

YOM HAZIKKARON

Educational Resource Guide

Last year, on Yom HaZikkaron, Israel and the Jewish people remembered the 25,040 fallen soldiers and victims of terror. Tragically, because of the continuation of the Swords of Iron War, the number of fallen soldiers and victims of terror has significantly increased. Some of the fallen soldiers were lone soldiers who came to live in Israel without their families. This includes Sgt Rose Lubin z"l, who made Aliyah from Atlanta, Georgia, and was killed in a terrorist attack outside the Old City of Jerusalem in November 2023.



Rose was part of a rich heritage of United States volunteers who fought to create and defend the State of Israel.

PART 1: NATAN ALTERMAN'S THE SILVER PLATTER



Natan Alterman (1910-1970) lived in Tel Aviv after making Aliyah from Poland. He was a poet and wrote a regular column in which he commented on current affairs in Israel through poetry. One of his most famous poems, *The Silver Platter*, was published immediately after the UN decision to create a Jewish State in Palestine in 1947.

Read the poem and discuss the questions.

The Silver Platter - Natan Alterman

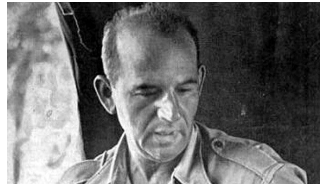
And the land grows still, the red eye of the sky slowly dimming over smoking frontiers
 As the nation arises,
 Torn at heart but breathing,
 To receive its miracle, the only miracle
 As the ceremony draws near,
 It will rise, standing erect in the moonlight in terror and joy
 When across from it will step out a youth and a lass and slowly march toward the nation
 Dressed in battle gear, dirty,
 Shoes heavy with grime, they ascend the path quietly
 To change garb, to wipe their brow
 They have not yet found time.
 Still bone weary from days and from nights in the field
 Full of endless fatigue and unrested,
 Yet the dew of their youth.
 Is still seen on their head
 Thus they stand at attention, giving no sign of life or death
 Then a nation in tears and amazement will ask: "Who are you?"
 And they will answer quietly,
 "We Are the silver platter on which the Jewish state was given."
 Thus they will say and fall back in shadows
 And the rest will be told
 In the chronicles of Israel

- What is the miracle the people are receiving?
- What makes the people feel terror, and what makes the people feel joy?
- What do the young people represent?
- What is the 'Silver Platter'?
- How do you think Alterman is criticizing his society?

Part 2

The Silver Platter represents the 6,000 Jewish and Israeli lives that were lost in Israel's War of Independence. If it were not for their sacrifice, the State of Israel would not have been established nor survived when five Arab armies invaded it. Of these 6,000 lives lost, 39 were volunteers from the United States and Canada. Below are some of the amazing stories of these volunteers. Read some of these as part of a ceremony in memory of the 'Silver Platter' upon which our State was given to us.

The War of Independence, 1948, Micky Marcus



David Daniel Mickey Marcus, a tough Brooklyn street kid, rose by virtue of his courage and intelligence to help save Israel in 1948 and become its first general since Judah Maccabee. After a distinguished military and public service career in the United States, the 46-year-old Marcus wrote his name forever in the annals of Israeli history.

Born to immigrant parents in 1902, Marcus grew up in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, where he learned to box to defend himself against neighborhood toughs. His high school athletic and academic record won him admission to West Point in 1920, from which he graduated with impressive scores. After completing his required service, Marcus went to law school and spent most of the 1930s as a Federal attorney in New York, helping bring Lucky Luciano to justice. As a reward, Mayor LaGuardia named Marcus Commissioner of Corrections for New York City.

Convinced that war was imminent, Marcus voluntarily went back into Army uniform in 1940, and after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, served as executive officer to the military governor of Hawaii. In 1942, he was named commandant of the Army's new Ranger school, which developed innovative tactics for jungle fighting. Sent to England on the eve of D-Day, he voluntarily parachuted into Normandy with the troops of the 101st Airborne Division. Marcus helped draw up the surrender terms for Italy and Germany and became part of the occupation government in Berlin. Admiring colleagues identified him as one of the War Department's best brains. He had a bright future ahead of him as a member of the Army's top brass.

In 1944, Marcus's consciousness of himself as a Jew took a dramatic turn when he was put in charge of planning how to sustain the starving millions in the regions liberated by the Allied invasion of Europe. A major part of his responsibilities involved clearing out the Nazi death camps. Here, Marcus came face to face with the survivors of Nazi atrocities and saw with his own eyes the piles of uncounted Jewish corpses in Europe's death camps. Following that assignment, Marcus was named chief of the War Crimes Division, planning legal and security procedures for the Nuremberg trials.

Through these experiences, Marcus came to understand the depths of European anti-Semitism. Though never previously a Zionist, Marcus became convinced that the only hope for the remnants of European Jewry lay in a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

In 1947, Marcus returned to civilian life. A few months later, the United Nations authorized the partition of Palestine and the eventual creation of a Jewish state. Within days, David Ben-Gurion asked Marcus to recruit an American officer to serve as military advisor to Israel. Failing to recruit one of his friends, Marcus decided to volunteer himself. The U.S. War Department granted Marcus, a reservist, permission to accept the offer, provided Marcus did not use his name or rank or disguise his military record.

Thus, one "Michael Stone" arrived in Tel Aviv in January 1948 to confront a nearly impossible situation. A sea of hostile Arabs surrounded the widely separated Jewish settlements in Palestine. The newly created Israel would have no defensible borders, no air power, a few tanks and ancient artillery pieces, and almost no arms or ammunition. The Haganah was an effective underground organization, but it had no experience as a regular national army. Facing it were well-supplied Arab armies determined to drive the Jews into the sea. The pro-Arab British administration in Palestine prevented the importation of military supplies to the Israelis.

Undaunted, Stone designed a command structure for Israel's new army and wrote manuals to train it, adapting his experience at Ranger school to the Haganah's special needs. He identified Israel's weakest points as the scattered settlements in the Negev and the new quarter of Jerusalem. When Israel declared independence and the Arab armies attacked in May 1948, Israel was ready, thanks to Stone's planning. His hit-and-run tactics kept the Egyptian army in the Negev off balance. When the Jewish section of Jerusalem was about to fall, Marcus ordered the construction of a road to bring additional men and equipment to break the Arab siege just days before the United Nations negotiated a cease-fire. Israel had withstood the Arab assault with its borders virtually intact. In gratitude, Ben-Gurion named Marcus a Lieutenant General, the first general in the army of Israel in nearly two thousand years.

Tragically, Marcus did not live to see the peace. Six hours before the cease-fire began, Marcus was unable to sleep in the village of Abu Ghosh near Jerusalem. He walked beyond the guarded perimeter wrapped in his bed sheet. A Jewish sentry saw a white-robed figure approaching and, not understanding Marcus's response, fired a single, fatal shot. Marcus's body was flown back for burial at West Point, where his tombstone identifies him as "A Soldier for All Humanity." Hollywood would later immortalize Marcus in a movie, "Cast A Giant Shadow."

Ben-Gurion put it simply, "He was the best man we had."

American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. (n.d.). Mickey Marcus. Jewish Virtual Library. Retrieved March 12, 2025, from <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/mickey-marcus>

Stanley Andrews



Stanley Andrews (Anekstein), the son of Rivka and Yosef, was born on April 13th, 1923, in the Bronx in New York. When he was 18, he completed his studies at City College in New York with top grades and discovered he had a talent for sports writing and painting.

In World War II, he was recruited into the U.S. Air Force and served four years as a pilot on the Pacific Ocean battlefield. He reached the rank of captain and received several awards for distinguished service.

After the war, he moved to Los Angeles and studied at the University Art School. Although he had not received a Jewish education, when he heard about Israel's struggle for independence, his Jewish heart was touched. He searched around and found out how to volunteer for the Israel Air Force. His combat flights and his individual actions under difficult circumstances made a very important contribution to the struggle in the battles of June 1948.

In "Operation Yoav," the operation to secure the route to the Negev in October 1948, he participated in several successful bomb sorties against the enemy. On October 20th, 1948, as an additional pilot to non-Jewish Canadian Leonard Fitchett, while making a low-level attack on the Egyptian fortress Iraq-el-Suweidan, their Bristol Beaufighter bomber aircraft was hit by heavy ground fire. All three airmen were killed, including the British-born navigator Dov Sugarman.

Following his death, Stanley Andrews (Anekstein) was awarded the rank of Flight Commander (Captain).

A plaque in his memory was erected at the Military Cemetery on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem.

Machal. (n.d.). Stanley Andrews. Retrieved March 12, 2025, from <https://www.machal.org.il/personal-stories/stanley-andrews/>

Arieh (Ari) Lashner



The son of Chana and Pesach, Arieh was born on April 8th, 1915, in New York. He studied at junior and high school and then entered New York City College, where he took a four-year course in the arts and humanities, emphasizing education and instruction. He received his Zionist education at the Kindervalt school, part of the Poalei Zion movement, and at summer schools run by the same movement.

In 1932, he joined "Poalei Zion" and three years later became one of the key organizers and initiators of the labor Zionist youth movement "Habonim."

From the spring of 1936, he worked in the movement's summer camps in Los Angeles, Chicago, St. Louis, and other places. He was known everywhere as an outstanding educator. As part of his intention to make aliyah, he prepared himself for his new life at the Krimridge Ranch, but after a year, he was pressed to return to his work in "Habonim." During the years 1940-42, he coordinated educational activities and worked at the movement's center in New York, and edited their newspaper "Habonim."

In 1942, he was recruited into the American Navy, and served as a radio officer; during his service he visited many countries, England and France amongst them. On his release from the Navy in 1945, he returned to his previous educational work until January 1946, when he dealt with recruiting volunteers for Aliyah Bet activities. Arieh himself was amongst the first volunteers and went out with two of the first ships that sailed from America.

He arrived in Palestine in July 1946 on the Aliyah Bet ship "Haganah" and joined Kibbutz Kfar Blum, a Habonim kibbutz. His wife was already there, as she had made aliyah previously. He worked in a building on the kibbutz and eventually became an electrician. Before the outbreak of the War of Independence, on March 15th, 1948, while climbing a pole to repair an electric cable that was part of the protective fence of the kibbutz, he was hit by a sniper firing from the eastern side of the Jordan River.

He was laid to rest at the Kfar Blum cemetery, where his wife and daughter were later buried.

Machal. (n.d.). Arieh "Ari" Lashner. Retrieved March 12, 2025, from <https://www.machal.org.il/personal-stories/arieh-ari-lashner/>

Harold (Zvi) Monash



The son of Goldie and Max, Harold Monash was born on January 1924 in Berlin, Germany. He studied at junior and high schools in Berlin until moving to the USA in 1936. His departure from Germany was made possible by an American aid organization. He stayed with his family until his parents arrived in New York in 1940. From 1939-43 he studied at a Technical High School and completed his studies as a certified electrician with excellent grades

In February 1943, he joined the American Army and became a Ranger unit member. In July of that year, he was sent to Italy with the rank of corporal. His battalion suffered heavy losses, and he was one of only 50 men who survived. He volunteered for a paratrooper company and captured three Nazi soldiers in the battle at Anzio Beachhead in Italy, for which he received the Medal for Excellence¹. He was severely injured in the battle for Rome and received the Purple Heart Medal. He returned to the U.S. to recuperate, a lengthy process. In the last days of his army service, he served as an officer in the camps holding German prisoners of war.

On his release from the army, he planned to make aliyah to Palestine and complete his studies at the Technion in Haifa. For this purpose, he studied Hebrew in a special course at a Rabbinical college. He joined a youth movement and then volunteered as a crewman on the Aliyah Bet ship "Haganah," which sailed from France. After he arrived in 1946, he began his studies. After a year of study at Technion, he joined a kibbutz to get to know the country.

At the War of Independence outbreak, he joined the Palmach, served in Hativat Harel, and was sent to the battlefield in the Jerusalem sector. When asked why he was here in a foreign army, a Jew who fought alongside him, the poetry of his youth inspired him, and he replied, "for the benefit of the country of my birth." He sealed this holy covenant on his death as a hero on April 23rd, 1948.

Operation "Yabusi" was carried out in the Jerusalem sector towards the end of April 1948; it aimed to link the Jewish population's territorial area in the city to the settlers in the north of Jerusalem. For the purpose of this operation, Hativat Harel moved to Jerusalem, and on the night between the 22nd and 23rd of April, they attacked Shu'afat, Beit Iksha, and Nebi Samuel.

The assault at dawn on Nebi Samuel was badly timed, and heavy enemy fire forced the troops to retreat after suffering heavy casualties. Zvi fell in this attack. He was laid to rest in the military cemetery at Kibbutz Kiryat Anavim and promoted posthumously to Lieutenant.

In the book *Underground to Palestine*, the American journalist I.F. Stone wrote the following about Monash:

He was one of the few who survived Anzio Beachhead. His shipmates were proud of him, but getting him to talk about his experiences was hard. He spoke of his many missions behind the German lines laconically: "Aw, it was just routine work. You don't want to hear about that." But his shipmates told me that he once lured 3 Germans over the American lines by pretending to be a Wehrmacht officer in the darkness.

The Ranger, as we called him, told me about one of his experiences, which he didn't consider routine.

His outfit was destroyed during the Anzio landing. After his escape from Anzio, a soldier approached him and asked what outfit he was in. He said, "I'm a Ranger."

"This other soldier took a look at me," he went on, "and asked, 'What's your religion?' I said, 'I'm a Jew.'"

"He said, 'How come a Jew got into the Rangers?'"

"I was so mad I pulled out my revolver and would have shot him, but my buddies interfered and held my arms, and my lieutenant walked up and knocked him out with a sock on the jaw."

Machal. (n.d.). Harold "Zvi" Monash. Retrieved March 12, 2025, from <https://www.machal.org.il/personal-stories/harold-zvi-monash/>

George (Buzz) Beurling



Born December 12th, 1921, in Wiarton, Ontario, Canada, and grew up in Montreal. His parents were Hetty Florence and Friedrich Gustav Beurling, who brought him up in the strict observance of their Christian faith, a sect that believed more in the Old Testament than the New Testament. This affected his childhood and education, creating a foundation of calmness and unity and providing closeness to God and the Heavens, leading him to learn to fly at 14.

Also loved music and all branches of sport, especially swimming, attaining a high standard in music and sport.

In the early months of World War II, he tried to join the "Flying Tigers," fighting on the Chinese side against the Japanese. The Canadian and the Finnish Air Forces would not accept him despite his 250 hours of flying time. Ultimately, he reached England on a cargo ship and was accepted as a Pilot in the Royal Air Force. Posted to the besieged island of Malta, where he shot down 27 German and Italian aircraft who were attacking the island without respite, earning the title of the "Maltese Eagle".

In one of the aerial dogfights in which he downed three enemy planes, his Spitfire crashed into the sea. Wounded, he was rescued. While in hospital, he was commissioned as an officer and awarded his third Distinguished Service Medal. He was sent back to Canada to recover, joined the Royal Canadian Airforce, and returned to active duty in the European area. He continued with many heroic air battles and earned more decorations, including the Victoria Cross.

He aspired to contribute to the best of his ability in the justified war against the Nazis, in the spirit of his education and personality, to help his brothers in arms. His book, "Spitfire Above Malta", describes his deeds in the "Battle of Malta" in a graphic and enthralling fashion.

On his return home, he was honored by his city's military and civilian authorities. Because of his worldwide fame as a pilot, he was offered lucrative positions in many countries in Latin America, China, and the Arab world, but he refused to sell himself because of his talents.

When he learned that his country of the Bible had been declared and was struggling for its very existence, he volunteered himself and his abilities to that nation he knew and loved from the Holy Scriptures. He made contact with Haganah representatives and flew as a passenger to Rome. At Urbe Airfield, together with a Jewish pilot from Britain, Leonard Cohen, who had also distinguished himself in defense of Malta and other World War II battles, were preparing to ferry a light Norseman Transport Plane to Israel. Soon after take-off on May 20th, 1948, the plane caught fire in mid-air and crashed engulfed in flames. Both of them were killed. Sabotage was suspected but never proven.

The Canadian Consul in Rome organized his burial in the Catholic Cemetery in Rome. To honor him, the Jews of Rome closed their shops to attend his funeral.

The Israeli Airforce bestowed on him the posthumous rank of Flight Commander. With the approval of his parents, his body was re-interred and transferred to Israel and laid to rest on November 11th, 1950, with a military ceremony in a special section for non-Jews at the Haifa Carmel Military Cemetery.

Machal. (n.d.). George "Buzz" Beurling. Retrieved March 12, 2025, from <https://www.machal.org.il/personal-stories/george-buzz-beurling/>