



DEAF HISTORY International

An Association for All Interested in the Study, Preservation, and Dissemination of Deaf People's History

Nos. 44 & 45

The DHI Newsletter

SPRING / SUMMER 2011



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The DHI Newsletter

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Notes from the Editor



The DHI Conference 2012 is almost a year away! After many months of planning, meetings, discussions, designing and re-designing, the Planning and Organizing Committees of the DHI Conference 2012 in Toronto finally launched a conference website to the global public in early May. You can check it out at www.dhiconference2012.ca. The website is accessible in two languages, English and French. According to the Google Analytics, this website had 2,358 visitors from 78 countries between May 6, 2011 and June 30, 2011. Some of the information about the conference is also printed in the pages of this newsletter. However, please browse the website often for more detailed information and the latest updates. If you plan to attend, don't forget to register early and save money!

In March of this year, there was an announcement about the Finnish Museum of the Deaf in danger of being closed due to cuts in funding from other sources. Published articles, emails, and petitions were widely circulated with the message "Save the Finnish Museum of the Deaf!" One of them is also printed in this newsletter on page 4.

Despite all early attempts to keep the museum operational, the Finnish Association of the Deaf at its recent general assembly held from June 11th to 12th decided to close its museum. The staff were given notices that they have until the end of this year to wrap and pack all the museum's collections. Meanwhile, they will also have time to seek alternative solutions, perhaps incorporate into a larger museum. Information about the museum's 100 years of activity with some photos was published in our Winter 2007 newsletter.

I will be attending the 16th World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf in Durban, South Africa from July 18 to 24, 2011. Should you be there also, please do not hesitate to find me at this conference and introduce yourself. I would love to meet you!

The DHI Newsletter welcomes submissions from our readers, colleagues and friends. Your help is urgently needed because I do not have any contributed articles nor book reviews for the next few issues. If you are interested in contributing an article, photograph or anything else pertaining to Deaf history, please do not hesitate to do so!



ADVERTISEMENTS

The DHI Newsletter welcomes advertisements for inclusion in its publication. The content of all textual advertisements should be related to the field of Deaf history and the educational purposes of the newsletter.

The rates are \$100 for a full page and \$50 for a half page. There is no charge for ready-made graphics. For further information, contact the editor.



The Deaf History International Newsletter welcomes Deaf History-related submissions of news, articles and essays, book and film reviews, images and photographs, newspaper clippings, conference and workshop announcements, websites, and other readings of interest for possible inclusion.

Please submit them to the editor by the following deadlines:

DHI ISSUES	SUBMISSION DEADLINE	DISTRIBUTION DATE
SPRING	March 15	April 15– 30
SUMMER	June 15	July 15 – August 15
FALL	September 15	October 15 – 31

**FOR
FUTURE ISSUES**



President's Column

By Peter Jackson (United Kingdom)

Most people in the International Deaf community have recently been saddened by the events surrounding the cancellation of the 2011 Winter Deaflympics in Vysoké Tatry, Slovakia, and the arrest of the organiser, Jaromir Ruda whilst trying to cross over the border into Hungary. He has now been sentenced to 13 years in a medium-security prison for the embezzlement of €1.6 million of funds (approx. 2.3M US Dollars) that were allocated for the preparation of the Games. He may face further charges of fraud and embezzlement to the tune of something like €11 million (approx. 15.6M US Dollars).

Whatever the circumstances leading to the cancellation may be, this event was much looked forward to by the Deaf winter sports community. It is incredibly sad that there should be so much bad publicity brought forth against Deaf people and Deaf organisations worldwide. Unfortunately, many people have lost a lot of money through the cancellation. On top of this, we learned that the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD) has now relieved organisers in Vancouver, Canada, of their duties to host the 2015 Winter Deaflympics. While the full reasons for this decision are not known, it has been said that these organisers did not have the support of the country's national sports association (The Canadian Deaf Sports Association). Additionally, the extremely severe economic situation now being experienced by Greece, where rioting is now taking place due to government austerity measures, makes it very possible that the 2013 Deaflympics due to be held there could be cancelled. Also, the 2017 Deaflympics suffered a blow when Barcelona, Spain withdrew its bid to host the Games, leaving only Buenos Aires in Argentina as the sole contender.

The impact of the world economic situation has also manifested itself with the 2011 World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf in Durban, South Africa, where attendee registrations are considerably down.

The ramifications of the current global economic climate affecting the ability of Deaf organisations to host international events, plus the unrest in the Middle East affecting world oil prices and stability in countries like Libya, Bahrain, Syria, and Egypt mean that for our DHI Bureau, there will be serious considerations in deciding who will host the DHI Conference 2018. Although applications for hosting this conference are now being sought, it may no longer be enough to simply to put together an attractive proposal to host the conference. Proposals may have to be more realistic, and if necessary, downsized to avoid incurring too many liabilities.

In the future, our DHI Bureau may have to take a look behind the proposal and consider issues such as the affordability of the conference and whether there is support of the proposal from the national association or a respected academic establishment, or even the government. It may become necessary to require these organisations to supply a letter of guarantee that any losses incurred by the host conference committee will be covered should a problem arise.

This is a sad reflection of the signs of the times and the economic climate that we now live in. I feel that the mess that the ICSD have found themselves in has acted as a warning for other international Deaf organisations to make sure that they cover their backs.

On a more positive note, I hope that our DHI members have seen the excellent website set up by the Planning and Organizing Committees for the 8th Deaf History International Conference in Toronto, Canada (July 24 to 29, 2012). The conference website is clear, attractive, easy to navigate and in both official languages of Canada - English and French. I hope it will encourage you and as many people as possible to register early and attend this event. Congratulations!



SAVE THE FINNISH MUSEUM OF THE DEAF!



The emergence of the Finnish Deaf community and Finnish Sign Language users dates back to 1846 when the first school for the deaf was founded by Carl Oscar Malm, who was also Deaf himself. His first disciples in Finland and thus first users of sign language (imported to Finland by Malm from a Swedish deaf school that he attended (1834-1845) soon realized their unique history and started to document their language and preserve material related to Malm. Later, the collections of the museum increased and the first exhibition space was opened in 1915.

Today the Finnish Museum of the Deaf is a professional special museum funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture. It is one of the few museums dedicated to the Deaf in the world and widely noted by the international Deaf community. Research, lectures, exhibitions regarding the Deaf history and material heritage of the Deaf has gained worldwide recognition.

The collections of the museum include more than 10,000 objects and photographs, a collection of rare books and original documents regarding the first years of the Finnish Deaf Community. These are now in severe danger, since the Finnish Association of the Deaf (FAD) has decided, due to reduced funding by the Slot Machine Foundation, on March 23rd, 2011 to close down the museum and lay off both employees. (There are approximately 100 employees in FAD.)

There are no plans how to secure the safekeeping of the collections, no plans regarding the access of visitors and researchers to the collections. Among the material at risk is the priceless original photographic material of the first Sign Language Dictionary from the beginning of the 1910s as well as unique historical works of Deaf artists. In danger of disappearing are also the earliest documents, objects and photographs of Deaf life.

Read more: http://www.adressit.com/save_the_finnish_museum_of_the_deaf

They've published their appeal in four languages in the Internet:

Petition in **English**:

http://www.adressit.com/save_the_finnish_museum_of_the_deaf

Petition in **Finnish Sign Language**:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGJUwjyvmGg>

Petition in **Swedish**:

http://adressit.com/_radda_dovas_museum

Petition in **Finnish**:

http://www.adressit.com/pelastakaa_kuurojen_museo

For further information, contact:

Päivi Rainò, Researcher, Ph.D.
Humak University of Applied Sciences
Email: paivi.raino@humak.fi





ANNOUNCEMENT

DHI Conference 2012 Website

The Planning and Organizing Committees of the 8th DEAF HISTORY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE and its host, the Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf, wish to announce the official launch of the conference website at www.dhiconference2012.ca. The website is readable in two different languages, English and French, because Canada is constitutionally bilingual.

This triennial event will take place in Toronto, Canada from July 24th to 29th, 2012. The conference theme is *TELLING DEAF LIVES: Biographies and Autobiographies*.

You can now start planning and adjusting your commitments, travel itineraries and vacation to attend this most anticipated conference. Remember to register early to avoid any disappointment. Registration will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Please share this announcement with your friends, colleagues and others around the world who might be interested in attending and/or presenting a paper at the conference.

8TH Deaf History
International Conference
Toronto, Canada July 24-29, 2012

8^e Congrès international
sur l'histoire des Sourds
Toronto, Canada 24-29 juillet 2012

TELLING DEAF LIVES / RÉCITS DE VIE DES SOURDS
Biographies and/et Autobiographies

www.dhiconference2012.ca

8th Deaf History International Conference

TELLING DEAF LIVES: Biographies and Autobiographies

Toronto, CANADA — July 24–29, 2012

www.dhiconference2012.ca



Hosted by Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf

CALL FOR PAPERS & VIDEO CLIP GUIDELINES

PRESENTATION SUB-THEMES / CATEGORIES

- Deaf Pioneers (Individuals who made an important historical impact)
- Stories from the Continents (Group Histories)
- Multimedia Archives (Preservation)
- Storytelling Pedagogy (Historical Novels)
- History of Deaf Comedy
- History of De'VIA Artists

ABSTRACT REQUIREMENTS: Written or Video

A) For Written Abstract Requirements

Send or email your written abstract as follows:

- Sub-theme (from the categories at the top above)
- Your presentation title
- Description of your proposed lecture (400 words)
- A short paragraph about yourself (40 words)

Written Language: English
Programme: Microsoft Word 6.0 (or later version)
Paper Title: Title should be centred, bold and capitalized
Authors: Include name, academic degrees and affiliations of all authors
Length: Maximum one page (including figures)
Font Face / Size: Times New Roman 12 point; Avoid the use of non-English language fonts

B) For Video Abstract Requirements

Send a video clip abstract with International Sign (maximum length of 5 minutes). In the video clip, please include:

- Sub-theme (from the categories at the top above)
- Your presentation title
- Description of your proposed presentation (maximum length of 4 minutes)
- Explanation of your background (maximum length of 1 minute)

The format of the video could be in DVD, Apple program (Photo Booth application), QuickTime (.mpg) or MOV file.

DEADLINES: Written / Video Clip Abstracts

Abstracts	October 15, 2011
Acceptance/rejection notifications to presenters <i>Presenting authors whose abstracts have been accepted <u>must</u> register for the conference.</i>	December 15, 2011
PowerPoint and final version of notes or paper <i>Your PowerPoint must be sent by the given deadline for interpreter's preparation. If there is no PowerPoint file soon after the given deadline, the lecture <u>must</u> be cancelled.</i>	May 15, 2012
Written article / manuscript following presentation for a published conference proceedings <i>Any papers received <u>after</u> the given deadline may not be included.</i>	October 15, 2012

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Requests for audio-visual / technical equipment must be specified in the initial written / video clip abstract submission.

SEND YOUR MATERIALS

- Written documents / video clips are to be sent via email.
- DVDs are to be sent via postal mail.

Dr. Anita Small
 Chair, Program Committee
 DHI CONFERENCE 2012
 c/o Deaf Culture Centre
 The Distillery Historic District
 55 Mill Street, Building 5, Suite 101
 Toronto, Ontario M5A 3C4 Canada
 EMAIL: program@dhiconference2012.ca

IMPORTANT NOTE:

All authors who wish to present their abstracts at the DHI Conference 2012 must pay the registration fee. Honorarium, travel and accommodation expenses cannot be provided for presentations.



Hosted by Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf

CALL FOR VIDEO DOCUMENTARIES & GUIDELINES

The DHI Conference 2012 is introducing video documentaries to encourage historians to document Deaf life. They will be selected for exhibit and discussion.

DOCUMENTARY TOPICS:

- “Sense of Place” (e.g., Deaf Clubs, Deaf Schools, Sports, Groups, Deaf Organizations, Communities)
- “Great Leaders”
- “Tales from Everyday Life”

DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS

Topic:	From the categories list in topics above.
Language:	Send your video documentary in the Sign Language of your country. DVDs <u>must</u> have open captions or subtitles in written English.
Duration:	Short video documentaries <u>only</u> . Maximum 20-minute film. (To be presented within 10 minute discussion.)
Format:	DVD, Apple program (Photo Booth application), QuickTime (.mpg) or MOV file formatted in MPEG video for Region 1 / North America. Please test your computer burned DVD on several makes and models of players before sending. <u>NOTE:</u> DVD+RW and DVD-RW are not accepted.
Deadline:	Postmarked <u>no later than October 15, 2011</u> . Late entries will <u>not</u> be accepted.
Acceptance / Rejection Notification to Presenters:	December 15, 2011
Year of Production:	Video Documentary completed after the year 2005 to present.
Labelling:	DVDs must be labelled with the title, producer’s name, length in minutes and e-mail address.
Shipping methods are: Air Cargo, UPS, or Courier, First Class or Regular Mail	All video documentary shipments to DHI Conference 2012 <u>must be prepaid</u> . Packages must be clearly marked with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHI Program Committee Address and Sender’s Return Address • Video Documentary Title and Running Time • Customs Declaration – it is your responsibility to have it cleared and approved to be sent.

VIDEO DOCUMENTARY ENTRY FORM

Click below to print and complete the form

http://www.dhiconference2012.ca/documents/video_documentary_entry_form_2011-04-27.pdf

SEND YOUR MATERIALS

The Video Documentary Entry Form and three (3) copies of your DVD, film stills and photos are to be sent via postal mail. Digital images must be at minimum resolution of 300 dpi.

Dr. Anita Small
 Chair, Program Committee
 DHI CONFERENCE 2012
 c/o Deaf Culture Centre
 The Distillery Historic District
 55 Mill Street, Building 5, Suite 101
 Toronto, Ontario M5A 3C4 Canada
 EMAIL: program@dhiconference2012.ca

IMPORTANT NOTE:

All authors who wish to present their abstracts at the DHI Conference 2012 must pay the registration fee. Honorarium, travel and accommodation expenses cannot be provided for presentations.

8th Deaf History International Conference

TELLING DEAF LIVES: Biographies and Autobiographies
Toronto, CANADA — July 24–29, 2012

www.dhiconference2012.ca



Hosted by Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf

REGISTRATION FEES

REGISTRATION OPTIONS*	BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2011	NOVEMBER 1, 2011 to MARCH 31, 2012	AFTER APRIL 1, 2012
COMBO — Regular	\$550.00 CAD	\$595.00 CAD	\$645.00 CAD
COMBO— Student (ages 18-25) ¹	\$495.00 CAD	\$550.00 CAD	\$550.00 CAD
COMBO—Senior (age 65+) ²	\$495.00 CAD	\$550.00 CAD	\$550.00 CAD
COMBO-Least Developed Countries ³	\$495.00 CAD	\$550.00 CAD	\$550.00 CAD

* Notes about Registration Fee Options:

All combo tickets include a copy of the Conference Program booklet, full access to the High Tea Reception (Official Opening), Keynote/Plenary Presentations, Workshops, Video Documentary Viewings, Session Coffee Breaks, Lunch Meals, Exhibits, Gala Dinner and Entertainment, DEAF CULTURE CENTRE, Art Gallery of Ontario, Eaton Centre, and a registration bag containing conference materials.

¹ Proof of student status required upon arrival. Failure to do so will result in changing your ticket to Regular Combo and you will be required to pay the difference. The difference will depend on the date of original registration payment.

² Proof of age required upon arrival. Failure to do so will result in changing your ticket to Regular Combo and you will be required to pay the difference. The difference will depend on the date of original registration payment.

³ Applicable to those countries identified as Least Developed Countries (<http://www.unohrls.org/en/ldc/related/62/>). Providing false information will result in changing your ticket to Regular Combo and you will be required to pay the difference. The difference will depend on the date of original registration payment.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

OPTIONAL: Registration does not include a published paper or electronic copy of the conference proceedings.	\$30.00 CAD (per copy)
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GALA DINNER & ENTERTAINMENT ONLY

(Saturday, July 28, 2012 / 6:00 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.)

AVAILABLE FOR NON-COMBO REGISTRANTS AFTER APRIL 1, 2012 (Seating availability on a first come, first served basis)	\$150.00 CAD (per person)
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Any questions about registration should be directed to:
Joyce Lange (Chair, Registration Committee)

registration@dhiconference2012.ca

8th Deaf History International Conference

TELLING DEAF LIVES: Biographies and Autobiographies
Toronto, CANADA — July 24–29, 2012

www.dhiconference2012.ca



Hosted by Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf

An Invitation to Exhibit Your Company or Organization

This five-day event is a great opportunity to showcase your products and services, the organization and its staff, to all conference attendees in a prominent area of the hotel. We strongly encourage you to reserve early because all requests will be filled on a first received, first served basis. If you are unable to come and exhibit, there is still an opportunity to promote your company/organization. Be a sponsor!

BOOTH RESERVATION OPTIONS*

TYPE OF EXHIBIT	BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2011	NOVEMBER 1, 2011 to MARCH 31, 2012	AFTER APRIL 1, 2012
COMMERCIAL / CORPORATE . NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION (See note below)	\$295.00 CAD	\$345.00 CAD	\$395.00 CAD
NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION / ASSOCIATION (See note below)	\$145.00 CAD	\$195.00 CAD	\$245.00 CAD
OPTIONAL FOR EXHIBITORS: 3-Day Lunch Pass to dine with conference registrants	\$105.00 CAD for 1 exhibitor / \$210 CAD for 2 exhibitors		

ELECTRICITY AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST — On a first come, first served basis.

* **NOTE:** All prices are in Canadian Dollars (CAD). Booth prices include a 10' x 10' (304.8 cm x 304.8 cm) booth with a 3' x 6' (91 cm x 183 cm) skirted table and two chairs, 2 exhibitor badge passes, a company/organization logo (gif or jpeg format) for promotional use on our DHI Conference 2012 website with an optional link to your website, listing in Program Book, and a registration bag containing conference materials. **PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE ACCESS TO OTHER CONFERENCE FUNCTIONS – EXHIBIT AREA ONLY**

OPERATIONAL HOURS OF EXHIBITS

	TUESDAY, JULY 24	WEDNESDAY, JULY 25	THURSDAY, JULY 26	FRIDAY, JULY 27
SET-UP	Anytime between 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.	Anytime between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.		
DISPLAY HOURS	10:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.			
TAKE DOWN				Anytime between 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Any questions about exhibits should be directed to:

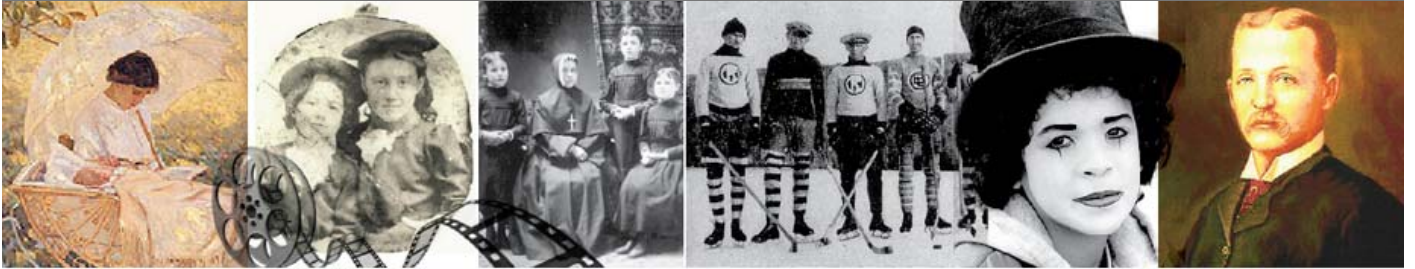
Kari English (Chair, Exhibits Committee)

exhibits@dhiconference2012.ca

8th Deaf History International Conference

TELLING DEAF LIVES: Biographies and Autobiographies
Toronto, CANADA — July 24–29, 2012

www.dhiconference2012.ca

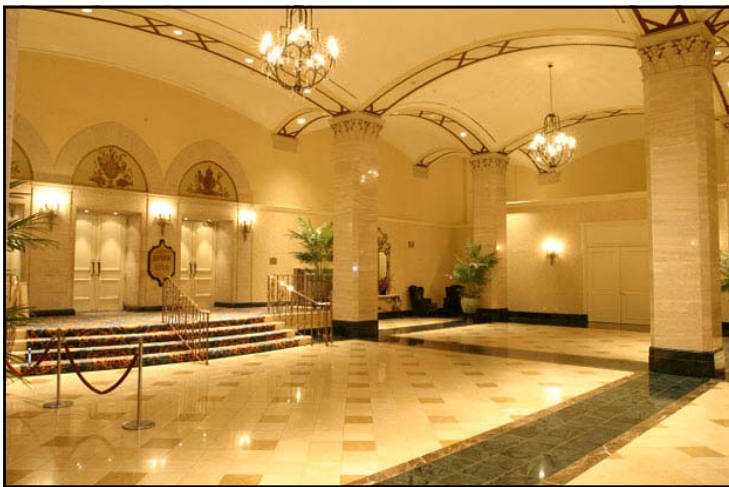


Hosted by Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf

GALA DINNER AND ENTERTAINMENT

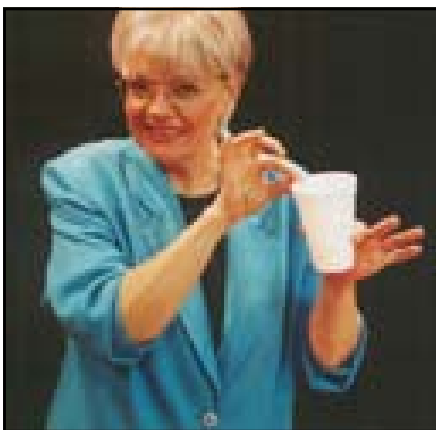
Saturday, July 28, 2012, 6:00 p.m. — 12:30 a.m.

Attire: Semi-formal (no jeans, t-shirts, shorts or running shoes allowed)



The Gala Dinner and Entertainment will take place in the 500-seat Imperial Room on the lobby level at the Fairmont Royal York, a large and historic downtown hotel. It is a 20 minute walk from the official DHI Conference 2012 site, Westin Harbour Castle.

The evening will begin with a reception and silent auction at 6:00 p.m. in the foyer of the Imperial Room. Dinner will be served from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., followed by two live performances given by Angela Petrone Stratiy and David Burke.



ONE WOMAN COMEDY SHOW
ANGELA P. STRATIY

ASL PERFORMER & STORYTELLER
DAVID BURKE



8th Deaf History International Conference

TELLING DEAF LIVES: Biographies and Autobiographies

Toronto, CANADA — July 24–29, 2012

www.dhiconference2012.ca



Hosted by Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf

PAYMENT, CANCELLATION, TRANSFER and REFUND POLICY

REGISTRATION

- Any cancellation or changes must be requested in writing and confirmed by the Chair, Registration Committee before March 31, 2012 for 50% refund of total payment. Exception: Full refund anytime with proof that a VISA application to enter Canada has been denied. Refunds will be processed 30 days following the conference.
- There will be no refunds after April 1, 2012 (including no-shows).
- Registrations are transferable with written notice via letter, fax or e-mail for a fee of \$25.00 CAD (before March 31, 2012) or \$50.00 CAD (after April 1, 2012).

Click here to print and register for the conference:

http://www.dhiconference2012.ca/documents/registration_form_2011-04-27.pdf

EXHIBITS

- Any cancellation or changes must be requested in writing and confirmed by the Chair, Exhibits Committee before March 31, 2012 for 50% refund of total payment. Refunds will be processed 30 days following the conference.
- There will be no refunds after April 1, 2012 (including no-shows).
- Subletting space is not permitted.

Click here to print and reserve a booth:

http://www.dhiconference2012.ca/documents/exhibit_form_2011-06-20.pdf

PAYMENT OPTIONS

There are easy ways to register for the DHI Conference 2012 or reserve a booth at the conference. Payment in Canadian funds (CAD) must accompany registration or booth reservation.

- By online
- By fax
- By wire transfer
- By mail

Registration and Exhibit Reservation Forms which includes payment instructions are available from the conference website.

LETTERS OF INVITATION (for visa purposes only)

- Should you decide to attend our DHI Conference 2012 and need a letter of invitation for visa purposes from our organizing committee, we require full payment of your registration fees before we can issue a letter to you.
- If your visa application is rejected and you provided us with proof of documentation that confirms rejection, we will immediately refund the full payment.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION at WESTIN HARBOUR CASTLE

Special discount rates for DHI Conference 2012 registrants are available when making reservations at this specific website:

<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/booking/reservation?id=1102070392&key=EDAA5>

DHI Bureau Seeks Bids for

DHI Conference in 2018

The Deaf History International Bureau is now accepting bids to host the DHI Conference 2018.

If your organization is interested in having this conference in your home country, please contact Edna Sayers, our DHI Secretary/Treasurer, for information regarding bidding guidelines and procedures. She can be contacted at either e-mail address: edna.sayers@gallaudet.edu or edna.sayers@hotmail.com

For the record, see page 14 for a list of our past and future conferences.

A Monument for Jewish Deaf Victims of the Shoah

Corrie Tijsseling (The Netherlands), Member-at-Large, DHI Bureau

Photo credits: Erika Zeegers (The Netherlands)

On October 17, 2010, a remarkable event took place in the Netherlands as a monument for Jewish Deaf victims of World War II was unveiled. It is located at Hortusplantsoen in Amsterdam. The initiator for this monument was the Stichting Doven-Shoah (Foundation Deaf Shoah) that is headquartered in Amsterdam. This is the first monument for Jewish Deaf victims in the public realm. It was a moving event because Anna Vos-van Dam, a survivor of Auschwitz, did the unveiling. In this article, the work and research of DovenShoah is being described.

On the sunny morning of May 10, 1940, the skies in the Netherlands were full of German planes and it was not until May 5, 1945 before the country was free again. In those five years, the Dutch Jewish people were persecuted and 102,000 of them died during the Shoah, which means, “the full and deliberate destroying of the Jewish people.” The names of all those people are written in the databases of Yad Vashem (www.yadvashem.org/wps/portal/Y_HON>Welcome) and the Dutch Digital Monument (www.joodsmonument.nl/?lang=en). A small part of the Jewish population survived persecution by emigrating or going in hiding. There are many stories of Jewish people who survived the war, but what do we know about Deaf Jewish people? Did they survive? What were their chances? How did they live before and during the war?

Three Jewish Deaf people, who were babies during the war and survived because they were brought to non-Jewish hearing families, felt the need to search for their history. These three are Elly Muller-Engelsman, Flip Delmonte and Eduard Leuw. They founded the commission “DovenShoah” (Deaf Shoah) in the Amsterdam Deaf Club SWDA (www.swda.nl). In 2004, a symposium was organized in regards to Deaf Jews and the Shoah. The symposium inspired to investigate what happened to Deaf Jewish people in the Netherlands and to work towards setting up a monument for these people. The commission “DovenShoah” decided to become an independent foundation, in order to fulfill these tasks. In 2007, the mayor of Amsterdam unveiled a plaque at the building of the former school for the Deaf in Amsterdam, the J.C. Ammanschool at Hortusplantsoen. The plaque remembers of the deportation of Jewish pupils and teachers of this school for the Deaf. However, Stichting DovenShoah decided that a monument should be the next aim, and also that research should be carried out to find out more about this rich part of the history and culture of the Deaf community that has perished in the Shoah.

First, a website (www.dovenshoah.nl) was created. A group of volunteers started the research and gathered



Drawings etched in Dutch Sign Language “de wereld bleef doof” (“the world remained deaf”)

materials such as photographs, letters and other documents. However, the material gave them little lead ways as where to go. Often, they did not have names for the photos and did not have a context for the letters and documents. Furthermore, they had no idea how many Deaf Jewish people lived in the Netherlands before WW-II and how many had become Shoah-victims. The group then decided to use the lists of pupils of Deaf schools as a starting point.

Jewish children were admitted to three of the five Deaf schools in the Netherlands: The Guyot Institute in Groningen (founded in 1790), the school in Rotterdam (founded in 1853) and the school in Amsterdam (founded in 1911). All schools have lists of pupils with details such as name and profession of father, name of mother, and religion. The researchers could thus find the names of Jewish children and then check those names with the databases of Yad Vashem and Digital Monument. Henk Betten searched the lists of the Guyot Institute from 1785 to 1945. The lists of the schools in Rotterdam (1853–1945) and

Amsterdam (1911–1945) were searched by the author. In a later stage of the project, Teun Hibma found valuable documents at the Amsterdam schools and more names could be added to the lists. However, the Rotterdam school stopped recording the religion of pupils in 1911–1912. For this school, all names of all pupils from 1912 to 1945 were checked with the databases of Yad Vashem and Digital Monument.

In this process, the researchers found for the period of 1785–1945 a number of 380 Jewish pupils in the three schools for the deaf. The oldest Shoah victim was Salomon Swaab; aged 85 years when he died in Sobibor in 1943. The youngest victim was Rosa Struch, aged 3 years when she died in Auschwitz in 1942. When the ages of the oldest and youngest victims were accounted for (1857–1939), they found 286 (ex-) pupils of schools for the Deaf of whom 196 died in the Shoah. Others died before the war because of age, illness or accident. So far, only less than 10 survivors are known. All names can be found on the website of DovenShoah. Go to

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

www.dovenshoah.nl, scroll down all below. Next to “Rouwadvertenties,” click on “meer”. This shows a newspaper-like page with mourning advertorials with all the names that can be downloaded as a pdf.

The lists of names gave the research team many leads. It is now possible to see which Deaf Jewish people were related since research has found families with at least 5 generations of Deaf people. One can also see that the majority of Jewish pupils of Deaf schools came from a poor or middle-class background. Another fact is that the majority of them were born in Amsterdam or moved to Amsterdam after leaving school as Amsterdam had a large, active Deaf community with many Jewish members. The non-religious national and local organizations for the Deaf often thrived on the work of Jewish Deaf people. Two examples are Louis Monasch, who had many international connections, and Hartog Zegerius, who received a decoration from the Queen for his extraordinary work for the Deaf organization Guyot. This organization had a general committee, support funds for poor Deaf people and committees for theater, sports and other recreative activities. Louis Monasch and Hartog Zegerius are only two names out of many. It is no wonder that after WW-II the Deaf community found itself helpless as their frontrunners had been killed in the Shoah. It took the Dutch Deaf community many years to recover from this blow. The monument serves to remind the Dutch Deaf community of this massive loss.

Now that the researchers have names and details, they can now start to portray the lives of these people and their work in the Deaf organizations. However, it has to be taken in account that there was no compulsory schooling for Deaf children in the Netherlands until 1947. Not all Deaf Jewish children attended a school for the Deaf. Children from poor families may not have attended a school at all and children from fortunate families received education from a personal teacher. As the work of DovenShoah is becoming known in the wider Dutch (Jewish) community, people start to contact the research team about Deaf people in their families. It is hoped that more names will be found.

Research can also work the other way around. For example, the researchers found a poetry album, owned by Corrie Zwaal-Treskes, a former pupil of the Amsterdam School for the Deaf that contains poems by five Jewish girls whose names were Kaatje Wurms, Bilha Vleeschdrager, Sonja Zeldenrust, Elly Farro and Mimi Reens. These poems and the descriptions of the five authors have been used in lessons at Signis, the present School for the Deaf in Amsterdam. This material serves to teach Deaf children about WW-II, the Shoah, anti-Semitism and racism. Signis has adopted the monument and considers it as an important goal to keep the history alive by teaching Deaf pupils about it. In effort to portray the five girls of the poems the researchers found a hearing relative of one of the girls, a younger brother. As he went in hiding as a baby, he has never known his sister and it was only two years ago that he found out that she was Deaf. October 17, he saw his sister for the very first time as Corrie

Zwaal-Treskes pointed out his sister on a photograph. Also, hearing relatives of one of the other girls contacted the researchers at the monument and the details of this girl were given to them. Thus, research not only enables the Deaf to give an important part of their history back to the Deaf community, but it also helps to give the Deaf Jewish people back to their (hearing) families.

Still, a lot of work lies ahead. The next step for Stichting DovenShoah is to interview non-Jewish ex-pupils of the Deaf schools to ask them about their Jewish fellow pupils in order to learn more about them. Another task is to create a digital database of all Jewish Dutch Deaf people who died in the war, with full details on every person. This data, with the photos and documents, will serve to develop teaching materials. Also, the researchers want to investigate the role of Jewish Deaf people in the Dutch Deaf community and their organizations. The results of this work will be published through articles, films and presentations, on a national and, hopefully in the future, on an international level.

For the international public, the author would like to draw your attention to the website “Deaf people and WW-II” (<http://idea3.rit.edu/paddhd/deafww2/index.asp>). In the video-section of this site go to “USC Shoah Foundation Institute.” Here, an interview can be found with Elizabeth de Jong, survivor of the war and a hearing child of Deaf parents, whose mother came from a Deaf family. Tom Linszen, a Deaf filmmaker, made a film about Anna Vos-van Dam and how she, being Deaf, survived Auschwitz: “Anna’s Silent Struggle” (www.annastillestrijd.nl).

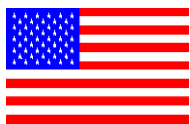


Above: Two pupils from a school for deaf children in Amsterdam (Royal Kentalis School Community Signis) brought flowers for the monument.

Below: A large audience, long after the formalities, there were still people bringing flowers.



DHI CONFERENCES: Past and Future



First-Ever International Conference on Deaf History

Washington, D.C., USA / June 20–23, 1991



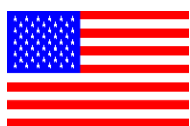
Second DHI Conference

Hamburg, Germany / October 8–11, 1994



Third DHI Conference

Trondheim, Norway / September 10–14, 1997



Fourth DHI Conference

Washington, D.C., USA / June 27–30, 2000



Fifth DHI Conference

Paris, France / June 30–July 4, 2003



Sixth DHI Conference

Berlin, Germany / July 31–August 4, 2006



Seventh DHI Conference

Stockholm, Sweden / August 4–8, 2009



Eighth DHI Conference

Toronto, Canada / July 24–29, 2012



Ninth DHI Conference

Edinburgh, Scotland UK / TBA, 2015

2012 DHI Conference Theme

TELLING DEAF LIVES: Biographies and Autobiographies

2015 DHI Conference Theme

Deaf Sporting Heritage

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