

Yellowstone Boys & Girls Ranch

Hosts the
Florence & Laurence Spungen Family Foundation's

Symbols of Survival: Money and Stamps from the Holocaust

A Collector's Holocaust Memorial

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2008

A Rare Opportunity to Witness the Holocaust

You are invited (free of charge) to view one of the rarest private collections representing the events of World War II.

A gift provided by the **Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation**, and hosted by the **Yellowstone Boys & Girls Ranch**, this will be the only opportunity for the public to view this collection in Billings, Montana.

Please join us from **1:00 PM to 4:00 PM on Sunday, December 7th** - at **3212 First Ave South** (in the gym of the old Garfield school building).



Above photo - In 1943 the Anti Nazi League headquarters in Palestine published the Black Album, a book of ten post cards that reproduced photographs of Nazi Atrocities that had been smuggled out of Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe. These were among the first visual proofs of the events that became known as the Holocaust.

More photos and information below the *"New York Times"* article.

"New York Times" - Article dated Sept 27, 2008

"Stamp Collector's Holocaust Memorial"

by Matthew Healey

The New York Times

When Ku Klux Klan violence spiked across the South in the 1970s, and a hitherto unknown group in California began publicly denying that the Holocaust had ever occurred, Ken Lawrence decided to fight back - using his skills as stamp collector.

Painstakingly, over 30 years, he researched and assembled a collection of postal memorabilia documenting the range and depth of horrors of what he termed "the Nazi scourge." He gathered items that showed not just the persecution of Jews and Communists but also other groups deemed undesirable by the Nazis, like gypsies and the disabled, not just in Germany but across Europe.

The award-winning collection, containing some 250 letters, postcards, postal documents, leaflets and other materials, has now been sold to the Spungen Family Foundation in Illinois. That foundation, in turn, has sought to expand the collection and continue to use it for the educational purposes that inspired Mr. Lawrence, of Spring Mills, Pa.

Daniel Spungen, a board member and spokesman for the foundation, said recently that his acquisition of the collection represented a "life-changing" experience for him. He is retiring from his job with the family business, a manufacturer of ball bearings, and devoting himself to further development of the collection, which includes rare letters from concentration camp inmates, postal documents illustrating Nazi activities and a Hebrew scripture re-used by a German soldier as a parcel wrapper.

In addition to being displayed online, the collection will be shown to the public beginning next year in Skokie, Ill., at the new headquarters of the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, which was set up in part as a reaction to neo-Nazi activities in that suburb of Chicago in the 1970s. The center advocated successfully for an Illinois state law requiring education about the Holocaust in schools.

The collection will also travel around the country, including stops in Santa Barbara, Calif., and Billings, Mont.

Mr. Lawrence, a longtime civil rights activist and writer, began gathering the materials in 1978 "in response to the sudden appearance of Holocaust deniers." He recalled in an interview recently that he used to show his first acquisition, a 1943 letter from 21-year-old Eduard Pys, who had arrived at the Auschwitz concentration camp on the very first transport in May 1940, to children in Mississippi and tell them, "David Duke says this never happened."

Having little money to spend on his collection, Mr. Lawrence used his contacts with writers and activists in Eastern Europe to solicit additional material. One item is a telegram from a member of a wartime Communist resistance group that was given to him by a friend in East Germany.

"I wanted to show all the victims and all the resisters, through their mail," Mr. Lawrence said. "I tried to include every sort of anti-Nazi activity, and treat them all heroically, whether they liked each other or not."

He continued to trail the Klan and neo-Nazis around the United States, offering his collection at community centers, schools and churches as evidence of what could happen if white supremacists prevailed.

Eventually, in 1992, Mr. Lawrence started exhibiting his collection to fellow stamp collectors as well, garnering awards at philatelic gatherings from Ohio to Washington to South Korea. His collection includes rarities like an envelope from a letter sent from Dachau in 1933, shortly after the concentration camp opened; a certified-mail receipt for a prayer book sent to a Jew in a French camp; a postal checking account receipt with a crude anti-Semitic cartoon indicating payment for a Nazi propaganda newspaper; the only known letter from Rabbi Leo Baeck, leader of German Jewry, when he was held in the Theresienstadt ghetto; cards from two previously unlisted camps in Romania; and mail sent to a Nazi doctor on trial for war crimes at Nuremberg in 1945.

Mr. Lawrence described the biblical scroll used as a parcel wrapper, which recounts part of the tale of David and Goliath, as "the most viscerally disturbing item" in the collection. "Some scholars have told me it is among the most important surviving evidence of Nazi desecration," he said.

The Philatelic Foundation, a nonprofit organization, has produced a DVD documentary about the collection, and Mr. Lawrence, who is being retained by Mr. Spungen to advise him on further development of the collection, is planning a book.

Last year, after a chance encounter with Mr. Spungen at a collectors' event, Mr. Lawrence agreed to sell him his collection. "I felt like I had taken the collection as far as I could. And I'm 65," Mr. Lawrence said.

A well-known stamp auctioneer had advised Mr. Lawrence to keep the collection intact rather than breaking it up to sell.

Mr. Spungen said he had originally planned to use part of his fortune to buy an "Inverted Jenny," one of the rarest of American stamps, which has an airplane misprinted upside down. But he said he changed his mind when he saw Mr. Lawrence's collection.

"I admit I knew next to nothing about the Holocaust, and now I'm playing catch-up," he said in a recent telephone interview. Among the items he finds most compelling are a piece of mail documenting sex slavery at the Buchenwald concent ration camp and fake British banknotes made by Jewish slave laborers during the Nazis' program to undermine the British economy.

Mr. Spungen said that while the collection as a whole was insured for a million dollars, and the scroll used as a parcel wrapper could be worth as much as half a million dollars on its own, "the educational value to future generations is incalculable."

Hebrew Bible Scroll

Photo (below) of a piece of a sacred hand-inscribed Hebrew Bible scroll that was used to wrap a parcel.



Paul Ehrenfreund used a cutout piece of a sacred hand-inscribed Hebrew Bible scroll to wrap a parcel he sent home to Vienna from southern Russia in 1942. Field Post Number 33.404 was the address of Bau (Construction) Battalion 219 attached to Army Group B of the German Army. This segment of the scroll from the Book of the Prophet Shmuel A (Book of I Samuel) tells the story of David and Goliath.

Postcard changed war crime trial

Postcard addressed to Dr. Eugen von Haagen

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This is one of the items in the collection of Holocaust-related mail. This postcard, addressed to former German Air Force officer and University of Strasbourg Professor, Dr. Eugen von Haagen, a Nazi war criminal is dated Dec 11, 1945.

It is the only known recorded example of the censor mark of the International Military Tribunal (IMT). This censor changed the status of von Haagen from defendant to witness at the war criminal trials. In 1951 von Haagen was convicted of war crimes and was imprisoned. He had infected prisoners at the Natzweiler concentration camp with typhus and hepatitis.



GUESTS

**Danny Spungen, Florence & Laurence Spungen Family Foundation
Dr. Steve Feller, Author & Presenter**

***We hope to see you on Dec 7, 2008
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
3212 1st Ave South, Billings, MT***

(gym of the Garfield School Building)

The award-winning Holocaust Exhibit includes envelopes, postcards, letters and specially designed postage stamps used exclusively by WWII concentration camp inmates, Jewish ghetto residents, and prisoners of war. Counterfeit Bank of England banknotes created by slave labor during "Operation Barnhard," the Nazis' failed plot to undermine Britain's economy.

Danny Spungen, of the *Florence & Laurence Spungen Family Foundation*, and Dr. Steve Feller, author of "Silent Witnesses: Civilian Camp Money," will be on location.

Dr. Feller will be presenting each hour. His presentation shows examples of coins and scrip used in the camps. The money serves as a, "tangible survivor with a story of daily life in those terrible times".

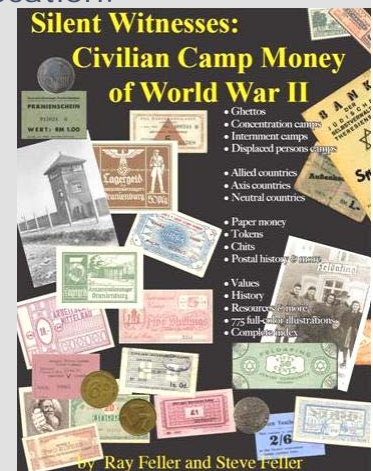
In some cases, the money was extremely symbolic and represented what was happening. Even Auschwitz has its own money system.

Steve Feller, B.D. Silliman Professor of Physics, and Chair of the Physics Department at Coe College, came Coe in 1979 after completing his doctorate in physics at Brown University. Since that time he has worked with more than 170 students in undergraduate research. With his students he has developed an internationally known program in studying physical properties and atomic structure in a wide variety of oxide glass systems, including several glass families which were discovered at Coe. Over 115 have been published with students in refereed journals of the field and more than 160 student and faculty presentations have been given at national and international meetings. He serves as a reviewer for several scientific journals, for the National Science Foundation, and for the Research Corporation.

He has been honored a number of ways including being named Fellow of the American Ceramic Society (2003) and the British Society of Glass Technology (2003), Physics Club Chapter Advisor of the Year by the national Society of Physics Students (2000), Distinguished Iowa Scientist by the Iowa Academy of Sciences (1999), Iowa Professor of the Year (1995) by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Also, he was given the 1993 American Physical Society Prize to a Faculty Member for Research in an Undergraduate Institution.

During spring and summer 1996 he served as a Fulbright Scholar to the United Kingdom where he did neutron scattering studies of glasses and crystals. In 2001 and 2006 he was visiting professor of physics at SojoUniversity (Japan) and University of Warwick (England).

From 1996-2002 he served on the national board of the Society of Physics Students. In 2002 he was elected the president of Sigma Pi Sigma, the national physics honor society, a position he was reelected to in 2004. He is the chair of the organizing committee of the



2008 Sigma Pi Sigma Quadrennial Congress (the only national meeting for undergraduates in physics). This meeting will be held at Fermilab, a national laboratory. He was especially gratified to have been awarded the C.J. Lynch Prize as Teacher of the Year by the 1993 senior class of Coe College.

Dr. Feller has published numerous books and papers relating to glass structure and properties as well as currency related to the Holocaust.

Please forward this email

Please help us notify everyone about this event!

Please forward this email to your friends by clicking the blue "forward email" link at bottom left of this newsletter.

If you have questions about this exhibit, the items can be viewed online at <http://www.foundationcenter.org/grantmaker/spungen/index.html>.

The exhibit will be viewed at a couple of schools in Billings and has a private showing but **this will be the only opportunity for the public to view the Holocaust Memorial exhibit** in Billings, MT.

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Join Our Mailing List!

"It sure makes a difference when you know somebody cares."

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