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By Susan Ellis

In 1978, Ken Lawrence, a civil rights activist and writer, decided to use his hobby, stamp collecting, for the greater good. For over 30 years, he'd put together a collection of letters, postcards, receipts, and stamps from the Nazi era — all of it, some 250 pieces, to offer material proof to counter claims of Holocaust deniers.

In 2008, the collection, "The Nazi Scourge: Postal Evidence of the Holocaust and the Devastation of Europe," was sold to the Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation, with materials being added by foundation member Danny Spungen, who has been traveling with the collection and speaking about the Holocaust.

Among the items in the collection are documents on sex slavery in the concentration camps, a postal receipt for a prayer book sent to a French camp, and a biblical scroll used to wrap a parcel.

This week, the collection makes its way to Memphis, where it will be displayed at three venues over three days: the National Civil Rights Museum, the Belz Museum of Asian and Judaic Art, and the University of Memphis' Ned R. McWherter Library.

According to Belz Museum director Nancy Knight, so many local groups were interested in the collection that the decision was made to show it throughout the city.

"People seeing this firsthand," Knight says. "It has the power to move." □

"THE NAZI SCOURGE: POSTAL EVIDENCE OF THE HOLOCAUST AND THE DEVASTATION OF EUROPE" AT THE NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM SATURDAY, MARCH 28TH, 2 P.M.; AT THE BELZ MUSEUM SUNDAY, MARCH 29TH, NOON; AND AT THE NED R. MCWHERTER LIBRARY, MONDAY, MARCH 30TH, 1:30 P.M.; DANNY SPUNGEN WILL TALK ABOUT THE COLLECTION ON MONDAY AT MCWHERTER LIBRARY AT 1:30 P.M.

