

Letter from the President

This year, CBI will be observing **Yom HaShoah on April 15 at 2PM**. Yom HaShoah, (Holocaust Remembrance Day) is the day of commemoration for the six million Jews who were murdered as a result of the actions carried out by Nazi Germany. The horrors of the Holocaust should never be forgotten. To the survivors, the Holocaust remains real and present but for many others the Holocaust is part of ancient history. We confront the questions of how could it happen and could it happen again.

This year we are honored to have Dr. David E. Fishman as our guest speaker. He earned his B.A. from Yeshiva University and his PH.D from Harvard University. Currently a professor at Yeshiva University, he is the author of many books including the ***The Book Smugglers*** which will be the topic for our Yom HaShoah Service. Susan Bass, a fellow congregant, heard Dr. Fishman speak at Hofstra University and was most impressed with his lecture. Susan felt that he would be a great guest speaker and has organized this program and is the chairperson for this event.

After hearing about ***The Book Smugglers***, I decided to read it and could not put the book down. We are in for a great treat. The book is about the Lithuanian Jews in Vilna. Vilna was once considered the Jerusalem of Eastern Europe. Vilna was a city of Jewish culture encompassing famous Jewish authors, musicians, composers and craftsman. The Nazis were intent on destroying Jewish culture. They took torahs and used the parchment for shoes. They would melt down the torah crowns for the silver. During this time period Jews were put into ghettos and many ended up in concentration camps. Dr. Fishman tells the story of how these Lithuanian Jews risked their lives to preserve so many Jewish treasures. They would literally smuggle books under their clothes removing them from the ghetto. They also hid many of these valuable items in basements in Vilna. They wanted to preserve documents for evidence to prosecute the Nazis after the war. Eventually, the communists liberated Vilna. Unfortunately, the communists also wanted to steal the Jewish treasures and turned against the Jews. Once again the Jews had to smuggle their books and treasures to try to preserve their Jewish culture. Many of these items ended up in the United States and Israel.

I am looking forward to meeting Dr. Fishman and hearing him share his personal experiences. It will be a phenomenal event that should not be missed.

Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, April 15th at 2PM**. Bring your friends and family. I hope to have a full house.



Richie