Ferro
Fountain of
The Righteous
Biographies
Yelena Pechenezhskaya

Yelena Pechenezhskaya lived in Minsk with her Jewish husband, Levin Pechenezhskaya, when the Germans invaded the Soviet Union. Yelena's husband was able to escape, but her sister in law, Fanya Stolov and her thirteen-year-old daughter, Matus, was interned in the ghetto. From 1941-1942, Yelena sheltered Fanya and Matus, who managed to escape from the ghetto. Yelena was also active in the communist underground and was able to help Fanya and Matus reach the partisans in 1942. Later, Yelena took in Esfir Idelchik in 1943, and helped him reach the partisans as well. Fanya, Matus and Esfir all survived the war and remained in close contact with Yelena until the mid-1960s.¹

Yuzefa Putan

Leonid Putan was a student in mathematics and physics at the University in Minsk. In August 1941, he joined the underground and personally assisted his Jewish friends to safety. Putan was able to obtain false identity papers by acquiring the university’s official stamp and university diplomas. He gave out forged diplomas to eight of his Jewish friends and took those in immediate danger to distant villages. Putan and his mother, Yuzefa, also sheltered many Jews in their home. The Putans risked their lives to safely hid Irina Rukhovets and her four-year-old daughter, Inessa. After the war, Putan maintained friendships with the Jews he rescued, namely Lyubov Brish, Valentina Svoyatsky, her sister Sofya, and the Rukhovets.²

Matriona Adamovich

Matriona Adamovich was the nursemaid to the Finkelshtein’s two daughters, Ania and Zoya. After the German invasion, the Riva and Naum Finkelshtein joined the Red Army leaving their daughters with Matriona. She and the two girls were sheltered by the Vasilchonok family, who protected and cared for them. Ania decided to join the partisan movement, but was killed only a few months later. Zoya remained with the Matriona and the Vasilchonoks until liberation in 1944. Zoya was reunited with her mother after the war and returned to Minsk. Matriona went on to become the nurse to Zoya’s daughter in the 1960s.³

Novitzkaya Family (Tatyana and Galina)

Tatyana Novitzkaya and her daughter, Galina, from the village of Guzolovka, Belarus, took in a Jewish mother and her four-year-old daughter and hid them throughout the war. In 1941, an acquaintance of Tayana asked her to hide Irina Rukhovets and her four-year-old daughter, Inessa, in her home. The Novitzkayas knew the family was Jewish, but cared for them despite the danger of being caught by their neighbors and the Nazis. In 1943, all adult women and men were sent to work outside the village as forced laborers. Galina, only eleven years old, protected and cared for Inessa while the mothers went to work. Before the end of the war, the Novitzkayas and Rukhovets went into hiding in the forest until they were liberated by the Red Army. The two families remained close friends for years after the liberation. For Tatyana and Galina’s heroic actions, Yad Vashem recognized them as Righteous Among the Nations on November 12, 1998.⁴

BELGIUM

Andree Geulen-Herscovici

Andree Geulen-Herscovici was a part of the Belgian Resistance movement during the war. In 1943, Razel Lederman approached Andree to help her two daughters, Marguerite and Annette. Andree took in the young children and delivered them to safety at the home of a Catholic family. For more then two years, Andree collected Jewish children from their families and moved them to monasteries and Christian households. Andree cared for
Marguerite and Annette until 1946. Andree and the Committee for the Defense of the Jews saved more than 1,000 Jewish children during Nazi occupation of Belgium.⁵

**Jean & Josine Opdebeeck**

In 1942, Joseph and Ruchia Thoraschreiber asked their housekeeper to help them hide their two-year-old daughter, Liliane. Liliane was brought to Jean and Josine Opdebeek's house in Anderlecht, Brussels. Jean Opdebeeck headed the underground organization and towards the end of the war he helped hide English pilots in his furniture workshop. They took care of Liliane as if she was their own daughter. The Opdebeeck also took in Marguerite Rotenberg after her hiding place was too dangerous. After the war, Liliane still remained in contact with Josine and still regarded her as her second mother.⁶

**BOSNIA**

**Mustafa & Zejneba Hardaga**

In April 1941, The Kavilio's home was destroyed when the Germans began bombing Sarajevo during the invasion of Yugoslavia. When they fled to the hills they came across their Muslim friend, Mustafa Hardaga. He immediately offered them to stay at his house. The Kavilios became a part of the Hardaga family, declaring, "our home is your home." The Kavilio family stayed with the Hardagas until he was arrested and imprisoned by the Croatian Ustasha. He was taken to clear the roads from snow when Zejneba found him and began to bring the prisoners food. Josef Kavilio managed to escape imprisonment and went back to stay with the Hardagas. The Kavilio family eventually fled to the mountains and joined the partisans. After the war, they stayed with the Hardagas until they immigrated to Israel. In 1984, Yad Vashem recognized the Hardaga family as Righteous Among the Nations.⁷

**BULGARIA**

**Stoyan Popgueorguiev (Sofia Metropolitan Stefan)**

Metropolitan Stefan, born Stoyan Popueorguiev, was the Head of the Sofian Church in Bulgaria as well as the highest ranking Bulgarian Church official during the Holocaust. Stefan actively opposed the anti-Jewish policies under the Fascist Bulgarian regime. He was outspoken against the Bulgarian alliance with the Third Reich and wrote articles criticizing Hitler and the Nazis. Stefan intervened many times to halt the deportations of the Jews living in Sophia. He pressured the Bulgarian King by threatening to instruct all churches to shelter Jews. Because of Stefan's demands, he was able to postpone the deportation of 800 Jews living in Sophia. As the head of the Church, Stefan was able to persuade the Bulgarian Church not accept the anti-Jewish laws and protect all Jews who converted to Christianity. For Stefan's courageous efforts to save Bulgarians Jews, He was recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations on November 11, 2001.⁸

**Konstantin Markov (Metropolitan Kiril)**

Metropolitan Kiril, born Konstantin Markov, was the Head of the Church in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. He openly condemned antisemitism and the leaders of the Bulgarian government who supported Hitler's racial policies against Jews. In March 1943, Kiril was able to halt the deportation of 1,500 Jews living in Plovdiv. He sent a telegram to the King pleading to release the Jewish prisoners and threatened to start a campaign of civil obedience by personally lying down in front of the railroad tracks to stop the deportations. Kiril was successful in his mission to save the Jews of Plovdiv. On November 11, 2001, Kiril was honored by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations for his brave acts to save the Jews of Bulgaria. ⁹
CHINA

Feng Shan Ho

After Austria’s annexation to Nazi Germany, many Jews were under intense pressure to obtain entry visas to leave the country. Feng Shan Ho worked in the Chinese Consulate in Germany and began issuing visas for Jews to emigrate to Shanghai. Many made use of their visas and traveled by boat from Italy or through the Soviet Union. Ho ignored the instructions of the Chinese Ambassador, and issued visas on a large scale. He received a “demerit” in 1939, for his insubordination for providing entry visas to so many Jewish refugees. Ho retired in 1973, and died in 1997. On August 7, 2000, Yad Vashem awarded him the title of Righteous Among the Nations for his courageous acts of kindness.10

CZECH REPUBLIC

Hanna Malkova & Family

Hanna Malkova was a widow living with her daughter Eva at the time of the war. Her husband’s friend Cizkova was a member of an anti-fascist organization, along with Dr. Viktor Kaufmann. Viktor’s sister, Heda Kaufmann, escaped deportation to Theresienstadt and went into hiding. Cizkova was able to help Heda and Viktor’s wife, Irma, to refuge at Hanna Malkova’s house. She sheltered the two women until the end of the war. Heda remained in close contact with Hanna after the war. In her memoir, she spoke of about Hanna’s courageous act of rescue.11

DEMARK

Henry Christen and Ellen Margrethe Thomsen

Henry Christen Thomsen and wife, Ellen, were innkeepers in the village of Snekkersten. The Thomsens were active members in the resistance and their inn became a clandestine route to Sweden. It became the meeting point for fisherman who transferred Jews in their boats. When the number of Jewish refugees increased, Henry got a boat and made runs to Sweden himself. Thomsen was also assisted by many members of the village. Dr. Jorgen Gersfelt acted as a chauffeur, driving many Jews to shelters and to the boats. Thomsen was interrogated by the Gestapo and eventually arrested in 1944. He was sent to the Neuengamme concentration camp in Germany, where he died at the age of thirty-eight.12

The People of Denmark

When the Danish Jews were being persecuted and the Nazis threatened for the removal of 7,800 Jews from Denmark, the Danes responded by organizing the most spectacular act of rescue during the Holocaust. Led by King Christian X, the entire Jewish population was ferried to Sweden in 1943. Only 500 Jews were captured and unable to make it across the channel. The Danish Jews returned to Denmark after the war and found their homes, businesses, and schools intact.13

FRANCE

Kate Lipner
In September 1942, seventeen-year-old Kate Lipner, agreed to shelter two children from the Spruch family. Moses, age ten, and his little sister hid in Lipner’s apartment attic for over two years until they were able to reunited with their mother in Spain. Kate displayed constant heroism demonstrating that young individuals can make a difference. Kate immigrated to Chicago shortly after the war.14

**Father Raymond Vancourt**

Father Raymond Vancourt was a highly respected professor at the University of Lille when he hid Irene Kahn, her aunt, uncle and cousins, as well as many young Jewish refugees in his home. It was not until the end of the war that Irene Kahn learned of his involvement in the underground Resistance. Yad Vashem recognized Vancourt, his cousin, and housekeeper, Raymonde Lombard, as Righteous Among the Nations. 15

**Le Chambon-sur-Lignon**

From December 1940 to September 1944, the inhabitants of the French village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, led by Pastor Andre Trocme of the Reformed Church of France, his wife Magda, and his assistant Pastor Edward Theis, and the villages on the surrounding plateau provided refuge for an estimated 5,000 people. This number included an estimated 3,000-3,500 Jews who were fleeing from the Vichy authorities and the Nazis. The residents of these villages offered shelter in private homes, in hotels, on farms, and in schools. They forged identification and ration cards for the refugees, and in some cases guided them across the border to neutral Switzerland. These actions of rescue were unusual during the period of the Holocaust insofar as they involved the majority of the population of an entire region.16

**Andre & Magda Trocme**

Pastor André Trocmé was the spiritual leader of the Protestant congregation in the village of Le Chambon sur Lignon in the département of Haute-Loire in Southeastern France. When deportations of Jews began in France in 1942, Trocme urged his congregation to shelter all Jews. The village became flooded with Jews seeking a safe place to hide until they crossed into the Swiss border. Despite the danger, many residents of Chambon sur Lignon took in Jewish refugees and housed them in local farms, public institutions and orphanages. Magda actively located families willing to accommodate Jewish refugees and prepared the town’s many schools for increased enrollment. Trocme was threatened many times by the Vichy government to comply with the anti-Jewish policies. However, the Gendarmes never took action to arrest any residents of the town. Around 5,000 Jews passed through Le Chambon and surrounding villages until liberation in 1945. On January 5, 1971, Yad Vashem recognized the Reverend André Trocmé and his wife, Magda, as Righteous among the Nations as well as 32 other residents of Le Chambon sur Lignon.17

**GERMANY**

**Johannes "Hans" Fittko**

In October 1940, Emergency Rescue Committee recruited Johannes “Hans” Fittko, an accepted journalist and activist against the Hitler regime, and his wife, Lisa. Between 1940-1941, The couple helped organize a safe route to help political refugees cross safely from occupied France into Spain. This included noted people in arts, literature, science, as well as Jewish refugees.
The safe route went from Banyuls sur Mer, France, across the Pyrenees Mountains to port Bou, Spain. The Fittkos saw more than a hundred people to safety across the mountains.\textsuperscript{18}

**Paula Huelle**

Paula Huelle was a widow and owner of a tobacco store in Berlin when she began bribing a Gestapo official to save Jewish children from deportation. She learned when registration of the Jews was to take place and would shelter the children in her home. Fearing for the lives of the children, she purchased property in the countryside and took the children to the farm. She sold all her jewelry and used her savings to provide the children food. After the war, Huelle immigrated to Arlington Heights, Illinois. She passed away in 1992.\textsuperscript{19}

**Liesel & Luise Gansz**

In 1942, when the Nazis closed Jewish schools and forbade Jewish children to receive an education, Charlotte Herzfeld, a school teacher, defied the Nazi order and continued to tutor children of Jewish forced laborers. Tragically, Herzfeld's parents committed suicide after being told they were to be deported. When the SS came to her home, she escaped and fled to her non-Jewish friend, Liesel Ganz. Liesel and her mother, Luise, took Herzfeld in and arranged shelter for her at a friends home. They provided food and cared for her until the end of the war. Herzfeld and Liesel remained close friends until Liesel passed away in 1971. Herzfeld and Liesel's graves stand side by side.\textsuperscript{20}

**Elsa Ledetsch and Gisela Reissenberg**

During the last major transport of the remaining Jews in Berlin, Rachela Schipper was given a note by an unknown woman with an address of an acquaintance, Elsa Ledetsch. On February 28, 1943, Elsa was approached by Schipper and her daughter, Jenny, at her home and asked Elsa for help. Elsa decided to take Rachela into her home and Elsa's daughter, Gisela, took in Jenny. A few weeks later, Gisela took in another Jewish couple, Gustav and Irma Compart. Gisela hardly had room for three extra people in her tiny apartment, but they made due by sleeping together in the same bed and extra chairs. The Schippers and the Comparts were unable to leave the homes of Gisela and Elsa. Despite the danger of being suspected by their neighbors, Gisela and Elsa fed and took care of the Jewish refugees until they found a new hideout in a farmer's home outside of Berlin. On October 19, 1987, Yad Vashem awarded Elsa Ledetsch and Gisela Reissenberg, as Righteous of the Nations for their honorable acts during the war.\textsuperscript{21}

**Kurt Seligmann**

Kurt Seligmann lived in Berlin, Germany and was considered by the Nazis a mixed race because his father was of Jewish origin. Because Seligmann married a non-Jewish Christian woman and raised his children as Christians, he was protected from Nazi persecution in Berlin. After the rise of Nazism, Seligmann tried to help his Jewish business associate, Hermann Schipper, until he was deported to Auschwitz in February 1943. During the war, Seligmann helped Schipper's wife, Rachela and her daughter, Jenni by providing them with food, money, and places to hide. Seligmann risked his life to save the Schipper family and even returned the jewelry Rachela gave him for food after the war. Because of Seligmann's courageousness and moral choices throughout the Holocaust, he was recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations on June 8, 2006.\textsuperscript{22}

**GREECE**

**Dimitris Spiliakos**

Dimitris Spiliakos was a Greek attorney with ties to the Jewish community in Thessaloniki, Greece. In 1943, Spiliakos offered to assist his former client, Isaac Covo, to escape the ghetto. He helped the Covo's son, Albert, to escape as well as escorted the
family to stay with a friend of his. Spiliakos took care of all the details for hiding and taking care of the Covos. He covered all their expenses for three and a half years. He helped the Covos and nine members of the Nissim family relocate to a safe place in Athens. After the war, Spiliakos assisted the Covos return to normal life.  

Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens and All Greece

In March 1943, Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens met with a delegation from the Jewish community asking him to intervene in the deportations of Jews from Thessaloniki. The Archbishop sent a letter of protest to the Prime Minister of Greece and to the German Ambassador of the Reich Plenipotentiary for Greece, requesting the German government to cancel the deportations. When proved unsuccessful, Damaskinos called for all priests and convents to extend aid and provide safe havens for Jews. With the help of the Chief of Police in Athens, Damaskinos issued thousands of identity cards with Greek names to help Jews escape or hide.

ITALY

Father Francesco Brondello

Father Francesco Brondello was a young Italian priest who not only provided Jews with food and clothing, but also photographed Jews to forge identity papers. He was arrested and imprisoned twice, but even under torture, Don Francesco did not disclose information about his contacts. Among those who owe their lives to him are local Holocaust survivors and sisters, Chaya Roth and Gitta Fajerstein-Walchirk.

JAPAN

Chiune Sempo Sugihara

In 1939, Chiune Sempo Sugihara was named the Consul General to Lithuania. After the German invasion of Poland, Jewish refugees started flooding into Lithuania. The Soviet Union agreed to have Jewish refugees cross into their country, but only with proper documentation. Although Japan forbade the issuance of transit visas, Sugihara, with the help of his wife, Yokiko, he issued over 300 handwritten visas per day. This enabled thousands of Jews to cross the Soviet Union into Japan. His legacy as a rescuer was lost until 1969 when one of those he rescued testified about Chiune’s role in saving many Jews.

LITHUANIA

Ignas & Elena Anuzis & Family

Ignas and Elena Anuzis lived in the old city of Vilna when they willingly sheltered Hasia Green-Gaslevitz. They were able to hide her with a Catholic nun at a nearby monastery. When it was no longer safe to stay at the monastery, Hasia was sent to individual homes as well as the Anuzis son, Ceslavos, in Kovna. The Anuzis also helped many others. They rescued two Jewish girls from the Vilna Ghetto and found them shelter at a pharmacist’s home. They went on to provide false documentation for other ghetto escapees. The Anuzi family immigrated to Michigan after the war, where Hasia had the chance to visit them.

Benediktas Sindikaitis, Kazimiera Mozurkiene, & Stase Sindikaityte-Minelgie

Benediktas Sindikaitis, Kazimiera Mozurkiene, and Stase Sindikaityte-Minelgie, helped Jews from the onset of Nazi occupation of Lithuania in 1941. They were able to hide Freda Karpul and her sister, who were on the run in and out of the ghetto.
They provided them with food and shelter. Kazimiera, the grandmother, cooked and Stase, the daughter, brought food to other Jewish refugees in hiding. Tragically, The Nazis arrested and murdered Benediktas during the war.28

Konstancija Brazeniene

Konstancija Brazeniene was a chairlady of a Catholic women’s organization in Kaunas. In 1943, when rumors of an Aktion spread throughout the ghetto, Chaya Shilingovski asked Brazeniene to shelter her five-year-old daughter, Sara. Brazeniene was able to obtain false identity papers and passed Sara off as her niece that came to stay with her. Despite the danger and financial burden, Brazeniene took in another child, Alexander Gringauz. She looked after the two children until the end of the war.29

THE NETHERLANDS

Jan & Boukje Jeninga

Jan and & Boukje Jeninga was one of the many families selected by the Dutch Resistance to take in and care for Jewish Children. With the parents approval the Jeninga’s selflessly chose to take in four Jewish children. They cared for five-year-old Stella Lenz-Barendse, a teenage boy, a two-year-old girl, and an infant until the end of World War II. Stella remained with the Jeninga family four more years after the war. Her family did not survive the concentration camps. Later, The Jeninga family immigrated to the United States.30

Jan Zwartendijk

In 1939, Jan Zwartendijk, a Dutch businessman, became the Philip's director of Lithuania operations. In June 1940, due to the German invasion of the Netherlands, Jan was asked to be the acting Dutch Consul in Kaunas. With the support of Dutch Ambassador, L.P.J De Decker, Jan aided Jewish refugees by issuing permits for entry into the Dutch colonial possession, Curacao. Although, the visas were useless, they helped Jewish refugees flee Lithuania. In August 1940, the Soviet Authorities shut down Jan’s office, officially ending his courageous work.31

Bevehdina “Diet” Eman

Bevehdina “Diet” Eman was twenty-years-old when she and her Christian friends took action to aid their Jewish acquaintances that were being oppressed by the German occupied forces. When her Jewish friend’s house was confiscated, Eman found them shelter, along with many others, with Dutch farmers willing to provide safe houses. In 1944, she was arrested for her underground activities. After her release from prison, she continued her work by spying for the Dutch resistance movement. When World War II ended, Eman worked with the International Red Cross Disaster Services and spoke about her experiences as a rescuer.32

Peter & Adriana Termaat & Jacob Balder

Peter Termaat and Jacob Balder worked with a Dutch resistance unit during WWI. In 1943, they were given an assignment to locate and rescue a young Jewish couple confined in Gelderland. They brought them safely to Amsterdam where they hid throughout the war. Unfortunately, Balder and eleven other Dutch resistance fighters were executed by occupying forces in 1944. After the war, Peter immigrated with his wife to Grand Rapids, Michigan.33
Myndert & Janny Blom

In 1942, The Nazis intensified the mass deportations of Jews from the Netherlands. Janny Blom decided to travel to her former employer, Dr. Vreedenburg, in order to persuade him to stay with her family. The Vreedenburgs traveled by ship to Janny and Myndert Blom's home where they were safely hidden in the upstairs attic. Despite the great risk to their family, the Bloms cared for the Vreedenburgs for three years. After the war the Bloms moved to Detroit, Michigan. 34

Marten & Taetske Weerstra

Marten and Taetske Weerstra lived in IJlst, Friesland, Netherlands. In June 1944, they took in Jacob and Flora Speijer until the end of World War II. Both Marten and Taetske took on many tasks to aid Jewish refugees and Allied soldiers. Marten was active in the local underground organization, supplying illegal goods and transporting weapons. Taetske devoted her time to collecting food, clothing, and blankets for many Jewish refugees in hiding. During the war, Taetske faked a pregnancy in order to save Flora Speijer’s baby. In April 1945, The Nazis arrested the Weerstra for hiding the Speijers. Both Marten and Jacob were mysteriously set free. For the couple's courageous acts, they received citations from the Dutch, American, and British governments. 35

Hendrikus & Dina Lievestro

In March 1944, Hendrikus and Dina Lievestro took in Jenny Heilbron to hide on their farm in Westendorp, Gelderland. Hendrikus and Dina were both members of the local Resistance movement saving over fourteen other Jewish refugees along with resistance members. They cared for Jenny for over eleven months, as well as a Jewish German boy, Henk Klaber, Sallo Levy, his sister, mother, and relatives. 36

Derk & Johanna Schukkink

Derk and Joanna Schukkink along with their children, Johan and Berta hid many Jewish refugees in their home as well as in many underground dugouts on their farm. The Schukkink family took in Albert Lauger and three Jewish families, the Oppenheimers, Schaaps, and the Lazarus. The families both switched from living in the Schukkink’s home or underground for many months. The Schukkink family cared for the families and kept their rescue efforts secret from their neighbors until their house was raided. The three families fled to the Heuker farm in Hoek, where they stayed until liberation. On December 15, 1985, Yad Vashem declared them Righteous Among the Nations. 37

Gehardus & Elizabeth Heuker of Hoek

Gehardus and Elizabeth Heuker of Hoek were stockbreeders with six children. Gehardus told his Jewish acquaintance, Moritz Schaap that he would be willing to hide Jews on his farm. In 1941, Moritz’s wife Erna and nine-year-old son, Klaus, fled to Gehardus' farm after Moritz was taken to Mauthausen. The Heuker's offered Erna and her son shelter in a cave in the fields on their farm, where they hid for nine months. The Heukers also took in three more families, the Oppenheimers, Schaaps, and Lazarus. They cared for the families from 1942 until the end of World War II. Yad Vashem recognized the Heuker family as Righteous Among the Nations on February 16, 1984. 38

**POLAND**

Katarzyna Moroz

In Poland, Katarzyna Moroz took in a young Jewish woman and her 3-year-old daughter, telling neighbors they were distant cousins. When Katarzyna's husband threatened to expose the Jews, she relocated Ella and her little girl to the home of Katarzyna's married daughter in another town. This saved them from deportation to certain death at the hands of the Nazis. In July 2012, Katarzyna was posthumously honored as “Righteous Among the Nations,” Israel’s Highest Honor, by Orli Gil, then
Kazimierz Stanislaw and Wanda Antonina Stawski

Kazimierz Stanislaw Stawski and Wanda Antonina Stawski are two of the more than 6,000 Poles recognized as Righteous Among the Nations, for their role in aiding Jews in spite of the danger this presented to themselves and their family. They sheltered Miriam Korn, a young Jewish woman, in their apartment in Warsaw for approximately two years, 1942-1944. She survived and went to Israel.

Irena Sendler

In 1942 during the mass deportations of the Warsaw Ghetto, a group of Polish citizens established an underground organization called the Council for the Aid of Jews, or Zegota. Irena Sendler became the head of Zegota's Children's Bureau and started smuggling small children out of the ghetto. Sendler also worked to find the children safe houses with non-Jewish families in the area. She hid them in convents, hospitals, and orphanages. In 1943, the Gestapo arrested Sendler and sentenced her to death. However, Sendler was able to escape and went into hiding for the remainder of the war. Sendler's Children's Bureau saved the lives of over 2,500 children from the Warsaw ghetto.

Oskar Schindler

Oskar Schindler, a German business man, took control of a Jewish-owned business in Krakow, Poland in 1939. He employed Jewish workers from the ghetto as cheap labor for the factory. In 1942, when the SS began to liquidate the ghetto, Schindler told his employees to stay in the factory until it was over. He bribed the Nazis to set up a "slave labor camp" in order to shelter his Jewish employees. He provided them with extra food and housing. As the Soviet troops began advancing into Poland, the Nazis stepped up the deportations of the Jews. Schindler set up a new armaments factory in Czechoslovakia and arranged for nearly 1,100 Jews to be transferred in order to save them from deportation. The Jews remained safely in Czechoslovakia until the Soviet troops liberated them in 1945. In 1974, at the age of 66, Oskar Schindler passed away and was buried in Jerusalem.

Jan Karski

In 1939, Jan Karski, joined the Polish underground, the Home Army, as a courier to the Polish government-in-exile. Karski was ordered in 1942 to clandestinely report to the west on the situation in occupied Poland. Before his departure, Karski met with two Jewish leaders, who asked him to inform the world of the destruction of Polish Jewry. In London, Karski reported to both the Polish government-in-exile, as well as Winston Churchill. Later, Karski traveled to the United States to stir public opinion against the murder of Jews. He met with President Roosevelt and other dignitaries, but unfortunately was unsuccessful in gaining their support. After the war, Karski was appointed Professor at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. and remained committed to remembering and honoring the victims of the Holocaust. Karks died in 2000, at the age of 86.

Anna Borkowska

Anna Borkowska was the mother superior of a small convent located in Vilna, Poland. When mass killings of the Jews began, Borkowska took in seventeen members of the Jewish Zionist Pioneer underground movement. Within the convent's walls, Abba Kovner wrote is famous manifesto
announcing his plans for a rebellion calling for the Jews to “not go like sheep to the slaughter.” When he returned to the ghetto to establish a resistance movement, Borkowska was the one who smuggled the first grenades to Kovner. In September 1943, The Nazis arrested Borkowska and was asked to be dispersed of her monastic vows. She remained a deeply religious woman.44

Jan Rosciszwewski & Janina & Stephania Wiluszynska

In 1942, former classmate, Shalom Brayer, asked Jan Rosciszwewski for assistance in hiding is family of four. Jan was able to find an underground storage area where he cared for the family. With the help of his two teenage cousins, Stefania and Janina, they prepared and brought food for the Brayers. Jan, Stefania, and Janina hid the Brayer family for six weeks until they fled to the underground group. They survived the war and moved to Israel.45

Jan & Anna Namowicz

According to Jan and Anna Namowicz's grandson, Robert Gornik, the two hid four survivors between the years of 1942 to 1944. Two survivors, Max Goldman and Henrik Spiendler, described the brave acts of Jan and Anna Namowicz in a letter dated June 19, 1946. They stated they owed their lives to Jan and Anna, who hid them and two other survivors in their household in Lithuania for nine months. The details of Jan and Anna’s rescue efforts are not well documented, but the letter was verified by the Secretary General and Legal Advisor of the Jewish Committee in Lodz, Poland. 46

Zofia Kuklo

Zofia Kuklo and her husband, Franciszek sheltered a family of eight Jews throughout the entire period of World War II. Zofia took the family in after a Gestapo collaborator asked Franciszek to help them. While Franciszek fought with the underground, Zofia courageously cared for the Jewish family. She even helped shelter and provide food for Jews she could not hide in her home. The SS threatened her many times, even at gun point. She never gave the family up despite the risks to her own family and herself. After the war, Zofia moved to Chicago. She passed away in 1998.47

Stanisława Israelowicz-Kovalczyk

During the German occupation of Lvov, Poland Stanisława Israelowicz-Kovalczyk sheltered many Jewish families between 1941-1944. Stanisława selflessly hid Eugenie Juran-Urich and her son in the attic space in her home. Later, she took in Dr. Leon Izraelowicz, who had escaped from the Lvov ghetto. After the war, she married Leon bonding the rescuer and rescued in marriage.48

Helena, Ignaz & Cezary Chorazyczewski

Abram Kashtan escaped from the Sarno ghetto and fled to his father’s former business partner’s home. The Chorazyczewski family took him in and hid Abram in their barn for over a year. As it became increasingly dangerous for the Chorazyczewski’s, their eldest son, Cezary, led Abram and two other Jewish boys safely into occupied territory. After the War, Helena moved to Michigan. For the rest of his life, Abram called Helena his “mama.”49

Stephania Hingler & Kazimierz Peirz

Stephania Hingler, a retired opera singer, provided a safe hiding place for Ziegfried Rappaport and his wife, Lidia. Stephania feared that she might arouse suspicion in her neighbors with all the extra food and laundry she was bringing in to her home so she asked a trusted neighbor Kazimierz Pierz, if he would help in providing food for the Rappaports. Kazimierz was also able to deliver correspondence between the Rappaports and their family in the area. Stephania hid Ziegfried for a total of two years and Lidia for only one.50

Albina Kusek
In May of 1943, Albina and Dennis Przbyszewski hid a young Jewish man, his wife, and her sister, in their home in Stydyn, Poland. When the Ukrainians under German command attacked the house, the couple was killed and Dennis was taken away. The sister, Ita survived the attack and Albina fled to another village. Ita and Albina met again in July 1943 in Sarny. When Ita, along with another Jewish girl, Batia, were being deported to labor camps in Germany Albina, her mother, and her two daughters stepped up to go to the labor camp with them. They lived together as one family during the entire stay in the German labor camps. After the war, Albina immigrated to Chicago. The two women whom she rescued moved to Canada and Israel.51

Kazimierz & Zophia Lazowski

Kazimierz and Zophia Lazowski sheltered two Jewish couples, Alexander and Barbara Heling, and Edward and Blanko Goldberg, in their home for the entire duration of World War II. They rescued many others by providing hiding places as well as pretending not to know that a young woman living in their home was actually Jewish. Zophia told her son, Eugene, a member of the Polish underground, that it was her “duty” to rescue the Jewish families.52

Kamilla Pelc

In 1941, after the German occupation of the East, Kamilla Pelc was asked by a Jewish family to care for their two-year old daughter, Irene. Because the family was being sent to a work camp, Kamilla took in their child. Irene became like a daughter to Kamilla and a sister to Kamilla’s daughter, Karol. When her parents returned from the work camp three years later, Irene did not recognize her parents anymore. Finally, at the age of six, Irene, agreed to return to her biological family.53

Marisia Szvl

Marisia Szvl lived on her family’s farm in Zdorow, Poland when she took in Golda Schacter and her two small children. Golda in search for food and shelter found Marisia’s farm and she accepted them immediately. She created a bunker-like shelter under their barn and cared for them at great personal risk to herself and family. Later, Marisia rescued thirteen-year-old, Mania Birnberg. Marisia and her mother hid the Jewish refugees for over two years until the end of the war. Marisia moved to Canada and frequently visits with the ones she rescued in Chicago.54

Jozef & Jozefa Paygert

Jozef and Jozefa Paygert was approached by the uncle of Hanka Nazemak and asked them to save her from life in the Lvov ghetto. The Paygerts accepted Hanka into their home, where she became well integrated into the family. Jozef and Jozefa’s daughter, Teresa, grew close to Hanka. While she was in the Polish underground, Teresa obtained fake identity papers for Hanka to move freely about town. After World War II, Hanka moved to Isreal. Teresa and Hanka remain in regular contact.55

Peter Twardzik

The Twardzik family and the Jewish family, the Lermans, were friends and neighbors before the German occupation of Poland in 1939. The Lermans were taken from their home and forced into a ghetto. The Lermans decided they would take the chance and escape the harsh living conditions in the ghetto. They sought refuge at the Twardzik’s farm. The family took in, Max Lerman, his brother David, his brother-in-law Mojsze, and sister Freda Salzman. They hid in their attic until the end of the war. After World War II, Peter Twardzik immigrated to Chicago. Peter was honored by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations for his families noble and selfless act during the Holocaust.56
Jożef & Stefania Macugowski

Jożef and Stefania hid Leib Radca, his wife, his three daughters, niece, as well as three other Jewish refugees fleeing from the Nazis. The Macugowskis hid them in a bunker built by Jożef and the fiancé of one of Leib’s daughters. The Macugowski family was honored as Righteous Among the Nations in a ceremony at David Yellin Teacher’s College in New York. 57

Danuta Renk-Mikulski

The Mikulski family lived in Bilgoraj, in the Lublin District of Poland. Melania and Jan Mikulski, a local forester, had three children, Jadwiga, Danuta, and Jerzy. After the German occupation of Poland, the Mikulski family took in two Jewish girls, Rivka Wajnberg and Lila Stern, who were fleeing a German Aktion in their town. A short time later, The Mikulski’s took in three more Jewish refugees, Bencjon, Chaim Rozenbaum, and Pola Kenig, that Jan found in the forest. The family created a hiding place in their home and cared for the five Jewish refugees for over a year until they joined the partisans. The entire Mikulski Family was honored by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations including Danuta Renk-Mikulski, who was honored in 1990. 58

Tadeusz Soroka

Tadeusz Soroka was twenty-years old when he saved nine Jews of Grodno before the ghetto was liquidated. Tadeusz Soroka worked in a furniture store outside of the Grodno Ghetto in Poland. In 1943, he began helping Jews escape the Grodno ghetto and safely travel to Vilna. Hershl Lipszyc was the first Jewish man that Soroka was able to bring to safety. Soroka made arrangements with Lipszyc and his friend Lutek Schneider, to meet and take a freight train to Vilna. Soroka brought them to the railway station where they jumped onto the roof of a railway car and rode 180 kilometers bearing the freezing temperatures of the Polish winter. Soroka repeated these rescue missions four times, saving the lives of Lazar Zalcman, Eliahu Jezerski, Ruben Lubicz, Lisa Naussbaum and her father and brother, as well as Aron Derman. Soroka brought them to the Vilna Ghetto where many joined the underground and became partisans in the Narocz forest. Seven out the nine Jews Soroka saved, lived throughout the entirety of the war. It was not until forty years later did the survivors whom he saved find Soroka in Upper Silesia and brought him to the United States. On October 27, 1983, Yad Vashem recognized him as one of the Righteous of the Nations for his heroic acts to save the Grodno Jews from deportation. 59

Stephania and Janina Wiluszynska

In a small town in Poland in 1942, Jan Roscieszewski helped hide his sixteen-year old classmate, Shalom Bayer, and his family of four. Jan found an underground burrow and with the help of his two fifteen-year old cousins, Janina and Stefania Wiluszynska, he was able to feed the entire family. They successfully sheltered the Brayer family for six weeks until they left for the underground. Janina and Stefania were named Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem in 1998. 60

Hipolit and Franciszka Gorski

Hipolit and Franciszka Gorski from Sokolow, saved two Jewish siblings, Aaron and Irena Elster from the liquidation and deportations of the local ghetto. Before the deportations of the ghetto in 1942, the parents of Aaron and Irena asked the Gorski’s to save Irena’s life by taking her in and caring for her. The Gorski’s agreed to hide Irena in the basement of their home. Aaron managed to escape the liquidation and fled to the Gorski’s hoping that they would take him in as well. Aaron endured many hardships while living alone in the Gorski’s attic for over a year and half. The Gorski’s hid Aaron and Irena from 1942 until the Red Army entered the town. Yad Vashem acknowledged the Gorski’s posthumously for their honorable and moral actions during the Holocaust by adding them to the Righteous Among the Nations on June 30, 2010. 61
The Leszczynski Family

The Leszczynski family courageously took in two families, the Feldmans and Grodzickis and sheltered them for most of the war. The Feldman and Grodzicki family escaped the liquidation of the Siemiatycze ghetto in Poland and traveled to the village of Bocianka. When they reached the farm of Boleslaw and Anna Leszczynski they asked them for help. The Leszczyskis immediately took them in. The two families comprised of five adults and seven children, ages ranging from seven to fifteen. For most of the war, the Leszczynski's provided them with basic needs such as, food and medicine. In July 1944, the Feldman and Grodzicki family left and went into the forest with the Soviet partisans. It was not until 1989, after the Soviet communist regime fell, that the families were able to reunite with the Leszczynski. On November 18, 1997, they were recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.62

PORTUGAL

Aristides Sousa Mendes

Aristides de Sousa Mendes was the Portuguese Consul General in Bordeaux, France at the time of the German invasion on May 10, 1940. Thousands of Jewish refugees that fled south to cross the border ended up stranded in Bordeaux. Rabbi Haim Kruger begged Mendes to issue Portuguese entry visas to over ten thousand Jews in France. Mendes defied the Portuguese government risking his career and his life to issue thousands of visas for Jews to enter Spain. When Mendes returned to Portugal, he was dismissed from diplomatic service and denied benefits.63

SLOVAKIA

Peter Vlicko

Peter Vlicko was an officer in the Czech Army in 1941, when he secured false marriage papers for Georgina Reichsfeld, saving her from being sent to a concentration camp. He helped her safely cross the border. When Georgina returned to Czechoslovakia, Peter, his family, and friends, helped shelter Georgina until the end of the war. Peter also used his position in the Czech army to obtain identity papers for Jews which stated they were employees of the Ministry of Defense. He managed to save twenty Jewish refugees due to his rescue efforts. Peter and Georgina remained married and immigrated to the United States, where they settled in Lincoln Park, Michigan.64

SWEDEN

Raoul Wallenberg

After the German invasion of Hungary on 19 March 1944, Raoul Wallenberg was sent to Budapest as Secretary in the Swedish Embassy to issue 650 protective passports for Jews with connections to Sweden. However, he saw many Jews in need and started issuing thousands of protective letters. He began to purchase houses under the Swedish flag where he housed and protected Jews from the Hungarian Nazi party, the Arrow Cross. Wallenberg financed his operation through bribes and blackmail. Together with other international organizations, he had thirty-two protected buildings and established an international ghetto. He also saved many Jews from a death march issued by Eichmann, claiming their were protected Jews. After the Soviet occupation of Budapest, Wallenberg was taken by Russian soldiers never to be seen again. The circumstances of his death are still unclear, but it is stated that he passed
away in a Soviet prison in 1947.65

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In 1942, Carl Lutz, a Swiss diplomat, was stationed in Budapest to represent foreign nations in the Swiss Embassy. When Lutz arrived, he began obtaining permits for the local Jews to immigrate to Israel. After the German invasion on 19 March 1944, he continued efforts to rescue Jews by finding escape routes and issuing passports with the help of the Red Cross. He also set up a protective house named, “the Glass House” on 29 Vadasz Utca. He issued over 50,000 passports to Hungarian Jews which saved their lives.66

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Selahattin Ulkumen was the Turkish Consul-General on the Island of Rhodes under German occupation. In July 1944, Ulkumen saved approximately fifty Jews from deportation. During the deportation, Ulkumen demanded the Nazis to release all Turkish citizens and their families. Originally he requested the release of fifteen Jews, but it grew in numbers. When the Nazis insisted on seeing their Turkish papers, Ulkumen lied stating they were not to be deported because of Turkish law. Ulkumen saved all the Jews on his list, but 1,700 Jews were deported to Auschwitz that day.67

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In 1942, after the Germans occupied Ukraine, a child named Viktor Berezin knocked on their door begging for food. The Mitrofanovs took him in and passed him off as Alexander's nephew. Since Berezin was gravely ill from his time wandering, they took him to their relative and doctor, Boris Anishchuke. Anishchuk and his wife, Yevgeniya, nursed Berzin until he recovered. Berezin ran away from Anushchuke's home in fear of being sent away to another hiding place. Berezin wandered villages and lived off handouts until liberation in 1944. Berezin maintained a friendship with his rescuers for many years after the war. On December 6, 1999, Yad Vashem recognized Alexander and Vera Mitrofanov, and Boris and Yevgeniya Anishchuk as Righteous Among the Nations.68

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In May 1942, Fyokla Popeskul asked Emelia Rusina to take in Tatyana Rashkovskaya. Popeskul hid Rashkovskaya for months in a factory until it became too risky. Emilia Rusina agreed to hide Rashkovskaya in her home where she was able to move freely. She stayed with Rusina for almost two years until liberation on April 10, 1944. Rashkovskaya remained friends with both Popeskul and Rusina for many years. On June 30, 1999, Yad Vashem recognized them both as Righteous Among the Nations.69
Natalia Patyuta & Family

Moisey Patyuta and his wife, Anisya, were good friends with Nadezhda Gusareva, a Jewish woman, at the time of German occupation of Kiev. Fearing for her nine-year-old son’s life, she asked the Patyuta family to take him in. The Patyutas passed, Gusareva’s son, Losif, off as a relative from out of town. Later, Nadezhda was murdered at Babi Yar in September 1941. Despite the financial struggles, they continued to look after Losif for over three years. Losif and the Patyutas grew an emotional bond and Losif stayed with them even after the war. On February 6, 1992, Yad Vashem recognized the Patyuta family as Righteous Among the Nations.

USA

Varian Fry

Varian Fry was an American Journalist who volunteered to travel to Marseilles, France as a representative of the Emergency Rescue Committee. His task was to issue only 200 visas to prominent French political leaders, scientists, artists, and writers. Fry was shocked by the thousands of Jewish refugees unable to leave France. He opened the American Relief Center to serve as a cover for forging passports to smuggle refugees out of France. When Fry returned to America, he called upon the United States to allow entry for those suffering from the German oppression. Fry helped more than 1,000 refugees escape including, artists Marc Chagall and Jacques Lipshitz, the writers Lion Feuchtwanger, Heinrich Mann, and Franz Wefel, as well as Hannah Arendt. Fry was the first American to be recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.


