was hit by a Japanese bomber aircraft and sank.

Herbert Gabriel Babson

A fighter pilot flying an F6F Hellcat. His aircraft was intercepted during the Battle of Okinawa on 25 March 1945.

Sherburne Nathaniel Bear

He served in the United States Navy and took part in the fighting in the Marshall Islands, the Mariana Islands, Leyte Gulf, the Philippine Sea, and Iwo Jima. He fell in battle at Okinawa.

The Philippines Campaign

In 1935, the Philippines received self-government, but during the Second World War they were occupied by Japan. The period of Japanese occupation was marked by brutality and accompanied by the enslavement of many Filipinos. The liberation began with the landing of the United States Army on the eastern island of Leyte and ended with Japan's surrender on 15 August 1945.

Arthur Simons

An artillery officer who became a company commander in the 6th Ranger Battalion. He took part in all the campaigns in the Pacific theater in which the battalion was involved, including the raid on the prisoner-of-war camp at Cabanatuan. For his heroic actions during the war, he was awarded the Silver Star.

Max Clark

A Marine officer who, during the Japanese attack on the naval base at Sangley Point in the Philippines in December 1941, led the evacuation and rescue of fighters under fire. For this daring action, he was awarded the Navy Cross. In May 1942, after the Bataan Death March, he fell into Japanese captivity and was placed aboard the Japanese prisoner transport ship Arisan Maru. The ship was sunk by a torpedo fired from an American submarine on 24 October 1944.

The Solomon Islands — The Guadalcanal Campaign

Between August 1942 and February 1943, the United States and its allies fought a difficult campaign against the Japanese for control of "Guadalcanal", one of the Solomon Islands. The Allied victory marked a strategic turning point in this theater, because control of the island made it possible to secure the shipping routes to Australia and support the campaign in New Guinea.

Howard Goodman

A company commander in the Marines. He took part in the battles of Guadalcanal and Cape Gloucester, where he led assaults against the Japanese in brutal face-to-face combat, with bayonets fixed on his soldiers' rifles. During the fighting in the Solomon Islands, he led his men in an assault against Japanese machine guns and mortars. His courage earned him the Silver Star and the Bronze Star. He fell in battle in New Britain, Papua New Guinea, on 7 January 1944.

Herman Abadi

A platoon commander in the Marines. During the campaign on Guadalcanal, battles were fought between Japan and the United States for control of Henderson Field, the island's airfield. The approaches to the airfield were of supreme importance, and both sides fought fiercely over them for six months. In the battle on the night of 13 September 1942, the platoons of Second Lieutenant Bill Sager and Lieutenant Herman Abadi were caught under a suicidal attack by hundreds of Japanese soldiers and suffered the heaviest losses. Only after his death in 1997 was Abadi awarded the Silver Star.




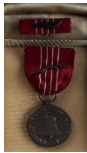


Wing 4 - Partisans, Underground Fighters, Ghetto Rebels, and Extermination Camp Uprisings







Introduction and Background

Scenography & Design

This section is designed as a forest and concentration camps environment and includes a representation of a zemlyanka, a partisan dugout partly built underground among dense trees, screens designed like tree trunks. Alongside it are a railway track and bridge, representing sabotage operations. The displays of underground fighters in Western and Central Europe are located partly in the forest area and partly near the railway and bridge. The displays of rebels and resisters in ghettos and extermination camps are embedded in brick stones, an exact replica of those in the ghettos and extermination camps, and in front of it is a kaleidoscope of medals under the heading “Through Their Courage.” The message is that precisely at that point of the museum, near Ghettos and the gas chambers, stands a monument symbolizing the heroism of those who fought.

Generic & Personal exhibits of wing 4 - Partisans & Underground Exhibits

Item	Image	Item	Image
Photo of Tolka		Photo of Rachel (Didi) Ross-Harel	
Partisan medal of Tolka		Medal of Freedom awarded to Didi by Eisenhower	
David and Ariane Knout		Dutch Underground Cross	

Enlistment document of David Knout		Medal of Courage from the King of Great Britain	
Milk jug Flashlight / Torch		Mauser	
kaleidoscope of medals		Detonator	

Representative Figures

Yitzhak “Tolka” Arad

Yitzhak Arad was born on 11 November 1926 in the town of Święciany, then in Lithuania, to his mother Rachel. At the outbreak of the German Polish war in 1939, he was a student at the Tachkemoni high school in Warsaw and belonged to the HaNoar HaTzioni youth movement.

He lived for three months under German occupation, and then fled to his hometown, which was then under Soviet control. When the war between Germany and the Soviet Union began in 1941, he tried to escape eastward but failed. After the Germans captured his town, he was imprisoned in the ghetto. There, he was employed by the Germans in sorting captured Soviet weapons. He managed to hide weapons from German army depots, organized an underground group, and later escaped to the forests. In February 1943, he joined a group of Soviet partisans in the Vilna region, in Markov’s Brigade. At first, he served in the Chapaev Battalion, and from there moved to the Lithuanian Vilnius Battalion. He received the nickname “Tolka” when, upon joining the battalion, he was ordered to change his name. This nickname remained with him in later years as well.

He took part in many battles against the Germans and operated as a saboteur, blowing up railway tracks and 13 enemy trains. Arad spent most of the war with the partisans until the end of the war, fighting the Nazis and their collaborators. He also entered the Vilna Ghetto in April 1943 in order to meet the underground leader, Abba Kovner. When the area was liberated by the Red Army, he was assigned to a unit fighting Lithuanian nationalists operating in the region. He was awarded the Partisan Medal, First Class.

On 25 December 1945, he immigrated to Eretz Israel as part of the illegal immigration movement, aboard the immigrant ship Hannah Szenes, which reached the coast of Nahariya. At the beginning of 1946, he enlisted in the Palmach, completed a flight course, and photographed Arab targets from the air. Because he was color-blind, he was transferred to a combined Palmach and Field Corps battalion under the command of Chaim Laskov. He trained demolition officers, took part in operational activities as a sapper, fought in Operation Nachshon, and went up to Jerusalem with the Harel Convoy. In besieged Jerusalem, he served as commander of the sappers and as battalion demolition officer and took part in the battles in the Jerusalem area and in Operation Horev in the Rafah and Nitzana areas.

After the establishment of the State of Israel, he continued his military service. In 1972, he was discharged with the rank of brigadier general, and during the Yom Kippur War he returned to serve for three months. Arad completed a doctorate on the subject "The Holocaust of the Jews of Vilna and Their Struggle in the Face of Annihilation." Over time, this work became the basis for his important book, *Ghetto in Flames: The Struggle and Destruction of the Jews in Vilna in the Holocaust*. He researched the Second World War and the Holocaust, publishing many books on Holocaust-related subjects, both as an author and as an editor. He served as chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate from 1972 to 1993. He received awards for his books *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union* and *In the Shadow of the Red Banner*. Until his final days, he remained an active board member in the association for the establishment of the Museum of the Jewish Soldier in World War II. He lived in Ramat Hasharon. He died on 6 May 2021 and was laid to rest in the cemetery of Kibbutz Einat.

José "Joseph" Aboulker

In preparation for Operation Torch, the Allied landing in North Africa, José Aboulker and 400 members of the Jewish underground in Algeria succeeded in taking control of key centers of power in the city of Algiers, including the police station, military camps, and the radio station. This takeover enabled the landing forces to carry out their mission without major fighting.

José Aboulker was born in Algeria on 5 March 1920. His father, Professor Henri Aboulker, was a well-known physician and surgeon, a lecturer at the University of Algiers, a member of the French Algerian Radical Party, and a Zionist leader who served for a time as deputy mayor of Algiers. His mother, Berthe Bénichou-Aboulker, was a playwright, writer, poet, and painter. José had two sisters, Marcelle and Colette, who also took part in the underground struggle. In June 1940, France was conquered by the Nazis. The Germans left control of southern France in the hands of the Vichy regime, a collaborationist government led by Marshal Pétain. Vichy rule was also extended to the territories attached to France in North Africa, including Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria. As a result of the antisemitic regime, the Jews' French citizenship was revoked, and some of the Nazi racial laws were applied to them. In response, three merchants from Bab El Oued established an underground group. Its initial purpose was to defend Jewish rights and Jews who were attacked violently, and to collect weapons for the struggle against Nazi rule and sabotage its war effort. Out of fear of a pogrom, they rented a gym where they trained and held meetings. They even hired a non-Jewish trainer named Géo Gras, who unknowingly served as a cover story for the group. To maintain secrecy and protect the underground members, the movement was divided into small cells, so that each activist knew only his commander and three additional members. Later, the meeting place for all the underground cells became José Aboulker's home. At that time, he had been expelled from medical studies because he was Jewish.

The underground group numbered around 400 Jewish students. Because Nazi rule was beginning to draw closer to Algeria, French officers from the Free French forces who feared direct Nazi control in the region decided to contact the Allies for help in acting against the Nazis. The Jewish underground decided to assist the Allied forces in their action as part of Operation Torch.

The role of the underground in Algiers was to help the forces landing on the beaches reach the shore, take control of Algiers, and neutralize the Vichy army for two hours, to allow Allied forces to enter without battle. On 7 November, at 5:30 in the evening, the heads of the underground groups met with the American consul and his aides in José Aboulker's home. For the first time, the members discovered who their fellow underground activists were, and even brothers and partners were surprised to see one another at the meeting. An antenna had been installed in the apartment, allowing communication with Gibraltar, where General Eisenhower was waiting to activate the forces. The French colonel who was supposed to manage the underground's complicated operation announced at the last minute that he would not take part. Command of the underground operation was therefore given to José Aboulker, a young man of 22 with no command background.

After much hesitation and planning, after midnight on Saturday night, 8 November 1942, Aboulker and his men began taking control of Algiers. Within 15 minutes, they completed the operation. The underground activists disguised themselves as soldiers in the Vichy army and in this way entered all military and governmental facilities. During the takeover, members of the underground impersonated senior Vichy army officers and broadcast false messages over the radio. The planned Allied landing on the designated beaches was scheduled for 7:00 a.m., but for unknown reasons the landing took place only twelve hours later, toward 7:00 p.m. This meant that for more than 12 hours, the underground activists had to hold the key points in the city without arousing suspicion. Around 2,300 soldiers landed on the beaches of Algiers. The results of the operation were significant but controversial. Casualties were indeed minimal, and Allied forces defeated the Axis forces, improving access to central Europe. However, American forces left Algeria and Morocco under Vichy rule, and Tunisia came under direct Nazi rule for half a year. The discriminatory laws in Algeria remained in place, and Aboulker's father was even imprisoned. French citizenship was restored to the Jews only in October 1943.

It is important to note that, within the framework of cooperation between the Jewish underground in Algiers and the French Resistance, the underground cooperated with several figures identified with the conservative right, some of whom were antisemitic. Nevertheless, José Aboulker, who recognized the deep ideological gulf between them, agreed to put politics aside and work together for the common goal. After the war, Aboulker did not immigrate to Israel. Instead, he developed an academic and medical career. He died on 17 November 2009 in southern France.

Sarah Shner-Nishmit

Sarah Shner-Nishmit was born on 2 March 1913 in the town of Sejny, in what is today northeastern Poland. At the time, the area belonged to the Lithuanian Suwałki region under the rule of the Russian Empire. During her childhood, her family moved between different places in Poland, Russia, and Lithuania because of the events of the First World War and the Russian Revolution. As an adult, she studied psychology, linguistics, and philosophy at the University of Kaunas. In 1933, she joined the HeHalutz movement. In Kaunas, she served as director of the Tarbut Seminary. During this period, she married Izya Sapir. With the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, she fled eastward. Her husband was killed, and she was left alone. She was captured and brought to the Dyatlovo Ghetto. After some time, she was taken to the Dvoretz labor camp, from which she managed to escape in 1942.

She joined the partisan movement as a medic. In one combat operation, she was wounded in the shoulder. For two consecutive years, Sarah fought in the Pobeda partisan battalion under the command of Pavel Bulak. She served as the battalion's medic and took an active part in defending the camp and in sabotage operations against the Nazi occupiers. At its height, the battalion numbered more than 1,000 fighters, men and women. After the war, she returned to Lithuania and engaged in Zionist activity. To earn a living, she worked in the state translation bureau of the Soviet authorities in Lithuania, and among her achievements was the translation of Lenin's writings into Lithuanian. As part of the Bricha movement, she was involved in the illegal transfer of Jews from Lithuania to Poland, on the assumption that from there they would be able to continue to Eretz Israel. After about a year of underground activity, the secret police uncovered her work, and she was forced to flee immediately to Poland.

In Poland, she became involved in the circles of the socialist Zionist movement and was sent by the Dror movement to help uncover the Oyneg Shabes Archive of Emanuel Ringelblum, the historian of the Warsaw Ghetto. She was one of the founders and central activists of the Zionist Coordination for the Redemption of Jewish Children, an organization, that worked to locate children who had been raised by Christian families or in monasteries and return them to the Jewish people. During this period, she married her second husband, Zvi Shner. Sarah immigrated to Israel in 1948 and was one of the founders of Kibbutz Lohamei HaGeta'ot. In 1962, she completed archival studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She engaged in literary writing, research, and teaching, especially on subjects connected to the Holocaust.

Additional Figures by Content Theme in the Section

Partisans

Women in Partisan Units

Jewish women, some of them very young, joined resistance organizations despite the harsh conditions faced by the partisans during the war. They served in a range of roles: gathering intelligence, combat, communications, logistics, and medicine.

Vitka Kempner-Kovner

A member of the underground in the Vilna Ghetto and one of the fighters in Abba Kovner's partisan unit. She later became Kovner's partner. She joined the Red Army and immigrated to Israel after the war.

Ruzka Korczak

An underground fighter and one of the leaders of the Fareynikte Partizaner Organizatsye — the United Partisan Organization — in the Vilna Ghetto. She was a partisan in Abba Kovner's battalion in the Rudniki Forests. She immigrated to Israel and lived in Ein HaHoresh.

Rachel Rudnicki

A partisan fighter in the Rudniki Forests, Lithuania.

Fania Lotz-Solomian

A member of the underground in Pinsk. She moved to the Polesie forests, joined the partisans, and served first as a nurse and later as chief physician of a paratrooper brigade.

Partisans in the Territories of the Soviet Union

The partisan forces included soldiers and officers of the Red Army, Soviet intelligence fighters and underground activists who had served in the army and remained behind in territories occupied by the Germans, as well as residents and Jews who had escaped from the ghettos.

They waged guerrilla warfare against the invading forces and relied on the local population, though local civilians often avoided helping them out of fear of the Germans.

Abba Kovner

One of the founders of the United Partisan Organization in the Vilna Ghetto. In January 1942, he issued the call: “Let us not go like sheep to the slaughter.”

He was the commander of a partisan unit in the Rudniki Forests. He immigrated to Eretz Israel after the war.

Yosef Chometz

An underground fighter in the Vilna Ghetto and a partisan in the Rudniki Forests. He immigrated to Israel after the war.

Baruch Shub

A fighter in the United Partisan Organization in the Vilna Ghetto. He was a partisan in the Rudniki Forests and immigrated to Israel after the war.

Yosef Glazman

The Betar commissioner in Lithuania and one of the leaders of the United Partisan Organization in the Vilna Ghetto. In October 1943, he went out at the head of a group to the forests and fell in battle.

Chaim Lazar

A fighter in the United Partisan Organization in the Vilna Ghetto. He was a partisan in the Rudniki and Narocz forests. He immigrated to Israel after the war.

Partisan Families — The Story of the Bielski Brothers

Partisans in Non-Jewish Units, in Europe and the Balkans

The partisans operated deep in enemy territory, in dense forests and hostile surroundings. Many served in non-Jewish units where, at times, an antisemitic atmosphere prevailed, forcing them to conceal their identity.

Leonid Bernstein

Commander of a partisan battalion who located the secret development facility for the V-2 missiles Hitler’s “doomsday weapon.” Leonid Bernstein was a young officer serving in western Ukraine when the war broke out. After months of defensive battles and retreat eastward, he was seriously wounded and remained behind enemy lines, deep inside German-occupied territory. After recovering, he managed to establish an underground unit that carried out sabotage operations against trains and other German targets. In the spring of 1943, he joined a partisan battalion fighting in the forests of Smela.

Like many Jews, Bernstein was forced to hide his real name and identified himself under a false name: **Vladimir Vasiliev**. During the war, Leonid Bernstein was responsible for derailing **42**

German trains. In the summer of 1944, he was parachuted with a group of ten partisans into southern Poland, deep behind enemy lines. Within only a month and a half, the battalion under his command numbered 1,500 men. He succeeded in locating the secret development facility for the V-2 missiles, the fearsome weapon with which Hitler hoped to change the course of the war. Following this daring discovery operation, the facility was destroyed in an air raid.

In the autumn of 1944, at the head of a force numbering about 5,000 fighters, Bernstein played an important role in the Slovak National Uprising and in the liberation of the country from Nazi occupation. Bernstein was awarded honorary citizenship in seven cities. In 1991, he immigrated to Israel and lived in Kiryat Ata until his death.

Partisans in Yugoslavia

During the Second World War, a large-scale armed partisan resistance movement developed in Yugoslavia under the leadership of Tito, the leader of the Yugoslav Communist Party. This movement succeeded in preventing the Germans from controlling large parts of the country.

By the autumn of 1941, it numbered around 50,000 people, including many Jews who fought in the Yugoslav partisan battalions. Some of them reached very senior positions.

Shmuel “Voja” Leder Todorović

Shmuel Leder Todorović was born into a large family. As a young man active in the Sephardi Jewish youth movement Matityahu, he could hardly have imagined that he himself would one day become a legendary freedom fighter. In the winter of 1941, Shmuel was sent by the head of the Communist Party, Tito, to establish partisan units in western Bosnia. He succeeded in recruiting many people, including his five brothers and sisters. Three of them did not return home. Elite units under his command penetrated deep behind enemy lines and operated in the enemy rear. They managed to capture various towns and villages and liberated the Plitvice Lakes in Croatia. But these were only preparations for the major sabotage operation. The Rajlovac airfield, near Sarajevo, served as a central supply base for German army forces in North Africa. Every week, dozens of aircraft loaded with equipment and ammunition passed through it. It was precisely at this critical point that Todorović decided to strike.

After difficult preparations, the attack on the airfield lasted an entire night. On 1 August 1943, he set out with his fighters on a mission. It would later be considered one of the largest partisan operations of the war. The partisan unit under Todorović’s command captured the airfield and destroyed about 30 enemy aircraft, armored trains, and a large quantity of military equipment. It was an unprecedented success. Tito and the Supreme Partisan Headquarters praised in a special order the fighting spirit and courage that Todorović and his fighters displayed in the daring operation. Todorović continued to serve in the Yugoslav Army, reached the rank of general, and was awarded the medal Hero of Yugoslavia.

Yehiel Grynszpan

Leader of a Jewish partisan group in Poland, which at its height numbered hundreds of fighters. His unit was incorporated into the ranks of the Polish underground Armia Ludowa, and together they operated in the Parczew Forests.

Dmitry Medvedev

Commander of the partisan unit “The Victors” and recipient of the title Hero of the Soviet Union.

Moshe Pijade

A Yugoslav partisan and statesman, and one of Tito's aides. He was responsible for the Yugoslav news agency and for contacts with the Allies.

Pavle Pap

A partisan commander who fought in the regions of Croatia and Dalmatia. He fell in battle and was awarded the title Hero of Yugoslavia.

Isidor Papo

Commander of the medical system in Bosnia. Later, he served as head of the surgical system at the General Staff of the partisans.

Esther "Mara" Ovadia

A partisan and member of Hashomer Hatzair. She fell in battle against the Bulgarian army and became a national heroine in Yugoslavia.

Isidor Baruch

Commander of a partisan company. He fell in battle and received the title Hero of the Yugoslav Nation.

Jewish Partisans in Italy**Eugenio Calò**

A partisan in Tuscany, Italy, who worked with the Allied forces. In one of the battles against the Germans, he and his fighters were captured and taken for interrogation in the village of San Polo. Despite torture, they did not reveal information. Eventually, they were placed together with all the men of the village into pits and shot by the Germans. This event became known as the San Polo Massacre. For his actions, Calò received the decoration Hero of Italy.

Rita Rosani

A partisan in Verona, Italy. She established a special partisan group named "The Eagle," which operated in the Valpolicella region. During the fighting, she was surrounded by German soldiers. In the battle that followed, she fought until her death. She was awarded the Gold Medal for Military Valor and was the only woman to receive this decoration.

Edoardo Volterra

Commander of a partisan unit of the Action Party. He attacked Camp 59 at Servigliano, on the Adriatic coast, several times to free the Jews imprisoned there. At the height of the operation, with offensive air support from the United States Air Force, his unit succeeded in freeing hundreds of Jews from the camp. For this, he was awarded the Silver Medal.

Mario Jacchia

A decorated Italian Army officer from the First World War. He served as commander of the partisans in the Emilia region, under German occupation. He was captured by Italian fascists and executed after being betrayed by an Italian collaborator. For his courage, he was awarded the **Gold Medal**.

Jewish Partisans in Greece

Yitzhak Moshe

A fighter in the Greek Army who, after the German occupation, became a partisan and commander of a partisan force. Later, he joined ELAS, the Greek People's Liberation Army, and served as commander of a company that carried out sabotage operations, blew up bridges, controlled roads, and attacked collaborators. He was known by the nickname "Captain Kitsos" and was awarded a medal for courage.

Inter Shamsi

He operated in the communist partisan organization in Greece. For his bravery, he received the nickname "Captain Mikhaos." He took part in the operation to smuggle the Chief Rabbi of Athens, Rabbi Barzilai, and helped restore the Jewish community of Thessaloniki. He later immigrated to Israel.

David Aelion

A partisan in the Greek People's Liberation Army, ELAS. He was known by the nickname "Keraunos" [Lightning]. He was responsible for coordination with the British Army on supply matters for the partisans. At the end of the war, he immigrated to Israel.

Underground Fighters

Poland and the Territories of the Soviet Union

Yitzhak Wittenberg - Leader of the Underground in the Vilna Ghetto

After the occupation of Lithuania, Wittenberg headed the communist underground. When the United Partisan Organization was established, he was chosen to lead it. When the Germans learned about him, they demanded that he be handed over. He was arrested by Judenrat but was freed in underground operation that same night. The Germans announced that if Wittenberg was not handed over, the ghetto would be destroyed. When the crowd in the ghetto demanded that he be surrendered to the Germans, Wittenberg turned himself in. In custody, he committed suicide.

Aharon "Dolek" Liebeskind - Underground Leader in Kraków

Head of the Akiva youth movement in Kraków and other cities in Poland. He was the leader of the resistance movement of the HeHalutz HaLohem underground in Kraków. In 1942, he wrote: "We are fighting for three lines in history, so that it will not be said that our youth went like sheep to the slaughter." He led offensive actions against the Nazis, the most notable of which was the attack on the Cyganeria Café in Kraków. He fell in battle against German forces on 24 December 1942.

Gusta Drenger - Underground Fighter in Kraków

One of the leaders of the underground in the Kraków Ghetto. She was arrested by the Gestapo and wrote a diary in prison documenting the actions of the underground, titled Justyna's Diary.

Yehuda Maimon “Poldek” - Underground Fighter in Kraków

A member of the HeHalutz HaLohem underground in Kraków. He served as a liaison to Polish underground organizations. He was captured and sent to Auschwitz, where he also took part in underground activity. At the end of the war, he was active in the Bricha organization and immigrated to Eretz Israel.

Bela Hazan-Yaari - Underground Fighter in Grodno, Vilna, and Białystok

A fighter in the Dror underground in Vilna and Grodno, Poland. Because of her appearance, she worked in Gestapo offices, where she obtained documents and stamps for forging identity papers and travel permits. At the same time, she served as an underground courier between the ghettos of Vilna, Grodno, and Białystok, transferring information, documents, money, and pistols. After being arrested and tortured, she was sent to Birkenau and then to Auschwitz. She survived and immigrated to Eretz Israel after the war.

Aliza Shomron-Vitis - Underground Fighter in Warsaw

A courier in the Jewish Fighting Organization - the ŻOB. She escaped from the ghetto on the eve of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. She was captured by the Nazis and sent to Bergen-Belsen. She survived and immigrated to Eretz Israel after the war.

Haika Grossman - Underground Fighter in Białystok

One of the leaders of Hashomer Hatzair in Poland. She served as an underground courier and took part in the Białystok Ghetto Uprising. She escaped and joined the partisans. At the end of the war, she immigrated to Eretz Israel. Later, she served as a member of the Knesset.

Tatiana Markus - Underground Fighter in Kyiv

An underground fighter in Kyiv after its occupation by the Germans. She served as a courier for the city committee of the Communist Party and obtained documents, medicines, and German uniforms for members of the underground.

Underground Resistance in Europe, Scandinavia, and the Balkans

France - The Jewish Army, AJ

During the war, an extensive network of resistance organizations operated in France: the Résistance. Its goal was to thwart the plans of the Nazis and their collaborators in the Vichy regime to destroy the Jews. Over four years of activity, members of these organizations saved tens of thousands of Jews. They issued and distributed forged documents, created a system for transferring and distributing money, smuggled families and children to hiding places in Europe, and established guerrilla groups in the mountains and in the major cities. Hundreds of members of the organization took part in the battles for the liberation of France after the Normandy invasion. After the war, its members continued Zionist activity and participated in the Bricha movement, Aliyah Bet, arms procurement for the Yishuv, the establishment of recruitment camps, and military training. One of the most prominent organizations was the AJ - Armée Juive, the Jewish Army. The organization carried out its first action in late July 1940, at a meeting between two couples of Revisionist Zionists: Abraham and Eugénie Polonski, and David and Ariane Knout.

At that meeting, they agreed on the structure of the organization and the nature of its activity. It was decided that the organization would be completely secret. Members were required to maintain absolute loyalty and strict discipline. The goal was active and armed resistance, alongside the rescue of Jews. To prevent betrayal and denunciation, recruitment was carried out by the method of “a friend brings a friend.” Admission into the Jewish Army included a ceremony and a special oath. The candidate was presented to the organization in a dark room so that he could not see the face of the officer administering the oath.

Women made up about 40% of all members of the Résistance. Often, these were young women with French appearance and citizenship, and therefore they aroused less suspicion. The tasks assigned to them included transferring weapons, ammunition, money, and forged documents.

In addition, they were responsible for moving groups of children who had been separated from their parents to hiding places in France, Switzerland, and Spain. Toward the end of the war, the smuggling route was blocked, and many members of the network were arrested.

Ariane and David Knout

Ariane was born in 1905 to the Russian composer Alexander Scriabin and his partner Tatiana Fyodorovna Schloezer. After her mother’s death, she emigrated to Paris, where she took part in several Russian émigré literary circles and wrote poems.

After two unsuccessful marriages, she married the Jewish-Russian poet David Knout, after converting to Judaism and choosing to identify with the Revisionist Zionist movement.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, she and her friends helped establish the Jewish Army - AJ. She was one of the most prominent activists in the underground and succeeded in saving many Jews, including children whom she helped smuggle into Switzerland after their parents had been deported and murdered. Ariane Knout was appointed responsible for contact with underground groups in southern France and for smuggling escape convoys to Spain. During her visits to the headquarters of the resistance movement, she used to train her comrades in the use of weapons.

When the danger increased for Jews, she proposed David to separate and that he should fled with her elder daughter, Mary, her two-year-old son, Eli, and their six-month-old baby, Joseph to Switzerland. Her second daughter, Betty, decided to stay with her mother and join her Resistance activities [she was only 15 years old].

Ariane remained in Toulouse to create an escape route for additional Jews. About a month before the liberation of Paris, in July 1944, during a secret meeting with fellow underground members at her home in Toulouse, Ariane was shot and killed by members of the French Milice, collaborators of the Nazi regime, who had ambushed her at the entrance to the house. For her actions, the French government awarded her the Croix de Guerre and the Resistance Medal. David survived, immigrated to Israel with their children, and became a successful journalist and playwright.

Hungary, Romania, and Greece

David Gur

A member of the underground of the Zionist youth movements in Hungary. He was one of the operators of the workshop for forged papers, which helped thousands of Jews, especially young people, survive. He immigrated to Israel after the War of Independence.

Nahum Menashe Grigore

A partisan who, after intelligence training in the Soviet Army, was inserted with a group of partisans into the Pruzhany area. He took part in railway sabotage operations and in gathering intelligence. At the end of the operation, he was awarded the rank of captain and the Partisan of the Patriotic War Medal.

Wilhelm Filderman

One of the leaders of Romanian Jewry. Through his personal connections with **Ion Antonescu**, the Prime Minister of Romania, he worked to assist the Jewish community during the war.

Sarah Fortis

A member of the Greek underground, **Andartes**. She took part in operational actions against the Germans, commanded a women's unit, and became known by the nickname "**Captain Sarika**." After the war, she immigrated to Israel.

Moshe Besso

An underground fighter in Athens. He joined a battalion of partisan fighters and took part in an attack on a prison, where they succeeded in freeing about **100** underground members who had been imprisoned by the Germans. He was wounded during the operation. At the end of the war, he immigrated to Eretz Israel.

The Slovak Uprising and Underground Activity

In Slovakia, armed Jewish underground cells existed in three labor camps: Nováky, Sered', and Vyhne. These cells organized mainly in preparation for resistance in case deportations from Slovakia to the extermination camps resumed. At the beginning of 1944, links were created between these cells and the underground Slovak National Council. The Jews saw cooperation to help save the 20,000 Jews who remained in Slovakia. The national uprising broke out on 29 August 1944 in Banská Bystrica, to overthrow the regime of Jozef Tiso. About 2,000 Jews took part in the uprising, including 1,566 partisans. Among them were also the parachutists Haviva Reik, Zvi Ben-Yaakov, Chaim Hermesh, and Rafi Reis, who did not return from their mission. About 500 Jews fell in the fighting. Although the uprising was suppressed, underground activity continued until the arrival of Soviet forces and the liberation of the country in 1945.

Juraj Spitzer

One of the leaders of the armed underground in the Nováky camp. He took part in the fighting and joined Yegorov's partisan unit in the Gápel area. He was awarded the Czechoslovak War Cross.

Imrich Müller

Commander of the Nováky cell unit, which numbered **200 fighters** and took part in the uprising. After the uprising was suppressed, he joined the partisans.

Ghetto Rebels and Uprisings in Extermination Camps

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

An underground organization was established in the Warsaw Ghetto six days after the beginning of the Great Deportation of the Jews of Warsaw to Treblinka, which began on 22 July 1942. During the deportation, about 75% of the ghetto's inhabitants were sent to their deaths. The underground organization in the Warsaw Ghetto, the ŻOB - Jewish Fighting Organization, was established on 28 July 1942 by three youth movements active in the ghetto: Dror, Hashomer Hatzair, and Akiva. Over time, the organization expanded, and political parties also joined it, including the Bund and the communists. The head of the underground organization was Mordechai Anielewicz of Hashomer Hatzair. His deputies were Yitzhak "Antek" Zuckerman from Dror and Marek Edelman from the Bund. At first, the founders of the ŻOB did not have a fully developed operational plan, but it was clear to them that they had to resist deportation by force, since its purpose was nothing other than the murder of the Jews.

Another organization also operated in the Warsaw Ghetto: the ŻZW - Jewish Military Union, associated with the Betar youth movement and the Revisionist party. One of the senior commanders of the ŻZW was Paweł Frenkel, alongside a command staff whose members were mostly Betar members. The commanders and founders of the ŻZW were discharged soldiers and former officers in the Polish Army and therefore had military training. They possessed weapons acquired through contacts that members of the underground had with people in the Polish Army. Although negotiations took place between the ŻOB and the ŻZW over merging their forces, unification did not take place because of disagreements between the two underground organizations. The ŻZW members demanded leadership of the joint underground, arguing that they had military experience from their service in the Polish Army. They demanded to join the ŻOB as an autonomous body and, in return, promised to provide the joint organization with the weapons in their possession — which were more numerous than the weapons held by the ŻOB. The ŻOB rejected these terms, because its leaders viewed the ŻZW as an organization with fascist characteristics. The ŻOB agreed to accept ŻZW members into a shared underground only as individuals. The two organizations continued to operate separately, but close to the beginning of the uprising, a certain degree of cooperation developed between them.

Prominent Figures among the Commanders and Fighters of the Uprising

Mordechai Anielewicz

Commander of the Jewish Fighting Organization - ŻOB - during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and a member of Hashomer Hatzair. He led the resistance that began in January 1943, and later the great uprising in April 1943. He died in the bunker at 18 Miła Street.

Paweł Frenkel

Commander of the Jewish Military Union - ŻZW - during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and a member of Betar. He commanded the battle at Muranowski Square, where his fighters raised the blue-and-white flag over the rooftops of the ghetto. He fell in battle in June 1943, about a month after the end of the uprising.

Yitzhak “Antek” Zuckerman

One of the leaders of the Jewish Fighting Organization - ŻOB in the Warsaw Ghetto. He worked to rescue and evacuate fighters. During the Polish uprising of 1944, he commanded a unit of Jewish fighters. After the war, he immigrated to Israel and was one of the founders of Kibbutz Lohamei HaGeta'ot.

Zivia Lubetkin

One of the leaders of the Jewish Fighting Organization - ŻOB in the Warsaw Ghetto. She was a commander during the uprising and helped rescue fighters from the ghetto. She took part in the Polish uprising in 1944. After the war, she immigrated to Israel and was one of the founders of Kibbutz Lohamei HaGeta'ot.

Zuta Hartman

A fighter in the Jewish Military Union - ŻZW during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. After the liquidation of the ghetto, she was sent to Majdanek. She survived the death march and later immigrated to Israel.

Rachel “Sarenka” Zilberberg

A member of Hashomer Hatzair and a fighter in the Jewish Fighting Organization in the Warsaw Ghetto. She died during the uprising in the bunker at 18 Miła Street.

Leon Rodal

One of the leaders of the Jewish Military Union - ŻZW in the Warsaw Ghetto. He fought in the battles in the Toebbens-Schultz area and fell in battle.

Simcha “Kazik” Rotem

A fighter in the Jewish Fighting Organization - ŻOB during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. At the end of the uprising, he helped evacuate fighters from the ghetto. He took part in the Polish uprising of 1944. After the war, he immigrated to Israel.

Marek Edelman

One of the leaders of the Jewish Fighting Organization - ŻOB in the Warsaw Ghetto, and a leader of the Bund. During the uprising, he fought as a sector commander in the battles of the Brushmakers' District. He later took part in the Polish uprising.

Getzel Schwarzman

Chairman of the Judenrat and leader of the uprising in the Tuchin Ghetto in eastern Poland. During the uprising, the fighters fought with gasoline and axes against machine guns. At the end of the uprising, around 1,200 Jews managed to break through the gates of the ghetto and escape into the forests. Schwarzman took responsibility for the uprising and was executed. His wife and two sons also fell in battle.

Masha Bruskina

An underground fighter in Minsk. She worked to smuggle weapons for the partisans, was captured, and tortured. Her execution by hanging in the center of Minsk was documented by the Germans, and the photographs were presented at the Nuremberg Trials against the war criminals.

Hersh Smolar

Leader of the underground in the **Minsk Ghetto**. He managed to escape from the ghetto and fought as a partisan until the end of the war.

Shaul Gorodinsky

He led the major escape of **233 Jews** from the **Novogradok labor camp** in the summer of **1943**, through a tunnel **250 meters** long.

He joined and fought in the partisan unit of the **Bielski brothers**. After the war, he immigrated to Israel.

Mordechai Tenenbaum

One of the founders of the **Jewish Fighting Organization — ŻOB**. He was the leader of the uprising in the **Bialystok Ghetto**.

He committed suicide together with his fellow fighter **Daniel Moszkowicz**, in order not to fall alive into German hands.

Uprisings in Extermination Camps Sobibor and Auschwitz-Birkenau

Sobibor was an extermination camp that operated in 1942–1943 in the Lublin region of occupied Poland. During the camp's existence, between 170,000 and 250,000 people were murdered there, most of them Jews. In the summer of 1943, on the initiative of Leon Feldhendler, an underground group formed among the prisoners of the camp and decided to break out. The group was led by Alexander Pechersky, a lieutenant in the Soviet Army who had arrived in Sobibor as a prisoner of war. On 12 October 1943, in the evening, the leaders of the underground gathered in the carpentry barracks. Ten people took part in the meeting. The commander of the uprising, Alexander Pechersky, presented the plan for the revolt, which was to take place the next day. The first stage of the uprising was carried out as planned. Between 15:00 and 16:30, eleven SS men who had been summoned to the workshops were killed, including the camp commander. At the same time, the telephone lines and the electricity supply to the Ukrainian guards' room were cut off, and six rifles were taken and handed over to members of the underground. The prisoners broke out under fire. Only about half of them managed to reach the forest. Pechersky succeeded in escaping and, together with several fighters, joined the partisans. After the events, the Sobibor camp was taken out of use. In this way, the uprising became one of the few cases in which prisoners succeeded in significantly disrupting the Nazi extermination machine.

The Sonderkommando Revolt in Auschwitz-Birkenau

Sonderkommando means “special unit” in German. This was the name given to the unit of Jewish prisoners in the Auschwitz extermination camp whose task was to handle the bodies of Jews who had been forced into the gas chambers and crematoria. They removed the bodies from the gas chambers and transferred them to the crematoria. The Sonderkommando prisoners were among the only people who saw the extermination process up close and were involved in all its stages. To prevent resistance from forming, they were executed by their Nazi commanders every four months. On 7 October 1944, after careful and secret planning, the prisoners in the crematoria complex rebelled and launched an armed attack against the Nazi guards. They killed four SS men and blew up one of the crematoria. The revolt was brutally suppressed by the Nazis, and the overwhelming majority of its participants were executed.

Prominent Figures among the Leaders and Participants of the Revolt

Roza Robotka

In 1942, Roza Robotka was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where she joined an underground organization. Her mission was to obtain explosives from the Union munitions factory, where Jewish female prisoners worked, and to pass them to her comrades for the preparation of improvised charges intended to blow up the gas chambers. After the revolt and the explosion of the crematoria, she was captured and severely tortured but did not betray her partners. On 6 January 1945, shortly before the camp was liberated by the Red Army, she was executed by hanging together with her comrades before the prisoners of Auschwitz.

Shmuel Yosef Luboshitzky


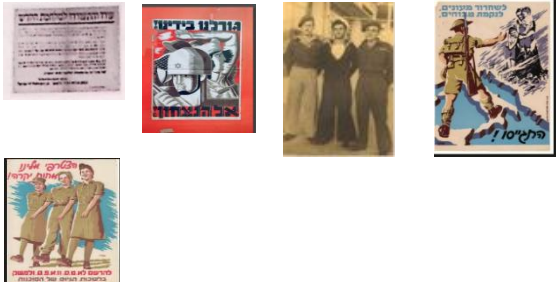
One of the leaders of the Sonderkommando Revolt. He took part in disabling Crematorium IV and killed several Nazi officers. He was captured, severely tortured by the Nazi commander, and transferred to the Dora-Mittelbau camp, where V-1 and V-2 weapons were produced. He immigrated to the state of Israel and took part in the War of Independence.

Final Display

Hologram Presenting Imagined Dialogues and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising broke out on the eve of Passover, 19 April 1943, and lasted about three weeks. Although the Jews in the ghetto understood that it was only a matter of time before all of them would be murdered, the underground organizations still operated separately. Two underground organizations with different ideologies were established in the ghetto: the Jewish Fighting Organization ŻOB and the Jewish Military Union ŻZW. Mordechai Anielewicz and Paweł Frenkel, the commanders of the two organizations, were the same age - 23. Most of the fighters, including Frenkel and Anielewicz, did not survive. The uprising inspired resistance movements in occupied Europe and, after the war became a symbol of Jewish heroism .

Posters in the Transition Area between Section 4 and Section 5

Item	Image
Radio that used for listening to the 1947 UN vote for the recognition of the State of Israel	
Posters of the Yishuv's volunteering for the British Army 1940 - 1944	

Wing 5 - The Volunteers of the Yishuv to the British Forces, their contribution to the establishment of the State of Israel & the IDF

Introduction and Background













- Number of volunteers from the Yishuv to the British Army: approximately **38,000**
- Around **4,500 women** served in the **ATS** and **WAAF**
- Taken prisoner by the Germans: around **1,500 Jewish soldiers** at **Kalamata** in southern Greece, and another approximately **170** in **Crete**
- Total number of fallen in battle: approximately **70**

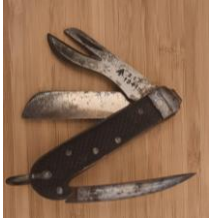



Scenography & Design

This section is built as a circle of display cases containing objects and stories connected to the volunteers of the Yishuv who served in different units of the British Army.

At the center stands a round table that functions as a large interactive screen, divided into four screen segments. It presents newspaper reports, letters, and relevant contemporary sources. Around it, a large 360-degree panoramic screen displays the final presentation.

**Generic & Personal exhibits of wing 5 – The Yishuv's volunteering for the British Army,
the establishment of the State of Israel and the IDF**

Item	Image	Item	Image
A BREN Gun Machine, used by the British Allais Forces		Photographs of Sonia Gelman-Peres, and one with Shimon Peres when she was discharged from her service at ATS	
Mess tin of a Brigade fighter		2 pages of the personal diary of Sonia Gelman-Peres	
Military Warfare Knife, used by British Jewish soldiers		Service booklet of Sonia Gelman-Peres, and ATS driver's license	
Military tags of Brigade Jewish soldiers		Azaria Rapoport's notebook for learning vehicle operation during his service in the British Army	
A military dagger mounted on a rifle in the British Army		Letters sent by Azaria Rapoport during his service in the British Army to his friend Abrashe Tami	
Medical equipment of a medic in the Jewish Brigade		Brigadier Frederick Hermann Kisch in military uniform, & a photograph with his two sons, 1941	

<p>A 1941 folding knife that Yosef Tager received when he enlisted in the Air Force</p>		<p>Brigadier Frederick Hermann Kisch's sword, featuring the Star of David</p>	
		<p>Brigadier Frederick Hermann Kisch's pistol</p>	
<p>Text of a thanksgiving prayer written by Chief Rabbi of the Yishuv, Yitzhak Isaac Halevi Herzog - 1945</p>		<p>At the exit of Wing 5 in front of the yellow flowers that symbolize a "memorial candle" for the fallen</p>	

The Yishuv in Eretz Israel also mobilized for the war effort, despite its tensions with the British, out of the understanding that this was a war for the survival of all humanity and of the Jewish people. More than 10% of the Jewish men and women in Eretz Israel volunteered for the British Army. They were integrated into different fronts, parachuted behind enemy lines, supported the partisans, and transferred intelligence information to the Allies. At the same time, these Jews acted on behalf of the Haganah and the Mossad LeAliyah Bet, helping rescue Jews, assist Holocaust survivors after the war, and organize their immigration to Eretz Israel by legal and illegal routes. At the outbreak of the Second World War, the British Mandate authorities were enforcing the Third White Paper, which restricted Jewish immigration and land purchase. The leadership of the Jewish Yishuv debated how to act: should they cooperate with the British in the war against the Nazis, or continue the struggle against Britain because of its anti-Zionist policy? However, as more accurate information reached Eretz Israel about the events of Kristallnacht in Germany and about the murderous ideology of the Nazi regime toward the Jews, the Zionist leadership in Eretz Israel decided to support enlistment and volunteering for the British Army. The goal was to prevent a future Nazi attack on Eretz Israel and to try to help their Jewish brothers and sisters in Europe. David Ben-Gurion formulated this position as follows: "We must fight the White Paper as if there is no war and help the British as if there is no White Paper." The volunteering of the Yishuv for the war against the Nazis also had additional goals, including the creation of professional military units and the training of soldiers who would later serve in the defense of the emerging Hebrew state. During the war, around 35,000 members of the Jewish Yishuv in Eretz Israel volunteered for the British Army.

The fifth section of the museum, which surveys a decade of fighting and national revival from 1939 to 1949, focuses on the Jewish men and women of the Hebrew Yishuv in Eretz Israel who volunteered for the British Army and its various units.

These volunteers eventually became part of the military and command infrastructure of the War of Independence, the organization of the IDF, and the establishment of the State of Israel.

Jews served in the British Royal Army on land, in the air, and in many units and roles: infantry, transport, paratroopers, artillery, sappers, doctors, medics, military rabbis, pilots, intelligence and commando personnel, drivers, and combat-support professionals.

Many women from the Yishuv volunteered for the British Army as drivers of military vehicles and ambulances, nurses and welfare assistants, parachutists, observers, and combat-support personnel in maintenance and other essential military services, mainly in bases in Egypt and later in Europe. Although their enlistment sometimes met with reservations in the Yishuv, among their families, and in the movements to which they belonged, they saw it as the fulfillment of a mission and a national duty in the struggle to defeat the Nazis. Inside the section, visitors can follow the main events that took place in Eretz Israel during the war through various displays. These include an interactive table containing a timeline of major wartime events, a memory box with unit symbols, postcards, letters, and photographs of the male and female fighters from the Jewish Yishuv.

In addition, the section includes films and unique displays that present in depth the story of the Sappers' Units, the fighters of the Jewish Brigade, the Buffs, and the approximately 4,500 Jewish volunteers from abroad - Mahal who came to join the struggle.

The section also explores the personal stories of several male and female fighters, including Haviva Reik, Frederick Hermann Kisch, and others. Finally, the section commemorates the contribution of the men and women who fought in the Second World War to the struggle for statehood, to the campaigns of the War of Independence, to the founding of the IDF and its branches, and to the development of the State of Israel as a whole.

Representative Figures

Shlomo Shamir

Shlomo Shamir was born in Russia in 1915 under the name Shlomo Rabinovich. He immigrated to Eretz Israel in 1925, and in 1929 joined the Haganah. In April 1940, he completed a civilian flight course at Sde Dov Airport and volunteered for the British Army, serving in one of the three Jewish infantry battalions. When the Jewish Brigade was established, David Ben-Gurion and the Haganah command appointed him commander of all Haganah personnel serving in the Brigade. He accompanied the Brigade's forces in Europe and reached Bergen-Belsen. In 1946, he was discharged with the rank of major and was sent to the United States as head of the Haganah's security delegation, tasked with purchasing machine tools for weapons production and persuading American officers to come and assist the Haganah organization, which was on its way to becoming a regular army. In February 1948, Ben-Gurion called him back to Eretz Israel to establish an armored brigade that would break through the road to Jerusalem. He was appointed the first commander of the 7th Brigade and commanded the brigade's battles on the Jerusalem front and at Latrun. He was among the planners of the breakthrough to Jerusalem through the Burma Road.

Shamir served as head of the Staff Duties Department and later as commander of the Central Command. On 5 April 1949, he was appointed commander of the Navy, and on 14 December 1950,

commander of the Air Force. In 1952, he founded the company Pazchim in the Negev and headed companies in oil development, fertilizers, and gas. Later, he managed the Israel Land Administration. In 1967, he completed a degree in social sciences and an executive program at Harvard. He was among the founders of the Museum of the Jewish Soldier in World War II and had a major influence on shaping its content and messages. He also engaged in music, writing, and painting. Shlomo Shamir died on 19 May 2009 and left behind one daughter, Yael. He had been married to Judge Mina Shamir, who died in 1996.

Haviva Reik-Martinowitz

Haviva, daughter of Arpad and Emma, was born on 22 July 1914 in Nadabula, then in Hungary. After completing her studies, she joined the Hashomer Hatzair movement in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. In April 1938, she went for training in Bratislava. After the establishment of the fascist regime in Slovakia in March 1939, she coordinated immigration affairs in the national leadership of Hashomer Hatzair. In December 1939, she immigrated to Eretz Israel and joined Kibbutz Ma'anit. On the kibbutz, she was active in many branches, including orange marketing and the management of a factory for extracting essential oil from lemon peels. She also served as secretary of the Working Mothers' Organization in Karkur. In May 1942, she enlisted in the Palmach and served in Company C. When the first reports reached Eretz Israel about the extermination of the Jews in Europe, Haviva volunteered for a parachuting mission behind German enemy lines to assist the Jews of Slovakia. She underwent parachute training at Ramat Rachel and in Cairo, wearing a British Air Force uniform. Her area of operation was set as Slovakia, a region she knew from her youth. On 18 September 1944, she arrived under a false identity in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, then the center of the Slovak National Uprising, as "Ada Robinson," a sergeant in the British Air Force. There, Reik met the Jewish parachutists from Eretz Israel: Zvi Ben-Yaakov, Rafi Reis, and Chaim Hermesh, who had already been there for about two weeks. Together, they assisted Jews living in the liberated area, established contact with members of Jewish youth movements who were fighting in partisan units and created a network of transit stations from Poland to Slovakia for smuggling Allied prisoners and pilots. She worked in many practical fields, including the supply of food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and forged documents. She initiated the establishment of workshops that provided paid employment for refugees and managed to open and operate a sewing workshop and a shoemaking workshop.

On 26 October, the Germans captured Banská Bystrica. The parachutists, together with youth movement leaders, Jewish leaders, and their families, withdrew to a temporary camp in the Bukovec Mountains. Four days later, the camp was attacked by Russian Ukrainian SS men. During the attack, six Jews were killed. Haviva was captured and taken to prison in Banská Bystrica.

On 20 November 1944, she was executed together with Rafael Reis and about 200 other Jews, who were buried in a mass grave near Kremnička. After the liberation of Slovakia in April 1945, the British Army searched for its fallen. The remains of Haviva Reik and Rafael Reis were found at Kremnička, identified, and transferred to a British military cemetery in Prague.

In 1952, the remains of both were brought to Israel and buried in a military ceremony on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem.

Frederick Hermann Kisch

Frederick Hermann Kisch was born on 23 August 1888 in India, to Alice and Hermann Michael Kisch, into a Jewish family that served the British colonial administration. His family had become distant from Jewish life in England and was not involved in the Jewish community. Frederick was educated in schools in England, and at the age of 18 was accepted to the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. About a year later, he was commissioned as an officer in the Royal Engineers. Between 1909 and 1914, Frederick served in the British Army in India and rose to the rank of captain. When the First World War broke out in August 1914, he was part of the British force sent to the front in France. He fought on the Belgian front until December 1915.

During the war, Frederick was wounded twice. After recovering, he was sent to the Middle Eastern front and Iraq. He was wounded again, and after recovering was transferred to the Ministry of War in London, where he served in British intelligence until the end of the war. During his service as a liaison officer, his name was mentioned three times in official British battlefield dispatches. He received several decorations, including Britain's Distinguished Service Order and France's Croix de Guerre. Frederick was promoted to major, and later to lieutenant colonel. After the First World War, Frederick took part in the British delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, where he became closely acquainted with the leaders of the Zionist movement. He was influenced by them and decided to become active in the Zionist Organization.

He married Ruth, a relative of Herbert Samuel, the first High Commissioner of Mandatory Palestine. In 1922, he was elected to the Executive of the Zionist Organization. In 1927, he gave up his British citizenship and accepted Palestinian citizenship. During this period, Frederick took an active part in the social and economic life of the country. He served on the boards of various enterprises and was a member of the presidency of Maccabi. He was among the founders of the Eliezer Ben-Yehuda Foundation, whose goal was to publish the complete dictionary of the reviver of the Hebrew language. The 1929 disturbances in Eretz Israel shook the Zionist movement and led to the resignation of its president, Dr. Chaim Weizmann. Frederick also resigned from the Zionist Executive position at the 17th Zionist Congress in 1931. However, even after resigning from his official roles in the Zionist movement, Frederick continued to work on the boards of various economic and cultural companies. Among other things, he served as treasurer of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra when it was founded. When the Arab Revolt of 1936–1939 broke out, he agreed to serve as liaison between the Jewish Agency leadership and the British Army, which had brought a large force into the country.

With the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, Frederick returned to service in the British Army as an officer in the Corps of Engineers. He was stationed with the Eighth Army, which fought in the Middle East. He was promoted to brigadier and appointed officer responsible for engineering units of the Eighth Army. In this role, he made a major contribution to the Allied victory in the Middle East and North Africa. The engineering units under his command were responsible for solving the problem of clearing the minefields laid by the German and Italian armies in Africa. Among other things, the engineering forces built roads from Egypt into the distances of the Western Desert, where the Allied armies prepared for the decisive campaign against the forces of German General Rommel. When the Allied armies under General Montgomery advanced toward Tunisia, Frederick was with the forward forces. He reached Tripoli in Libya, and about 235 kilometers south of Tripoli found the "Giado concentration camp", the first concentration camp liberated by the Allies in January 1943. The Germans had concentrated the Jews of Libya there with the intention of destroying them. Frederick liberated the Jews from the camp, presenting himself as a Jewish fighter.

On 7 April 1943, while leading a reconnaissance party clearing mines along the route of the British advance in Tunisia, near the city of Gabès, he stepped on two mines that exploded and killed him instantly. He was 55 at the time of his death. Frederick Kisch was buried in a British military cemetery in Tunisia, near the place where he fell. He left behind a wife and two sons. In a eulogy written for him by Dr. Chaim Weizmann, later the first President of Israel, it was said: "His death on duty in the fields of Tunisia in the service of Britain was consistent with the guiding principle of his life: loyal service to Britain and to the Jewish cause." After the war, a friends' association was established to commemorate Frederick Hermann Kisch, headed by well-known figures including General Eisenhower and Professor Albert Einstein. They approached Field Marshal Montgomery with a proposal that he accepted the honorary presidency of the memorial committee. Montgomery replied to Professor Einstein: "I am glad to hear that you are planning to establish a memorial to Fred Kisch. I agree to accept the honorary presidency of the board of trustees. No other soldier in this fighting army served with greater loyalty and greater courage than he did. His death was a severe blow to us all." In his memory, Kfar Kisch, a moshav of discharged soldiers near Kfar Tavor in the Lower Galilee, was founded. A forest was planted in his name on the slopes of Ma'ale HaHamisha in the Jerusalem hills, and an electrical engineering laboratory was established in his name at the Hebrew Technion in Haifa. His story is also commemorated in the book *Brigadier Kisch: "Soldier and Zionist"*, which tells the story of his life's work.

Ben Dunkelman

Ben Dunkelman was born in 1913 in Toronto, Canada. In 1931, he immigrated to Eretz Israel and worked for a year in the orchards of the Sharon region as a laborer and guard. He considered settling in the country, but under pressure from his parents was forced to return to Canada and help with the family business. In 1940, at the age of 27, he enlisted in the Canadian Army and completed an infantry officers' course. He took part in the Normandy landings as a company commander with the rank of major and fought in France and the Netherlands. During the Battle of the Bulge, in a personal action, he silenced two German machine-gun positions that were preventing his unit from advancing. He also showed courage in other battles, operating under German fire. For this, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order. He was offered the chance to continue his military service as commander of the First Battalion of the Queen's Own Rifles but refused because of the British government's treatment of the Jews. He returned to Canada, and when the War of Independence broke out, he met with Colonel David Marcus and Shlomo Shamir, who convinced him to come to Eretz Israel as a volunteer in Mahal - the overseas volunteers. In March 1948, he arrived in Eretz Israel using a forged British passport to bypass the Mandate government's restrictions on Jewish entry into the country. He met with David Ben-Gurion and proposed establishing a unit of Canadian volunteers within the IDF. Ben-Gurion politely replied that he would consider the proposal and sent him to Yigael Yadin, who attached him to the Harel Brigade. At first, the Palmach fighters received him with suspicion, but he quickly integrated. Yitzhak Rabin appointed him staff officer for planning. He took part in Operation Harel, Operation Yevusi, and the paving of the Burma Road.

On 5 July 1948, after spending some time developing a heavy mortar for the IDF, he was appointed by Ben-Gurion as commander of the 7th Brigade. After difficult battles on the Latrun front, he reorganized the brigade and prepared it for battle. In Operation Dekel, the brigade played a decisive role in the capture of Nazareth and in the success of the operation. In Operation Hiram, the brigade

played an important role in the conquest of the Upper Galilee. During his service in the brigade, he met Yael Lifshitz, who was the military secretary of Mordechai Maklef. Their wedding in November 1948 was attended by the entire senior command of the IDF. At the end of the fight, Ben-Gurion offered him the position of chief armored officer. Dunkelman refused because he wanted to return to civilian life. He decided to settle in Israel and work in industry and housing, but the difficulties of Israeli bureaucracy led him to return with his Israeli wife to the family business in Canada. The Bridge on the northern road, crossing Nahal Soreq, is named after Ben Dunkelman. In 1976, he published his memoirs- "Dual Allegiance", referring to his loyalty as a Canadian citizen and to the Jewish people and the State of Israel. He died in 1997 in Toronto.

Additional Figures by Branch / Role, The Sappers' Units & Prisoners of War among the Volunteers in German Captivity

Yosef Almogi

A member of the Haganah, he enlisted in the Sappers' Corps and served in Egypt, Libya, and Greece. In April 1941, he fell into German captivity and was held in Stalag VIII-B in Silesia until 1945. After the war, he served as secretary of the Haifa Workers' Council. From 1955, he served as a member of the Knesset for Mapai, and later as Minister of Housing and Development and Minister of Labor. In 1974, he was elected mayor of Haifa and served in the position until 1975. He also served as chairman of the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency. He died on 2 November 1991.

Yosef Berger

He served in Company 401, which was sent to build a railway line in France together with members of the British Expeditionary Force. He fought with the company as part of the rear guard of the retreating British Army. After the evacuation to Britain and the return to Egypt, he joined Commando Unit 51.

Asher Tibor Weinstein

He served in Company 602. He fell into German captivity and managed to escape several times. He received a certificate of commendation from King George VI.

Avraham Dayagi

He served in Company 602 in the Western Desert and was transferred with his company to Greece. He was captured by the Germans at Kalamata and held in captivity for four years.

Shlomo Lev

He served in Company 603. He fell into captivity but managed to escape and return to the ranks of the British Army. He served as an officer in the camouflage unit.

Fritz Yarden

He served in the Special Night Squads under the command of Orde Wingate. He later volunteered for the British Army and served in Company 608.

He fell into German captivity, but after several escape attempts, managed to escape. He fell in the battle of Sejera during Israel's War of Independence.

Ze'ev Leibowitz

He served in **Company 606** in the Western Desert and in Greece. With the German invasion, he withdrew from Greece and later from Crete.

Menachem Salpeter

He served in **Company 606** in the Western Desert. He was sent with his company to Greece as part of the British Expeditionary Force.

After the German invasion of Greece, he was evacuated to Crete and from there to Egypt. He continued his service in **Port Operating Unit 1039**.

Shalom Tajer

He served in Company 607 and fell into captivity in Greece. He jumped from the prisoners' train in Yugoslavia and walked on foot to Thessaloniki.

There, he organized an escape group to Turkey and managed to return to military service. He received a commendation from the King of England.

Nahum Mendel

He served in Company 605. He was transferred to Greece from the Western Desert and later managed to escape to Crete and his lecturers and continued his service.

Ze'ev Lakat

He served in Company 605. He was captured by the Germans at Kalamata and held in captivity for four years.

Oscar Efroni

He served in Company 605. He was captured by the Germans at Kalamata and held in captivity for four years.

Nathan Ostreicher

He served in Company 605. He fell into German captivity at Kalamata. Twice he escaped from captivity and was caught, but on his third escape he managed to get away.

Uri Shalit

He served in Company 606. He fell into German captivity at Kalamata. After three years in captivity, he managed to escape and reach the forces of the 3rd Armored Division of the United States Army, under the command of General Maurice Rose.

Yitzhak Ben-Aharon

He served as an officer in Company 606 and fell into German captivity in Greece. For four years, he was held as a prisoner of war together with two other Jewish officers: Captain Nathan Gershoni and Lieutenant Shimon HaCohen, in an officers' POW camp in southern Germany.

Ben-Zion Solomin

He served in Company 606 in the Western Desert. He was captured by the Germans at Kalamata and held in captivity for four years.

Naftali Yaakov Shtrasler

He served in Port Operating Unit 1039. He was captured by the Germans at Kalamata and held in captivity for four years.

Nissim Sitton

He served in Port Operating Unit 1039. He was captured at Kalamata and transferred to a labor camp in Tarnowitz. There, together with Zamirno Fisi, he identified the Australian pilot Harold Ashley Norman, who had fallen into captivity. The two exchanged identities — an act that helped the pilot escape and return to active combat service.

Brigadier Ernest Benjamin

Commander of the Jewish Brigade, who trained it and commanded it in the battles in Italy. He was also involved in the activity of its fighters in assisting the She'erit HaPletah, the surviving remnant of European Jewry after the war.

Yosef Fastak

He served as a driver in a sappers' company. He was captured by the Germans at Kalamata and held in captivity for four years.

Infantry Corps - The Buffs and the Jewish Brigade

In September 1940, the first Hebrew infantry company was established within the **Royal East Kent Regiment**, known by its nickname "The Buffs." The service of Hebrew companies in a regular infantry corps of the British Army was an important breakthrough in building a Jewish military force in Eretz Israel. Fifteen Jewish infantry companies, organized based on volunteers from the Hebrew Yishuv, became three battalions in 1942. In September 1944, with the addition of an artillery battalion, a field engineering company, and combat-support units, they became the Jewish Infantry Brigade Group, known as the Jewish Brigade.

Chaim Laskov

A company commander in the 2nd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. He fought in the War of Independence, took part in the Latrun operations, and commanded Operation Dekel, which liberated the Lower Galilee. Among other roles, he established the headquarters of the armored forces and served as commander of the Air Force, head of the Operations Directorate, commander of the Southern Command, and the fifth Chief of Staff of the IDF.

Mordechai Maklef

A company commander in the 2nd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. During the War of Independence, he commanded the Carmeli Brigade. He later served as operations officer of the Northern Command, head of the Operations Directorate, and the third Chief of Staff of the IDF.

Meir Zorea “Zaro”

A platoon commander in the 2nd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade, who received a citation in the campaign on the Senio River. He fought in the War of Independence and later served as commander of the Northern Command and head of the Operations Directorate in the IDF.

Dan Even

He served in the Sappers' Corps, in Company 601 and Company 609. He commanded Buffs Company 8. During the War of Independence, he served as commander of the Alexandroni Brigade and later as commander of the Eastern Front.

Yohanan Pelz

He served in Buffs Company 2. In the battles around the Senio River, he served as deputy commander of the 3rd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade and led the battle to capture La Giorgetta from the Germans.

Max Cohen

A company commander in the 1st Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. He later transferred to the 3rd Battalion and took part in the battles in Italy. He served as commander of the Carmeli Brigade in the IDF and later as a senior officer in the Israel Police.

Emanuel Gilboa

He served in Buffs Company 4 and was quartermaster sergeant in the 2nd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. He later served as the IDF's Chief Supply Officer.

Yehoshafat Harkabi

He served in the 2nd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. He later served as head of the IDF Intelligence Directorate.

Israel Tal “Talík”

He served in Buffs Company 12 and in the 2nd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. He fought on the Senio River front in Italy. He later became an IDF major general, served as commander of the Armored Corps, was the father of the 'Merkava tank', and later served as Deputy Chief of Staff.

Theodore “Ted” Addison

He served in Buffs Company 24, which was attached to the 3rd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. During the War of Independence, he served as communications officer of the 7th Brigade in the battle for Latrun.

David Lederman

He served in Buffs Company 28, which was attached to the 3rd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade, and took part in the campaign on the Senio River in Italy. After the war, he managed to locate his family in Romania and helped them immigrate to Israel.

Nahum Spiegel

He served in Buffs Company 14, which was attached to the 1st Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. He fought in many actions on the Senio River and was twice mentioned in dispatches for exceptional activity. He fought in Israel's War of Independence and later served as commander of the Golani Brigade in the IDF.

Ze'ev Millo

Commander of Buffs Company 16, which was attached to the 1st Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. After the war, he served as acting commander of the 1st Battalion. He fought in Israel's War of Independence.

Azaria Rapaport

He served in Buffs Company 20, which was attached to the 2nd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. He fought in Israel's War of Independence.

Ovadia Hazi

He served in Buffs Company 2, which was attached to the 1st Battalion of the Jewish Brigade, and fought in the battles on the Senio River, where he was wounded.

After the war, he helped with illegal immigration to Eretz Israel. Later, he served as camp sergeant major of the IDF General Staff camp.

Gideon Gilboa

He served in Buffs Company 12, which was attached to the 2nd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade, and fought on the Senio River.

Zvi Nagal

He served in Buffs Company 10, which was attached to the 2nd Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. He was wounded while fighting on the Senio River as the signaler of the company commander, Chaim Laskov. He later served as a communications officer in the IDF.

Gerald Kalk

He served in Buffs Company 6 and later served as transport officer of the Jewish Brigade.

Mordechai Gichon

He served in Buffs Company 20, which was attached to the 1st Battalion of the Jewish Brigade. He established the research branch in the IDF Intelligence Directorate and headed it.

Israel Carmi

He served in the Buffs, fought in the Special Interrogation Group — SIG, and later in the Jewish Brigade's battles on the Senio River in Italy. During the War of Independence, he served as commander of Battalion 9 and later as an officer in the IDF Military Police.

Lieutenant David Anthony “Toby” Van Gelder

He volunteered to serve in the Jewish Brigade during the Italian campaign and commanded a platoon in the fighting on the Senio River. In one of the battles, the platoon under his command succeeded in capturing 12 German soldiers. Later, he fell in battle.

Overseas Volunteers - Mahal

More than 4,000 volunteers came to Eretz Israel during the War of Independence in order to join the struggle for the establishment of the State of Israel. Most of the Mahal volunteers were Jews who had fought in the Second World War and felt solidarity with the Yishuv's struggle. They had military backgrounds and considerable experience, and in this way contributed to the establishment of the IDF, its branches, and its services. The volunteers served in the different corps that were taking shape during the War of Independence and contributed to the achievements of the war and to the rebirth of the State of Israel.

United States

David “Mickey” Marcus

A colonel in the United States Army and the first major general in the IDF.

In 1940, he entered active service in the United States Army, reached the rank of colonel, and served as a staff officer in the expeditionary force to Europe. He took part with an airborne division in the invasion of Normandy and later in the battles to defeat Germany. There, he encountered Jewish prisoners in concentration camps for the first time. He received important decorations, including the title Commander of the Order of the British Empire, in recognition of his work as liaison officer with British command during the war. When the struggle for Israel's independence developed into the War of Independence, Marcus accepted the invitation of the Haganah representative in the United States, Shlomo Shamir, to come and contribute his knowledge and military experience to the organization of the Israel Defense Forces and the management of its combat operations. Members of the General Staff valued him for his wise advice, guidance, and complete dedication to the struggle. He visited units and assisted the Training Bureau in preparing courses for company and battalion commanders.

In May 1948, at David Ben-Gurion's request, he submitted a proposal to create a brigade-sized force to open the road to Jerusalem. The mission was assigned to the newly formed 7th Brigade. On 28 May 1948, Ben-Gurion appointed him commander of the Jerusalem Front, with Yigal Allon appointed as his deputy. On the night of 10 June 1948, he was accidentally shot at his command camp in Abu Ghosh. After his death, he was awarded the rank of major general. He was buried in the cemetery of the United States Military Academy at West Point. Moshe Dayan and Yossi Harel attended the funeral as representatives of the IDF.

Paul Shulman

He served on a destroyer in the United States Navy in the Pacific Ocean. He was one of the founders of the Israeli Navy and became its second commander.

Rudolph Augarten

He fought as a fighter pilot in the United States Air Force. He later fought in the framework of the Israeli Air Force.

The Netherlands

Mordechai Lifshitz

During the war, he volunteered for the Free Dutch Army and took part in the liberation of the Netherlands from German occupation. After the war, he returned to Israel, enlisted in the IDF, and fell in the War of Independence.

Moshe Ze'e-Liao

During the war, he volunteered for the Free Dutch Army. He took part in the invasion of Normandy and in the liberation of his hometown, Arnhem. After the war, he returned to Israel and took part in the War of Independence.

Czechoslovakia

Chaim Efta

At the beginning of the war, he enlisted in the Czechoslovak Army and served in an artillery unit. After the war, he returned to Israel.

Mordechai Miklos Spiegel

He volunteered for the British Army and later joined the Czechoslovak Army.

Women Volunteers of the Yishuv and Combat-Support Personnel

The Women's Corps - ATS / WAAF

During the Second World War, more than 5,000 women from the Jewish Yishuv in Eretz Israel volunteered for the British Army. They wanted to contribute to the war effort to defeat the enemy that threatened to destroy the Jewish people, and they showed determination and sacrifice. Most of the women enlisted in the ATS - Auxiliary Territorial Service, the women's auxiliary corps of the British Army. There they served as storekeepers, clerks, drivers, combat ambulance drivers, nurses, and in additional roles.

Several hundred women enlisted in the WAAF - Women's Auxiliary Air Force of the Royal Air Force, serving in intelligence roles as observers and as radar and Morse-code operators.

Some of them served as officers and later helped establish the Women's Corps of the IDF.

Sonia Peres

Sonia Peres, née Gelman, was born in the town of Mizocz in Poland in 1924. In 1927, Sonia, her sister, and her mother joined the head of the family, Yaakov Gelman, one of the founders of Ben Shemen. Sonia grew up and was educated at the agricultural school in Ben Shemen, where she also met Shimon Perski, later Shimon Peres, her first boyfriend. Shimon joined a group of graduates who founded Kibbutz Alumot, while Sonia remained in the village to complete her high school studies and take her matriculation exams. At the same time, she joined the Haganah and took part in secret military training without her parents' knowledge. After completing her studies in 1942, she decided to enlist in the British Army, despite her father's opposition. Like many of her friends at the time, she saw her contribution to the war effort as the urgent duty of a daughter of the Jewish people facing an existential threat.

After reporting to the recruitment office at Sarafand - today Tzrifin, and completing a short driving course, she was recruited into the ATS as a practical nurse.

Her role was to assist the medical staff with everything needed to treat the wounded in a field hospital or in improvised casualty centers set up in the field, mainly in the Western Desert during the battles in North Africa. From 1942 to 1943, she served in this role at British Hospital No. 63. Caring for the wounded required her to confront complex medical and emotional situations. On one occasion, she openly protested an antisemitic remark made by her commander. She was put on military trial and transferred to a base at Mina, near Cairo. Sonia was then sent on a course in driving and armored-vehicle mechanics and received a license to drive heavy vehicles of up to three tons. From 1943 until the end of the war, she drove convoys of tanks and military trucks from the base at Tel el-Kebir in Egypt to Allied bases in Beirut. In May 1945, she was discharged from the ATS, returned to Eretz Israel, and shortly afterward married Shimon Peres.

From then until the day of her death, Sonia devoted her life to voluntary work in organizations supporting children with special needs, assisted IDF widows and orphans, and even opened her home to many of them. Sonia acted modestly and guarded the privacy of her life and family carefully, despite Shimon Peres's extensive political career. She died on 20 January 2011.

Mina Ben-Zvi

One of the first women to enlist in the British Army. She was commissioned as an officer and commanded a women's company in Egypt.

During the War of Independence, she served as the first commander of the IDF Women's Corps.

Esther Herlitz

She served in the first computer unit in the region. She was commissioned as an officer and served as deputy commander of ATS Company 531 in Egypt. Later, she served as a member of the Knesset and as Israel's ambassador to Denmark.

Tzipora Gove

She served in the WAAF at the Geneifa airfield in Egypt.

Rivka Guber

She served in the ATS. She lost both of her sons in the War of Independence and became known as "the Mother of the Sons."

Alice Hatzor

She served in the ATS as a driver in Egypt.

Rachel Caspi

A recruitment officer in the WAAF.

Aviva Gil

She served as an aircraft mechanic in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force — WAAF at the Geneifa airfield in Egypt.

Yafa Tavuah

She served in the ATS in Egypt. She was an activist in **Lehi** and was involved in the assassination of **Lord Moyne**. During the War of Independence, she served as an ambulance driver.

Esther Yanai

She served as a transport driver in the ATS in Egypt.

Rota Ofer

She served as a driver in the ATS in Egypt.

Combat-Support Personnel: Transport, Medicine, and Ordnance

During the war, many volunteers from the Yishuv were assigned to units that supported the fighting forces: transport, maintenance, supply, medicine, and the inspection of transportation routes.

Israel Barganov-Barav

Commander of Transport Companies 462 and 179. He served in North Africa and Italy. During the War of Independence, he served as commander of the IDF Transport Service.

Ben Edelman

Commander of Water Transport Company 405. He served in the Western Desert. During the War of Independence, he served as administrative officer of the Southern Front.

Leslie Pinchas Aelion

Commander of Transport Company 178. He served in North Africa, Malta, and Italy, and later served as commander of the Jewish Brigade's transport unit.

Reuven Eiland

A driver in Water Transport Company 405. He served in the Western Desert.

Yosef Ahiaz

A vehicle mechanic in Transport Companies 405 and 178. He served in Africa and Italy. He was aboard the ship Arinpura when it sank and managed to survive.

Asher Barked

A sergeant major in Transport Company 405. He served in North Africa.

Harry Yaffe

Commander of Transport Company 462. He served in the Western Desert. 139 of his soldiers drowned on the way to Malta when the ship Erinpura was sunk.

During the War of Independence, he organized the convoys to Jerusalem.

Dov Shemer “Shmurak”

An officer in Transport Company 462. He served in the Western Desert and survived the sinking of the Arinpura. He became company commander during the liberation of Italy. During the War of Independence, he was responsible for organizing and maintaining the convoys to Jerusalem. He later served as commander of the IDF Ordnance Corps.

Chaim Est

A driver in Transport Company 462. He served in the Western Desert and was among the survivors of the sinking of the Arinpura.

Shimshon Mardosky

He served as a driver in Transport Company 462 in the Western Desert. He was among those who fell when the Arinpura was sunk on 1 May 1943 by German bombers.

Yehoshua Messerari-Darhan

A driver in Transport Company 462. He served in the Western Desert. He was seriously wounded in the attack on the Arinpura and died of his wounds in a hospital in Benghazi.

Uri Matisis

A driver in Transport Company 178. He served in the Western Desert and in Europe. After the fighting ended, he took part in Bricha operations.

Amir Gilboa

A driver in Transport Company 178. He served in the Western Desert and in Europe. He later became a Hebrew poet.

Reuven Dan

A driver in Transport Company 179. He served in the Western Desert and in Italy.

Dr. Gideon Mer

He served as a medical consultant on viral diseases. Thanks to his research and instructions, the lives of thousands of Allied soldiers were saved in the Middle East, Burma, and the Pacific theater.

Dr. Chaim Sheba

A physician who served at British Army Hospital No. 66, south of Gaza. During the War of Independence, he served as the first Chief Medical Officer of the IDF. The Sheba Medical Center is named after him.

Yosef Kreizel

Commander of an ordnance company at the Abbassia base in Cairo. He served as an engineer on Montgomery's staff at El Alamein and as commander of the ordnance unit in the Jewish Brigade. He was among the founders of the IDF Ordnance Corps.

Shmuel Naaman

A sergeant major in Sappers' Company 401, with which he served in France. He later served as an officer and commander of Transport Unit 650. He took part in the Allied invasion of Italy and in the battle of Monte Cassino.

Dr. Ferdinand Zangen

A physician with the besieged force at Anzio. For his actions, he was awarded the Military Cross.

The Air Force

Around 2,000 volunteers from the Hebrew Yishuv enlisted in the Royal Air Force. They served in all professions, roles, and theaters of war, including the Far East. Around 700 women from the Yishuv volunteered for the women's auxiliary corps of the air force, known as the WAAF, where they served in a variety of roles.

Amichai Honig

The first Hebrew fighter pilot. He served in No. 14 Squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force and fought on the Western Desert front. As part of No. 603 Squadron, he took part in attacks on ships along the western coast of Greece. During one of these attacks, his aircraft was shot down and crashed.

Aharon Remez

The son of David Remez, one of the leaders of the Hebrew Yishuv. He was a fighter pilot in the Royal Air Force and served on the European front. After the war, he helped bring Holocaust survivors to Eretz Israel. He later served as the first commander of the Israeli Air Force.

Dan Tolkowsky

A Spitfire pilot. He fought in Italy, southern France, and Greece. He was one of the founders of the Israeli Air Force and served as its commander during the Sinai Campaign.

Ezer Weizman

He served as a driver in Egypt. After the death of his cousin Michael, son of Israel's first president, Chaim Weizmann, who had been a British pilot, Ezer Weizman completed a pilot course and served as a pilot. He later served as commander of the Israeli Air Force, Minister of Defense, and the seventh President of the State of Israel.

Alex Ziloni

He served as a technical officer in the Royal Air Force and as commander of the maintenance branch at a flight school. After the war, he returned to Eretz Israel. He was among the founders of the Israeli Air Force, served as the first chief of staff of the Air Service, and commanded the air force base at Tel Nof.

Mordechai “Modi” Alon

He served in the British Army in Egypt. He trained as a pilot and took part in battles in Italy. He was among the founders of the Israeli Air Force and served as commander of 101 Squadron during the War of Independence. He fell in battle.

Yehoshua Gilutz

He served as an officer and engineer in the Transport Command of the Royal Air Force. He took part in the campaign in the Southeast Asian theater. He was among the founders of the Israeli Air Force and served as commander of the Ramat David air base during the War of Independence.

The Navy

Many members of the Hebrew Yishuv volunteered for the British Royal Navy to contribute to the war effort against Nazi Germany and the Axis powers. They were dispersed among various units of the navy and the British merchant fleet, which had been mobilized for wartime needs. Their experience and achievements left a mark on Israeli seamanship and strongly influenced the establishment of the Israeli Navy.

Zvi Avidah

He spent most of his service in the framework of the British Navy in Egypt and the Western Desert.

Meir Kanterji

The son of one of the founders of Hadera, a member of the Haganah, and one of the first members of the Palmach. Out of a desire to take part in the war against the Nazi enemy, he volunteered for the British Navy. He spent most of his service in Egypt.

Shmuel “Sammy” Ofer

He served as a junior officer on a minesweeper based in Alexandria, Egypt. During the War of Independence, he served in the Israeli Navy and was a graduate of its first naval officers' course.

Edmond Brilliant-Halevi

He served as a mechanic at the naval base in Massawa, Eritrea, and in Alexandria, Egypt. He was among the founders of the Israeli Navy.

Meir Ruf

With the establishment of the state, he was among the first pilots in the Israeli Air Force.

David Schweiger

He served as the operator of a service vessel in the port of Alexandria, Egypt. He was awarded the British Empire Medal.

Paratroopers and Special Units in the British Army

In November 1942, the first reports about the destruction of European Jewry reached Eretz Israel. At that time, the idea arose to parachute people behind enemy lines and establish contact with the Jews of Europe, to encourage them to organize resistance against the Nazis, and to train people who could be activated with Allied assistance. At first, the proposal was rejected by the British, but in 1943 they agreed to the plan. Around 250 men and women volunteered for the paratrooper program. After strict selection, 37 fighters were trained, with emphasis on their countries of origin and their movement connections. They parachuted into Yugoslavia, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, France, Austria, and Italy. Their mission had two aims: on the one hand, participation in the British war effort; on the other, establishing contact with and organizing the She'erit HaPletah - the surviving remnant of European Jewry. During 1943–1944, 37 men and women were parachuted onto European soil. Twelve of them were captured, and seven were executed. Their mission became a symbol of the courage of the Hebrew Yishuv.

Hannah Szenes

A poet and writer. She volunteered for the British Army's paratrooper missions behind enemy lines. She parachuted into Yugoslavia and joined a local partisan group. After several months, when she crossed the border into Hungary, which had already been occupied by Nazi Germany, she was captured by Hungarian soldiers who supported the Nazi regime. On 7 November 1944, after severe torture intended to extract information from her in vain, she was executed after a field trial in the courtyard of the prison in Budapest, the city of her birth.

Peretz Rosenberg

The first of the Yishuv paratroopers. In May 1943, he joined Tito's partisans and fought with them on Yugoslav soil. He served as the radio operator of the British unit and as the liaison between Tito's headquarters and the British headquarters in Cairo.

Enzo Sereni

He volunteered to reach the Jews of Italy. After parachuting, he was captured, interrogated, and transferred to a prisoner-of-war camp in Germany, and from there to the Dachau extermination camp, where he was executed.

Dr. Israel Meirick

A doctor in the British Army. He was parachuted into Yugoslavia as a military physician ten times and treated Tito's partisans.

Dan Laner

He was parachuted by the British into Yugoslavia and fought in the ranks of Tito's partisans for about eight months against the Germans. After the war, he returned to Eretz Israel, fought in Israel's wars, and became a major general in the IDF.

Yitzhak "Mano" Ben-Efraim

He was parachuted into Romania, where he helped rescue Allied aircrews. At the same time, he saved Jews and helped arrange their immigration to Eretz Israel.

Shaikhe Dan

He was parachuted into **Romania**, where he helped rescue British and American pilots who had landed there, and organized the immigration of Jews to Eretz Israel.

Adolphe Rabinovitch

A fighter in the framework of the Special Operations Executive - SOE, who was parachuted into occupied Europe seven times. He was captured in France and sent to a concentration camp, where he was murdered.

The Special Units

Volunteering for Engineering and Artillery Units

Following the Jewish Agency's call for the mobilization of the Jewish Yishuv, skilled professionals of all ages volunteered for the army. In mid-June 1940, it was decided to concentrate the Palestinian volunteers with technical professions - who until then had been scattered among various British engineering units throughout the Middle East into special Eretz-Israeli units. They worked in mapping, port operation, and bomb disposal, and made a significant contribution to the Allied war effort on different fronts in North Africa and Europe. Within the framework of the British Army, several artillery units were also established from volunteers of the Hebrew Yishuv. The first was the Coastal Artillery Battery at Stella Maris on Mount Carmel in Haifa. In 1941, an anti-aircraft artillery unit was established, and in 1944, the 200th Field Artillery Regiment was formed as part of the Jewish Brigade, together with personnel from the coastal anti-aircraft batteries.

Emanuel Shahar

An officer in Engineering Unit 743 of the Jewish Brigade. He fought in northern Italy. He was one of the founders of the IDF Engineering Corps and served as its first commander.

Aharon Cohen

An officer in the engineering company of the 11th Armored Brigade in England. He served in Company 870 and later as deputy commander of Company 743. He fought with the Jewish Brigade on the Alfonsine front and in the operation to cross the Senio River.

Ephraim Lahav

He served in the Royal Engineers in Africa and Italy. He joined the Jewish Brigade, was among the founders of the IDF Engineering Corps, and served as commander of the corps.

Hillel Aldag

He served in the Royal Engineers. He was a platoon commander in a camouflage company of the Engineering Corps in the Eighth Army, and later an officer in the Jewish Brigade. He was among the founders of the IDF Engineering Corps and served as commander of the corps.

Shimon "Savia" Sirkin

Commander of Port Operating Company 1039, Operated in ports of the Western Desert and was responsible for unloading ships in the ports of the Suez Canal, Alexandria, Tripoli, and Benghazi.

Yitzhak Rapoport

An officer in Engineering Company 738, and later commander of the company. He was involved in building fortifications at El Alamein, clearing obstacles in Italy, and after the fighting served as military commander of Venice.

Gabriel Tibor

An officer in Survey Unit 524. He served in the Western Desert, the Middle East, and Italy.

Shmuel Admon

He served in an anti-aircraft artillery battery in Eretz Israel. When the Jewish Brigade was established, he joined the 200th Artillery Regiment and became regimental sergeant major. After the war, he completed an artillery officer's course in Britain. He was among the founders of the IDF Artillery Corps and served as its first commander. He later served as chief of staff of Northern Command.

Yaakov Meidad

He served in a coastal artillery unit in Haifa. He was among the founders of the IDF Artillery Corps and commander of the artillery school - Training Base 9.

Avraham Yoffe

He served in an anti-aircraft artillery unit in Eretz Israel and Cyprus. After completing an officers' course, he served in Transport Unit 405 in Benghazi. Later, he served as commander of the Southern Command in the IDF.

Meir Ilan

He served in the artillery corps of the British Army. He was among the founders of the IDF Artillery Corps, and later served as commander of the corps, head of the Quartermaster Directorate, and director general of the Ministry of Development.

Shalom Idon

He served in the coastal artillery battery at Bat Galim. When the Jewish Brigade was established, he joined the 200th Artillery Regiment, with which he fought in the battles in Italy. During the War of Independence, he served as a battery commander and was later appointed Chief Artillery Officer.

Dan Hiram

He served in the coastal artillery battery on Mount Carmel. When the Jewish Brigade was established, his unit was attached to the 200th Artillery Regiment, which became part of the Jewish Infantry Brigade Group. He took part in the campaign on the Senio River in Italy. He was among the founders of the IDF Artillery Corps and later served as commander of the corps.

Final Display

The tour ends in Wing 5, with a panoramic display that summarizes the museum's exhibitions. It presents the role of the male and female fighters in the rebirth of the Jewish people, the IDF, and the State of Israel, and in building its foundations. The display also directs visitors toward messages of hope and peace. As visitors ascend toward the exit from the exhibition, they will encounter a prayer written by the first Chief Rabbi of the Yishuv, Rabbi Yitzhak "Isaac" HaLevi Herzog - father of Chaim Herzog, Israel's sixth president, and grandfather of Isaac Herzog, Israel's eleventh president. Alongside it will appear a quotation from a poem by Mordechai Zeira: "Song of Thanksgiving", written in 1944 during his service in the British Army. After stopping near the embedded image of Chaim Herzog, Israel's sixth president, we will read the quotation that accompanies it: "I was privileged to see the Jewish people emerge from the terrifying depths of the Holocaust and rise to the heights of the sovereign State of Israel, in Eretz Israel." Chaim Herzog, *Derech Chaim*, 1997

Farewell to the Group

The volunteers of the Yishuv in the Second World War joined hundreds of thousands of their Jewish brothers and sisters in the armies of the world in a historic campaign. During this campaign, they helped destroy the threat to the existence of the Jewish people and to the free spirit of humanity. They returned from the front after enduring the terror of battle. They met the survivors and displaced persons, and reached out to them in uniform, wearing the badge of the Jewish Brigade. They helped smuggle them as illegal immigrants, trained them, supported them in every possible situation, and brought them, by every route available to Eretz Israel. They planted in them the vision of fulfillment and national rebirth. They laid the foundations for the establishment of the IDF and all its branches, helped turn it into a skilled and professional army, and passed on to its soldiers their courage and fighting spirit. What they had gained in the war for the world, they proved again in the war for their home.

We remember the Jewish woman fighter who took up arms; the Jewish soldier who assumed command; the partisan who charged forward; the parachutist who did not return; the pilot, the captain, the artilleryman, the driver, the doctor and the nurse; the engineers and transport personnel; the people of the shadows and the undergrounds; and the armored fighters who pushed forward on every front and became a source of inspiration.

Here, at Latrun, in the Ayalon Valley, at the heart of the country and its landscapes, in a museum that symbolizes more than anything else the heroism of the people and the state, we confront a central memory of the Second World War: a war that burned the Holocaust of the Jews into national and international consciousness, and often fixed the Jews only as helpless victims, detached from the fate and struggle of the other nations.

As we leave the museum, we can say with confidence that the chapter about the contribution of Jewish women and men fighters to the defeat of the Nazi regime and the Axis powers — and to the rescue of Jews and human beings wherever possible, through every form of struggle — has been rewritten and completed.

Selected Questions for Discussion and Reflection after the Tour Suitable for every age group

What messages does the museum seek to convey?

1. The story of Jewish fighting in World War II changes historical consciousness and completes the story of the Holocaust: the Jew was not only a persecuted victim, but also a fighter and attacker.
 2. The proportion of Jewish volunteers, enlistment, and participation in decisive battles of World War II was the highest in the world relative to the size of the Jewish population.
 3. World War II demonstrated the solidarity and patriotism of Jews toward the armies and countries in which they enlisted and served, across all branches and fronts.
 4. The participation of Jewish women in the Second World War on such a large scale was an expression not only of the feminist revolution of those years, but also of their courage, abilities in every role, and determination to risk their lives against all odds.
 5. World War II included, on the one hand, the story of the Holocaust and the human tragedy of the Jewish people and of humanity as a whole; and on the other hand, the immense military, technological, and strategic power of the war. The role of Jews in both historical arenas shows their strength not only as those who endured, but also as those who led.
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Questions for Discussion

- Did you leave the museum with a sense of belonging? Identity? Frustration? A different kind of connection? Why?
- This war brought together Jewish men and women fighters from all communities, cultures, and armies around the world. What are the implications of this for finding a common denominator? For strengthening the connection with the past? For visitors who are not connected to the heritage of the Jewish people and the State of Israel, or for visitors who are not Jewish?
- Which figure will stay with you after leaving the museum? Which story did you connect with most strongly? Why?
- Which front aroused particular interest in you? Are the combat stories presented in that section connected to this interest? Do you have a personal or family connection to the front, army, or stories presented?
- How does this museum strengthen the shaping of Jewish collective memory of the Holocaust and empower the memory of Jewish resistance - specifically through the perspective of the October 7, 2023, catastrophe? Did you find any connections?
- After learning about the partisans, underground fighters, and rebels in the ghettos and camps - could you imagine yourself joining one of these frameworks and acting within it, had you been in their place? Even under unimaginable conditions on the battlefield, with death waiting at every moment and around every corner?
- Did you encounter a story of dual loyalty — loyalty to the army and country in whose name the fighter enlisted, alongside loyalty to their Jewish origin? Does such military, national, and cultural duality exist today as well?

SHALOM

