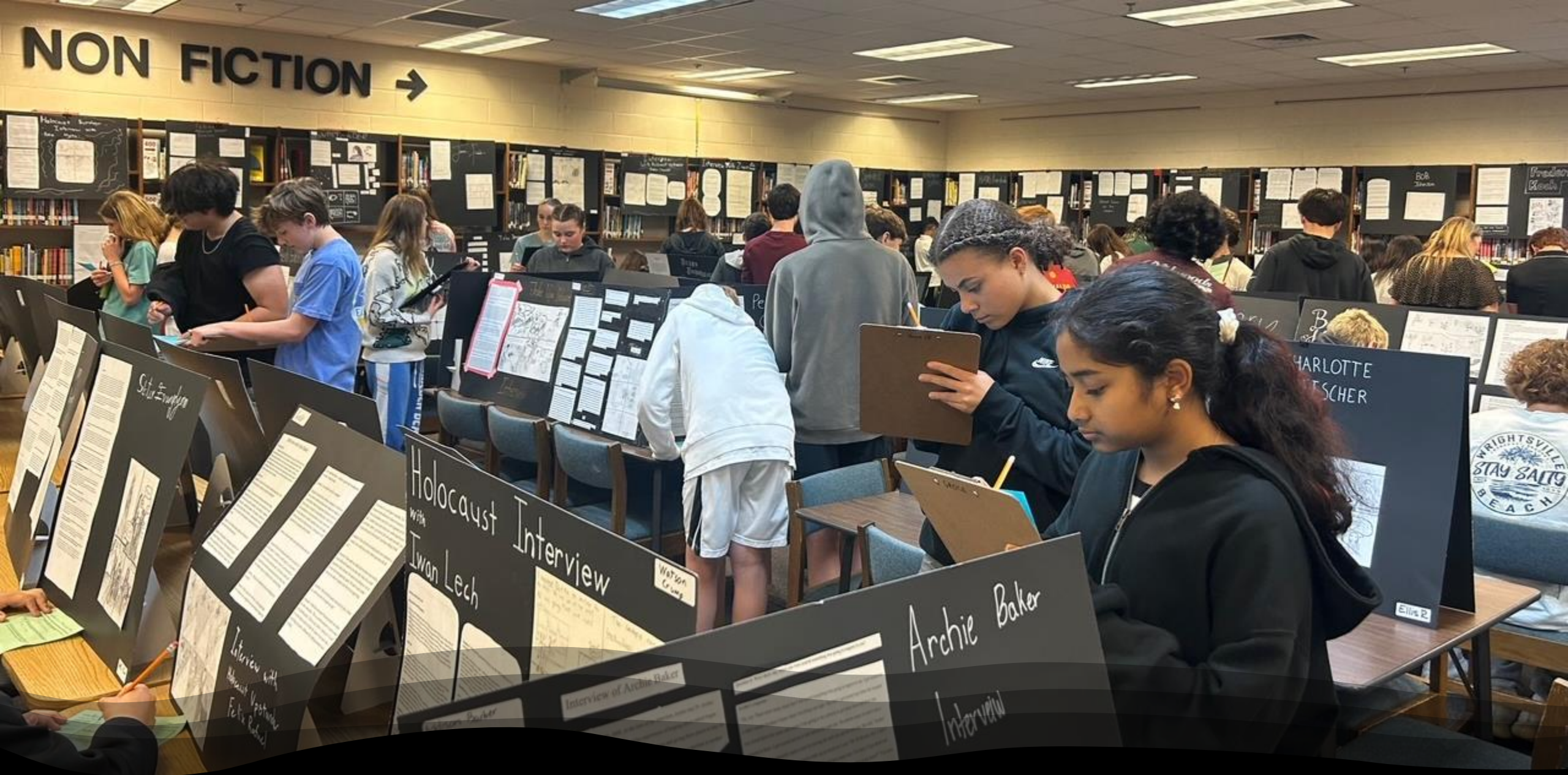


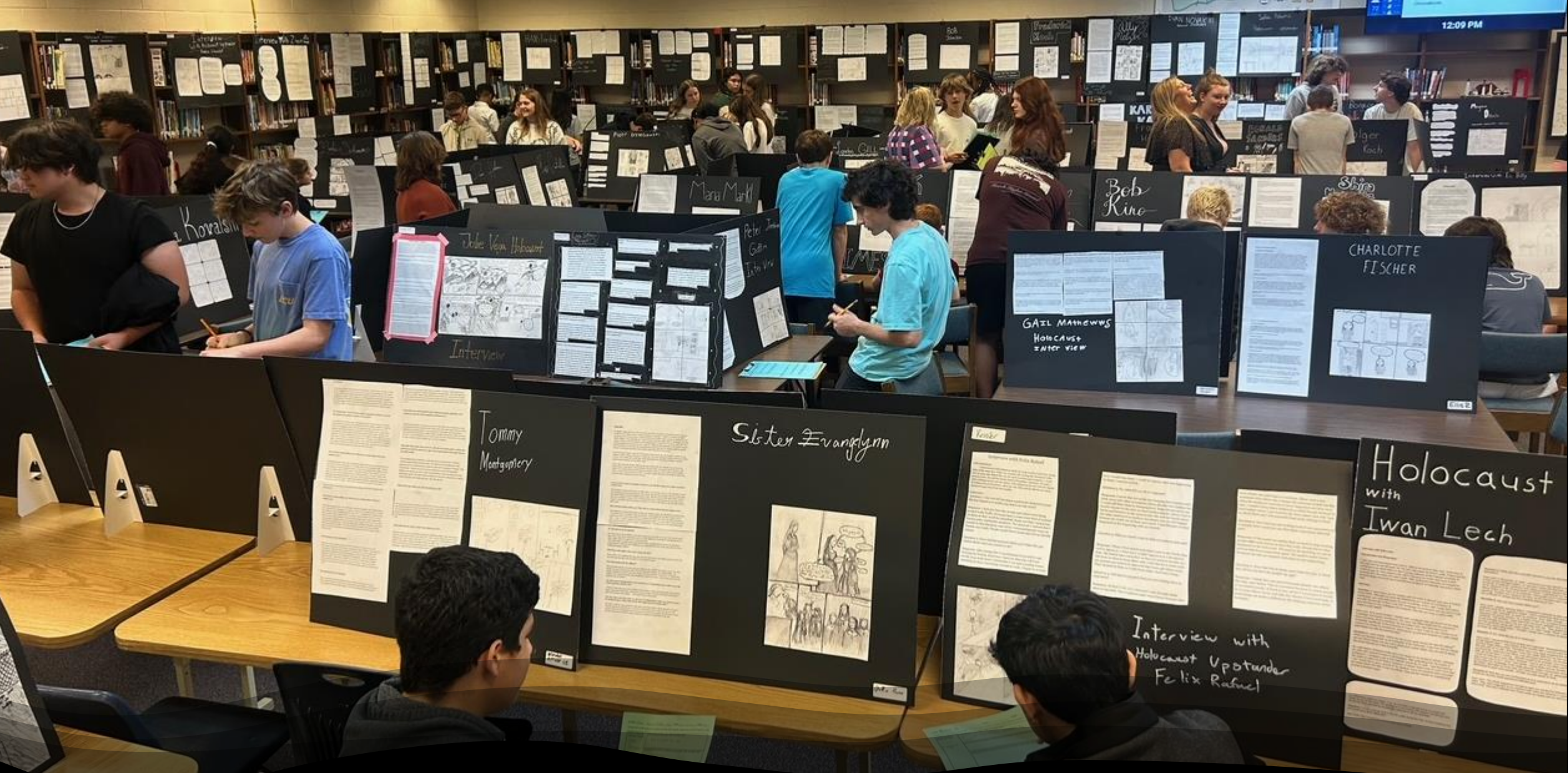


8th Grade Holocaust Upstanders Gallery Walk

April 2, 2024
NWMS Media Center



Student Gallery Walk and Reflection



Student Gallery Walk and Reflection

Mila Schmidt

Interview with Mila Schmidt

I interviewed Mila Schmidt on March 15, 2010, near her home in Blue Ash, Ohio at Summit Park. At the time of this interview Mila is 80 years old. Mila shares her story as a 13 year old girl who was an upstander during the Holocaust. Mila was born in 1930 in Hamburg, Germany. She and her little brother, Louis, as well as some other kids, were homeschooled by her mother; they held school in this little run down cabin in the middle of the woods. Now during the Holocaust, Mila, Louis, and their parents would bring Jews to the cabin and keep them safe and hidden. After the war, Mila and her family moved to the US where Mila and her brother went back to school and shared their story with many. After college, Mila became a nurse, got married and had two children, Charlotte and Adam.

Interview:

Question 1: Mila we know that you had a life changing experience as a Holocaust upstander. I would like to know what led you and your family to helping others and becoming an upstander?

I can remember that day so well, the day we became upstanders. It all started when our good Jewish friends, the Abrams, came over to give us some fresh eggs and homemade bread. The Abrams told us that some of their friends had gotten captured by some Nazis in town, which was part of Hitler's plan. We knew we had to do something; so we immediately started brainstorming ways we could help.

Question 2: After finding out about the other Jewish families how did it affect you or make you feel? What did you realize you needed to do?

Hearing about that news really opened my eyes to what was really going on. Before hearing this news, I had heard about Hitler and that he had some type of plan in newspapers and on the radio. But I didn't really understand what his plan was or what he was trying to do because I was so young. And after receiving the news about the capturing of Jews me and my family knew that we didn't want to lose the Abrams and they also didn't want the Nazis to take them. We had heard about how other Jews are trying to hide from the Nazis; so we decided to do the same thing.

Question 3: So how did you respond to the situation?

Me, Louis and our parents knew that we wanted to help change things because we knew that Hitler's plan was unfair. So we decided to help the Abrams, and any of their Jewish friends, hide and keep them safe from the Nazis. So the next day my parents told them to secretly go to the schoolhouse cabin and bring any of their Jewish friends with them. They told the Abrams and their friends that we were going to hide them there and keep them safe until the Holocaust was over, or until they were able to go someplace else where they would be safe. I can remember bringing them food and supplies in the darkness of the night so that we wouldn't get caught or look suspicious.

Question 4: How did your friends, the Abrams, and other Jews respond when you took them in?

After telling them we were going to help them hide and keep safe they were truly grateful. They also had some relief but also were worried a little bit. They had relief because we were helping them and letting them know that there are good Germans that care about Jews and not just mean Germans who do not like Jews. But they were worried about getting caught and going to a concentration camp or us getting in big trouble.

Question 5: Now looking back at your upstander experience, how would you say this experience affected you?

That experience taught me that even the smallest actions can make a big difference and can really impact lives. What me and my family did was only a fraction in making a difference for the world and making the world a better place. Our actions not only impacted our friends the Abrams and their friends but also helped people recognize that small actions make a difference.

Question 6: Do your grandchildren know about your story as a Holocaust upstander? If so, what message did you try to give them?

I have not only shared my story with my grandchildren but have also shared it with many other people. I have gone and told my story in so many places, but I mainly try to teach people and my grandchildren that you can make a difference even with the smallest actions. Even just trying can help make a change.

Question 7: Now that many years have passed, is there any advice that you would like to share for other generations that may help them in the future?

I would advise everyone to try and make a difference in the world or for your own community. And even just trying counts and the littlest things can impact many. Just know that you are capable of impacting many lives and whenever you get the chance to make a difference, take it, you will be grateful you did it and feel really good with yourself knowing that you tried to make a change. I know that I feel really good about what I did and don't regret anything at all.



Allison A.

This interview of Maja Nowak (66) took place on March 14, 2024 in Majas home in Sosnowiec Poland. Maja created forged passports during the Holocaust to help others escape. Maja ended up getting over one thousand Jews to freedom when she herself was only 15.

Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

The moment that made me realize I had to do this work was when my stepsister, Irena, was taken by the gestapo. I was 15 and we had been coming home from school when we were stopped by the gestapo and asked to show our passports. My sister was not Jewish, but her father had been from Jewish roots and she therefore qualified as Jewish in Hitler's eyes. I tried so hard to fight for her but they took her away and told me not to have any more affiliations with Jews. I never would have even heard from her again if it hadn't been for my mother's connections. One of her friends had connections in the ghetto Irena had been taken to and, after being paid a hefty sum of money by my mother, helped her escape. The only thing we heard from her was that she was safe in hiding, we didn't know where or if we could see her ever again but after the Holocaust we did find her almost 6 years after she had been taken. This almost inspired me to help others to freedom.

How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

It made me so many things. It made me sad, angry, confused, terrified for me and for my sister, completely mortified just at what the world had become, but it also made me so grateful to have the connections my family had because without those, Irena would have become a number in a camp that would be worked to death or murdered. I was so grateful to the person who got Irena out that I decided I wanted to be one of those people that helps out others in spite of bad times, because the only way we would get through these horrific times was by sticking together. I realized there were other people out there just like my sister who needed to escape, who were just waiting for someone to lend a hand and help them out, so I decided to forge passports for anyone who needed to escape.

How did you start making passports?

My father made official documents and passports for the German government before Nazi reign, and had taught me much of his trade growing up, so I became very good at making them. I used his old shop to make them, and I forged almost 20 passports a day, and then I would deliver them at night. I had all the materials I needed to make hundreds of passports because my father had been put out of business, so I had the whole shop and all of its supplies just at the tip of my fingers. I sold these passports off of the black market and so there were specific places you would go to buy and sell illegally and that's where I would sell the passports and also get requests for new ones. I actually enjoyed making passports every night because my neighborhood had not yet been given a curfew. I had a bag with a false bottom so I would pile some food and money on top of the false bottom and that's how I transported the passports.

Did you ever get caught?

There was one time I almost got caught. There were about 20 of us in a random alley one night dealing the black market and a group of Nazi officers found us and started shooting and chasing us. My world just went still for a minute because I had heard all of these stories and news reports about things just like this happening but I never fathomed it happening to me. I was 15 at the time so I could run and hide much faster and easier than many other people there that night so I ran to my old school about 2 blocks away and I hid there for a good 20 hours before I had the confidence to come out.

So, what did you do in response?

I was much more careful after that. Looking back, if we had been in another area or if I hadn't known my way around as well, I would have been taken as a Nazi prisoner of war so after that I was much more cautious, carrying my own forged passport everywhere and I would travel with others in a small group for protection.

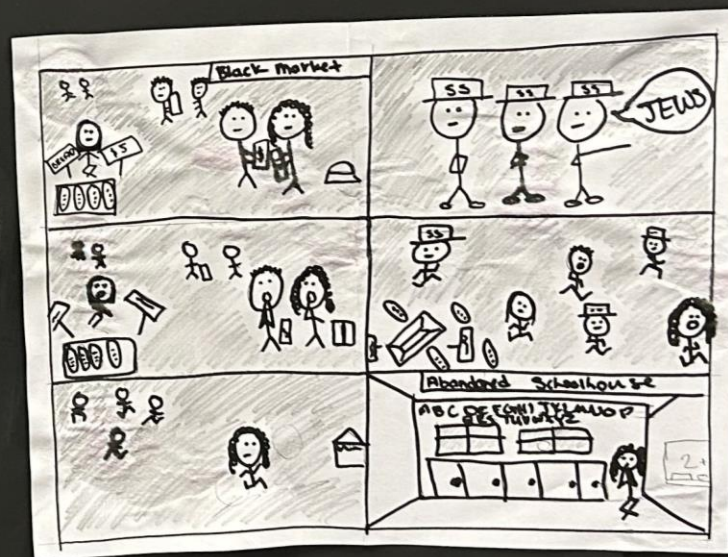
Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

I would say it affected me both positively and negatively. I got to see up close all of the worst of the Holocaust. I saw so much bad I thought the world might never heal from it. The thing I did do for me however is it let me be one of the people to help the world heal. I saw people murdered and tortured, but I also saw them escape into freedom, and I got to be the reason that they were free. I think it showed me that through the evils in the world, even if nobody else is, you can be the one to heal the world.

Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

I would just say that if you ever see an injustice, big or small, fix it. It can be as small as sticking up for a friend or as big as saving millions from torture and murder. Don't leave it to others to make the world a better place, do it yourself and inspire others to do the same.

MAJA NOWAK



Anna P.

Introduction And Biography:

I interviewed Vesdek Kino on March 17th, 2017, in his house in Berlin, Germany on Oak Lane. This was also his childhood home. When this interview was taken Vesdek was eighty-six years old. Vesdek told of his life as a seven-year-old child in the heart of Germany during WWII. He was the second oldest of four children. Only his younger sister, Anabel, survived the war out of all his siblings. Vesdek hid many Jewish children when they didn't have anybody to care for them. He kept some of them hidden throughout the war. After the end of the war, Vesdek was taken in by his Uncle Bob Kino since both his parents had died. His Uncle lived next door and was able to keep Vesdek's five-story childhood home available for when he was an adult.

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Vesdek's Response:

The moment that awakened me to what I needed to do to help was on Kristallnacht, November 9th, 1938, when I was seven. I saw my friend being beaten from the living room window of my house on Oak Lane and decided right then to go and help him. Thinking back now I realize my brother, Lucas, must have seen me leave and followed me for my safety. After I left the house I ran over to my friend, Marcus, I tried to pry Marcus away from the man beating him. It didn't work so I just jumped on top of Marcus instead and took the brunt of the attack. The man didn't care I wasn't Jewish, he was made purely of rage at that moment. I was certain my life would end when suddenly Marcus and I were thrown a few feet away and I heard my brother, my precious older brother, shout at us to run as fast as we could back to my bedroom in our house. I regret not trying to help him but I know I would have died if I had helped him. Marcus and I ran to my bedroom as fast as our little 7-year-old legs could take us. I only found out later that my brother had sacrificed himself to save Marcus and me. After that, I decided to go and shelter any Jewish children I could find. They deserved better than what was done to them.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Vesdek's Response:

After this happened to me I felt scared of everything for a while but soon realized that what was really needed from me was to hold out a willing hand to kids my age who needed someone. Their parents may have been taken away but if I

helped them they could stay alive and be able to tell their kids one day about their experiences. I know of at least two of the kids I helped that have since found family members and loved ones they thought they would never see again.

Question 3(Follow-Up Question): Did you see the kids meeting their loved ones again?

Vesdek's Response:

Fortunately, I was able to see one of the meetings but not the other. I'm still friends with Marcus so when he called me and said he had heard his Aunt Delilah was still alive I made it my goal to reunite them. It took a while but it was worth the wait. I'm glad they got to see each other again. They meet up at the library quite often to talk. I know of many who would kill to be in Marcus' position after what happened to them during the war.

Question 4: So, what did you do in response?

Vesdek's Response:

After saving Marcus I felt a burden for the other Jewish kids. After Kristallnacht I was watering our garden when I found a little girl, no more than five at the time, hiding in the little sunflower corner. She was the second kid I saved. Her name was Ana and unfortunately, she died in the past few years. After Ana there was Henri, he was a French Jew and he had been on the run when he saw Marcus out and about and decided to talk with him. The twins, Anneliese and Gisela, came soon after that. They arrived much the same as Henri did. My Mother was constantly going out for extra food, sometimes even stealing, when one day she was caught. She was given the death penalty and after that, I only helped one more kid. His name was Adler. He had tuberculosis and died soon after he arrived from his disease and lack of treatment.

Question 5: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Vesdek's Response:

Looking back I think the death of my family members, my brother Lucas giving up his life for me, my Mother died so we could have food, my Father was a Nazi and died after the Nuremberg Trials, and my baby brother, Otto, was killed young since he had down syndrome, have given me the ability to persevere when life is hard. These experiences gave me the courage and bravery to do what needed to be done. Without their deaths, I may not have been able to save all these people.

When I was focused on saving all the kids, Marcus, Ana, Henri, Anneliese, Gisela, and Adler, I couldn't focus on my pain from the deaths of my family. It gave me purpose when I felt I had none. Since then I've had multiple suicide attempts. I've been on antidepressants for a while too. I'm just glad my Uncle Bob Kino was there for me. Without him, the effect of all the horror I had felt and seen during that time would have hit me hard and I'm not sure I could have gotten back up from that. He comes to my house often to make sure I'm still alive.

Question 6: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

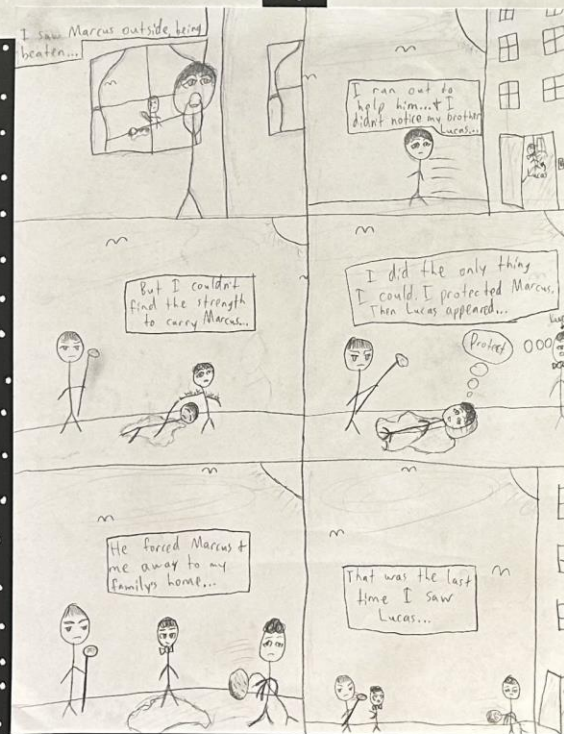
Vesdek's Response:

I would tell people your age or in your generation that you should never take anything for granted. I took my life in prosperity for granted and ignored how evil my father was until I saw firsthand what he did. I would also say to always help out someone in need. I don't regret taking part of the beating for my friend Marcus. I do regret not going back for my brother though. I only regret not helping out more than I did help. I feel like I could have done more but I didn't. It's a horrible sensation, that you could've helped more but all I did was help a few. At this point, I believe my life wasn't worth the lives of so many. To give up your own for someone else is the greatest honor.

Question 7: Do you believe you're a hero for what you did?

Vesdek's Response:

Goodness no! I barely made a dent in the amount of Jewish children who could've needed my help. I knew of a few who even reached out for help but I was too scared for my safety then that I didn't help them. At first, I wasn't careful with the people I helped and I didn't care who saw me. After my mother died for stealing food from a vendor, this was when any crime was punishable by death, I was scared about everything. It's a miracle I kept any of the kids I was already helping alive. Plus, it's not as though anyone knows about me. Heroes, like Carl Lutz and Miep Gies, created a real difference. I saved a few nobodies who haven't told their stories, not that I don't love and appreciate each and every one of them of course! They just didn't write books about what happened to them.



Vesdek Kino

Annabelle L.

Heidi Goldstein

Upstander Interview of Heidi Goldstein:

"Oh, one particular moment? I'd have to say when I first arrived at Auschwitz when the stuck-up officers were quickly identifying us to decide our fate. They asked us simple questions like our age, our job, and our health. My mother and I always had a broad physique for a lady which made us look older. I lied about my age because I had heard from another inmate that they don't accept the youngings. I was eh, 15 at this time but I could pass for a few extra years." Cracking a smile, she continued, "I told the officer I was 19 and it seemed believable. He pointed me to go to the right, along with my mother. My little sisters followed behind us in line for some time but... Heidi turned away in sorrow and guilt as if preparing to shed a tear. She forced me again and mumbled her next few words "...that was the last time I ever saw my dear Aliya and Aliya and I never spoke to each other again." I was the last one to see her. I saw her bulky finger to the left, opposite of us. I longed to be with them but I knew it was best to stay with my mother. Aliya and Alona were too young to be spared along with tons of other children who had never been given a chance in life because of their age and overall strength."

"At that moment, I knew that I would not, and could not just sit back and do nothing about this appalling situation that bastard has put us in! *Fuming up and getting strict with her words, she relayed how she felt.* 'I couldn't bear the thought of letting them do this to innocent little kids. I always thought to myself, 'What had they done to deserve this?' or 'How could these poor children be justifiably killed like this?' I wasn't able to live with myself knowing that people, especially those sweet little kids, were being put to death as we were working. And the fact that my own blood, my darling younger sisters, had been a part of this hate crime towards children makes my blood boil. I do not understand how any Nazi, follower of Hitler, or supporter could condone this activity! Anyone who has a heart knows how I feel.' *Toning it down, she*

Question #3: So, what did you do in response?

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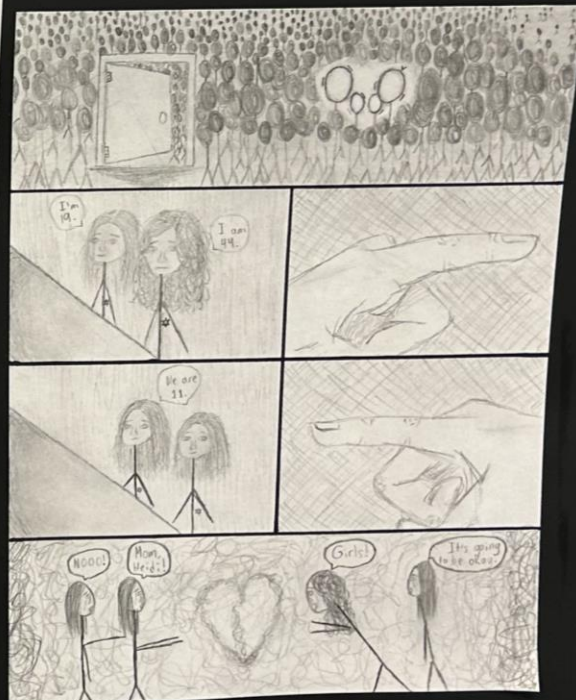
Question #5: Do you ever think about the person you shared a relationship with or what happened to them after their stay at your safe house?

"Yes, I do think about Micah occasionally. Every time I wonder what happened to him I always tell myself the same thing, "I got him as far as I could and wherever he is now, he is at peace." I want to believe that he made it out alive so badly but the chances aren't likely. An alone, deaf little boy who can't articulate himself would be a great target for those Germans." *Fidgeting with her hands she looks down as she says all of this showing her bleakness.* "I will forever remember him and if he is alive today I hope he remembers me too."

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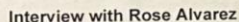
adults?
 "Hm, advice? Yeah, so I'd say to never take anything for granted because you never know what might happen and you could have everything stripped away from you in a second. So cherish the moments you have and always make the best out of every scenario because stressing and getting upset over something never helps the problem at hand. You need to be patient with people and always be forgiving and selfless. You never know what someone else is going through and you don't want to hurt them. Especially because often you'll find that other people are not like that and you can't change it so you have to work with what you can. Always be thankful for what you have, even if it's not much. And this is something that I learned that people say when I came to

the United States, "Treat others the way you want to be treated." and that is so true. I always say, "Be what you see that others lack." I'm not saying to try to be better than your peers, but you should know how you can tell when someone doesn't have manners? After it well, it's like that but trying to do they act like that and you try not to act like that after you see it. Well, it seems someone lacking a trait then it be the best version of yourself from the inside out, and if you see someone lacking a trait then you should try to not be like everyone else. The moral of the story is to always strive to be your best self, help others, be grateful, and be kind. There is so much evil in this mad world but one person can make a difference so try to make a difference in yourself today." Heidi smiles as she finishes her sentence and widens her eyes as she looks pleased with herself.



Avery H.

ROSE
ALVAREZ



By Brian Long

I am interviewing Rose Alvarez today on December 20, 2010, back in her home city, for my new podcast, *Holocaust Upstanders*, after she moved back in 1963. Rose Alvarez was 23, a young, Spanish woman when the Holocaust first started. Born on July 23, 1918, she started life with a humble beginning. Growing up, she lived with an older sister, younger brother, and a single mother, Isabella Alvarez in Alicante, on the Mediterranean coast. Although the family was struggling, they were happy together and had both bad and good experiences. When she was 22, she moved to Germany for a promising job opportunity as a journalist. Over the years of living in Germany through the Holocaust, Rose did not agree with the prejudice against Jewish people, and saved over 100 of them.

Question 1: You are known as a rescuer. I would like to know more about your story. Can you tell me how you came to do this work?

In 1941, when the Holocaust was just beginning, I was a journalist working in Germany. I had moved the year before as Jews were in high demand in Germany as an upcoming war was brewing. I lived in a suburban area of Berlin, in a tight-knit community. The Goldberg family was a Jewish family I had gotten to know quite well. It was a gloomy evening and the sun was setting. I had just gotten back home from work. I heard a commotion in one of the nearby houses. Swiveling around, I saw 2 Nazi soldiers with rifles pointed at the Goldbergs, and another 2 pushing them into the back of a large, gray truck. I stood in horror and froze at the sight. I wanted to help the friendly, generous Goldbergs, but fear overwhelmed me and I forced myself to navigate to my house, ignoring their pleas for help. For a month, I couldn't sleep as my guilt and sorrow haunted me throughout the night.

This experience made me realize that I had to take action and that what they were doing was horrible and unjust. I made the decision to help Jewish people as much as I could and to overcome any doubts or fear I had. I knew that if I didn't do something to redeem myself for my lack of action, I would go the rest of my life in shame and would constantly think about what I had- or hadn't- done.

To take action, I decided that I would build a safehouse in my attic where Jews could survive and hide from Nazis. I started by installing a wooden wall halfway in between the attic, and then filling that side with large wooden crates. In one of the crates, I cut off the top and one of the sides. The crate would be filled with old books, which you could then empty out, climb inside, enter the other space, then fill the crate again, and the spot would be very inconspicuous. I was able to find many Jewish people to hide through friends and colleagues who I trusted. Over the course of the Holocaust, I was able to house over 100 Jewish people, up to 8 at a time.

Yes, there was a time when I wasn't able to save someone. Around 2 years into my escape, an unfortunate coincidence occurred. Typically, I would be the one looking for Jewish people to help, rather than them finding me. I would contact trustworthy friends who would let me know if they knew or saw any Jewish people in need of help. But on one fateful day, I was sleeping in my house as I heard loud shouting coming from the street. I woke up and saw a group of men in German uniforms, urgent knocking outside. I got out of bed and went out to the person. A bright flash lit up the windows and loud barking ensued. I saw a dog running in the yard. I saw a bright flash lit up the windows and I made out 4 or 5 men and a dog. One of the windows, wondering what was going on. I made out 4 or 5 men and a dog. One of the humans fell onto the ground as the dog held onto their leg. The other humans were wearing Nazi uniforms and pulled the dog off while holding the other person down.

I would say that this experience has affected me by giving me a very different perspective on life. The experience made me realize how valuable life is and that I should be thankful for everything that I have and every second I live. I find that people nowadays don't realize how much they have, and are always wanting more.

Be grateful for everything you have and enjoy life as much as you can. Don't stress about things that aren't important and focus on what you can change. Always try to help others who deserve it and don't care about what other people think as long as it is not evil or bad.

Although the event was horrible and painful, people who went through it should inform others about how bad it was and what happened in order to prevent it from happening again. A genocide like the Holocaust should never happen again and was extremely cruel. So many Jewish people did not deserve to die simply because of their race. I hope that people will be aware of the horrors that occurred and understand to stop it if something like it ever starts again.

Interview with Eliza Smith

Introduction and Biography:

I interviewed Eliza Smith at her home in New York City on July 7th in 2007. At the time of the interview, Eliza was 13 years old and married with a daughter that plays in the professional soccer league. Eliza talks about her teenage years living in Poland during the Holocaust with her wealthy family including her mom, dad, and two older brothers. At the age of 17 she acted as a huge impact in the Holocaust saving her best friend's family by building an underground shelter for them. After the Holocaust Eliza moved to America and started her career as a professional soccer player.

Interview:

Question 1: Eliza, you are known for being an upstander. Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Eliza's response: I realized I had to do this work when my best friend came to my house and her family was crying saying "I won't see you again". At this moment I knew something had to change because I couldn't live with the guilt of denying my friend's family. I needed to help them. With this realization and acknowledgment I began to plan the idea of saving my best friend's family with the help of my family and our resources.

Question 2: So how did you act as an upstander? What did you do that made you known?

Eliza's response: I acted as an upstander by helping my Jewish friend and her family by building them an underground shelter for them to stay with materials they need to survive. This happened when my friend and her family came to my house one day and asked for help because she had to leave and hide. I couldn't say no, and I helped them. We came up with a plan to build an underground shelter with tunnels that lead to my house with all the resources and materials they need. This plan was successful and they weren't ever found.

Question 3: Can you tell me what your feelings were like at that moment when your friend was asking you for help?

Eliza's response: At the moment when I saw my friend at my door, knowing something was wrong I felt panic. Once she explained the situation to me I felt nervous and scared for her and her family. When I told my family everything I had calmed down a little, but I was still scared. I would say if I could remember throughout the whole thing I felt panic and I was questioning if my decision was the right choice. After we had created the idea and knew the plan I felt more relieved and confident of it and I knew I made the right decision.

Question 4: Throughout taking the action of making a change, did you ever come across any problems?

Eliza's response: Yes, in fact I do remember coming across some problems. At first when I told my family the plan I had created, they were not so sure we had enough resources to follow that plan. After a day or two we realized that we did have enough resources and that problem was resolved. Later on another problem occurred, the problem was internal. My internal problem was overthinking and worrying about what would happen to me and my family. That was a problem I had throughout the whole process of helping my friend and her family.

Question 5: Would you consider yourself a hero? How do you feel about yourself?

Eliza's response: I wouldn't necessarily consider myself a hero but I do think I made a big impact. At first I didn't consider myself as an upstander but as time went on I began to think of myself as more of an upstander. I am proud of my accomplishments and the sacrifices I made. I don't brag about my sacrifices or accomplishments, I believe anyone who takes risks for others and is caring can be an upstander just like me.

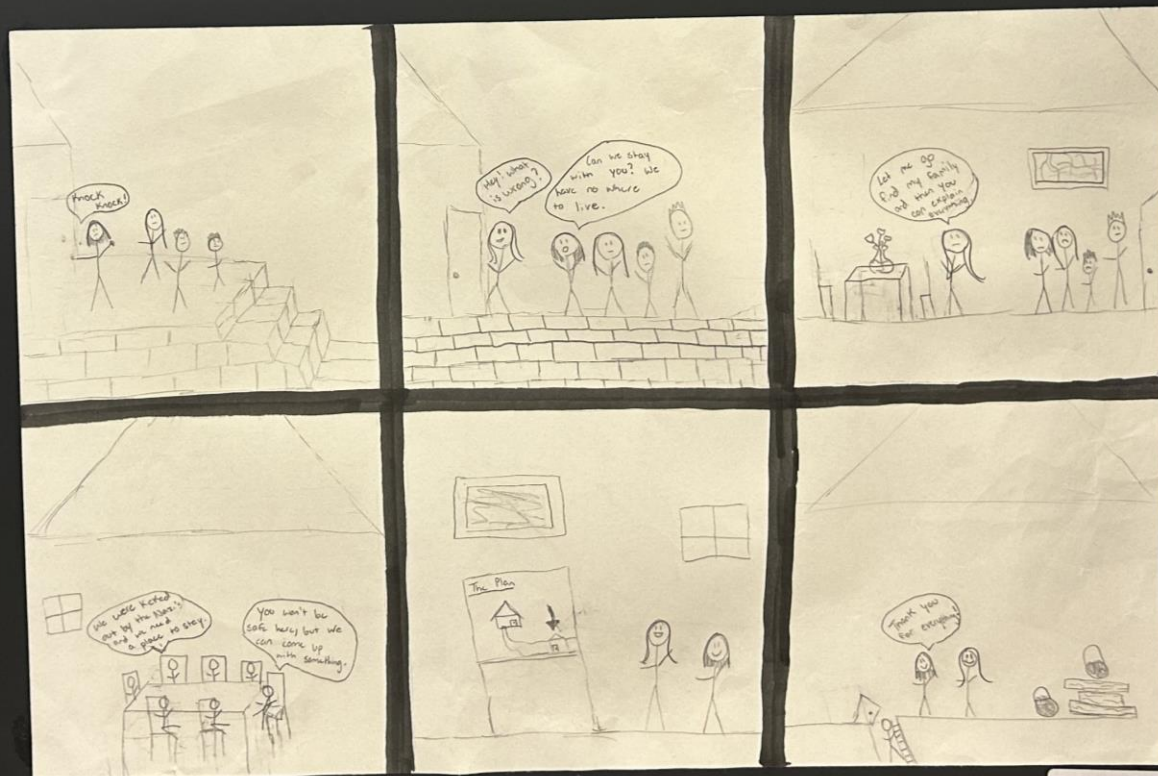
Question 6: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Eliza's response: I would say this whole experience affected me by showing me how just one good deed or action you can do for someone can change their life and the lives of the people around you. I am happy and proud of myself for taking care of my friend and her family but it has given me anxiety. I worry that there is always someone watching me, I have kept those issues for my whole life. I would say the experience was horrible but it made me the person I am today.

Question 7: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Eliza's response: Looking back, the advice I would give to the future generations that might help you is just take a minute or anything to go out of your way and take a risk to help others because one action from you can impact others in so many different ways. Yes, there can be a risk to do something for someone else but it is more rewarding in the end. I have learned that helping someone can change their lives. I knew what I had done in the moment taking that risk for my friend and her family, and I haven't regretted it once.

Interview with Eliza Smith



Brianna M

Interview With May White, Upstander During The Holocaust

Introduction and Biography

I interviewed May White on November 12, 2010, in Seattle. She was an upstander during the holocaust. Before the holocaust, May had several Jewish friends, but they were sent to death camps. May had a normal life before the holocaust with many friends and a husband. May helped to save her friend and several of her friend's family members. When the Nazis came to invade May's house, they were sadly found and sent to death camps. May will now answer the questions and tell her story.

Interview:

Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

May's Response:

Well, several of my friends were sent to death camps already and I wanted to step in and stop it from happening again. So my friend was about to have to be sent to a death camp, so I needed to help. I hid her in my pantry which had a secret door. I knew this was risky and I could be killed, but I wanted to help.

How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

May's Response:

Well...that moment affected me because I was risking my life for my friend. I needed to be brave. I realized that this would be risky but I needed to step in and help my friend.

So what did you do in response?

May's Response:

I helped hide her in my secret room in my pantry. There is a fake door/shelf in there. I had her there followed by her family members. I also helped other Jews throughout the holocaust by providing food and finding places for them to stay. I helped 20 people throughout the holocaust.

Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would say this whole experience affected you?

May's response:

I feel like it made me realize that everyone can save lives if you are brave enough and can risk your life, also go one step at a time.

Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

May's response:

I would say to take life one step at a time and help in every way possible. Such as helping whenever you can, or being kind to people.

What would you say is the scariest event that happened while saving people and being an upstander?

May's response:

I would say that the scariest event would be when the Nazis came and invaded my house, and found the hiding spot and they took my friend and her family members away. They were screaming so loud and were sent to death camps. They were dragged out to the trucks and the Nazis treated them awfully. I never saw them again.

How stressful was it?

May's Response:

It was the most stressful time in my life. I wanted to save my friend and her family, but I didn't want to take my life away and risk it. When the Nazi's came their truck screeched as it reached the house. When they were taken away, my friends were screaming and although they knew they could not resist it, they tried to not go. I am happy that I got to help, even though I did not save them.

May White



Mattie

Caroline K.

Interview with Borys Bazek Introduction and Biography

I interviewed Borys Bazek in the Gainesville, Florida public library on May 2nd, 1995. At the time of the interview, Borys was 83 years old. Borys relayed events from his early childhood in Warsaw Poland. He had two siblings who got drafted into the war and unfortunately did not make it out alive. As a 30-year-old protective father, he sent his two children to the United States. He worked to protect Jews in his convenience store. After WWII ended Borys joined his family back in the United States.

Interview:

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Borys response: The day that I became a father. Everybody I chose to hide was somebody else's child. When my son was born at night and I put him in my arms it changed my perspective on life. He was a tiny defenseless baby, wriggly and perfect. I would do everything and anything to keep my son and other kids safe even if I had to risk my own life for it because I remember that one moment when my baby was born and want other parents to feel that.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Borys response: I realized it was my duty to protect other kids because I would want somebody to do that if my kids were in that situation. I felt like there was no other choice. When I saw these kids worried if they would be able to live the rest of their life I knew that I had to take action to ensure they could live their life to the fullest. It didn't matter the ages of the children, I was willing to protect all of them, from the tiniest of babies to teenagers and even adults if I really had to. Each one deserved to live.

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

Borys response: I hid the kids in the attic of my convenience store and provided them with good health and nutrition. I knew that the attic was empty and nobody would suspect me of hiding anybody up there so I knew it was the perfect place for them. For the attic to work I had to make some changes to it so nobody would find it or suspect anything. I put a shelf for food in front of the door and nailed it shut. I put a bed in the attic and a fridge up there so they can keep their food safe.

Follow-up question: What was the most difficult part of having children hide in your attic?

Borys response: The hardest part was keeping children quiet. I tried to soundproof the attic as best I could, but kids will be kids. They could only move around at night and had to whisper during the day. The worst part was keeping the children from crying because they missed their families.

Question 4: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Borys response: This experience made me realize how bad of a time that was and what everybody had to go through to try to make it out alive and do the best thing for their kids. I would want another parent to do the same thing if me and my kids were in this situation. Which I would do the best things for my kids.

Question 5: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Borys response: Even if you don't know the person you should put yourself in the parents' shoes so you know the decision they have to make. You never know what you can accomplish or do as a parent to help your kids out.

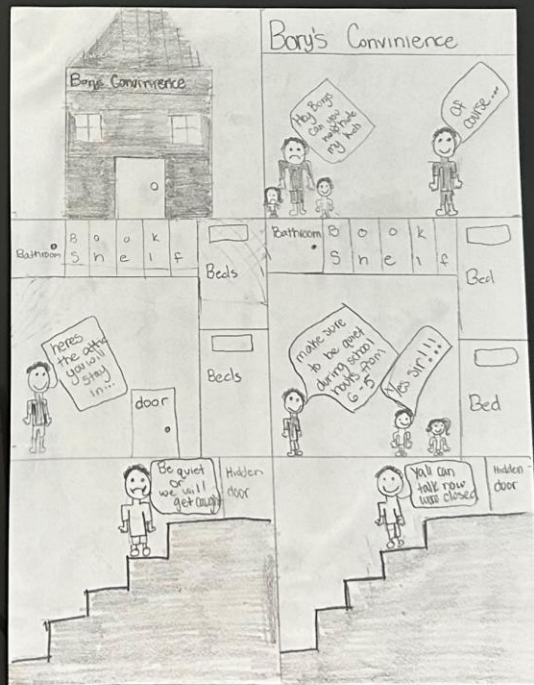
Question 6: Why would you risk your life to help other people?

Borys response: The reason that I risked my life to help random people is I felt that I had no choice and that I wouldn't be a great person if I did not help at all. When I was in public one day I saw someone ask a citizen if they would simply help hide their kids until the war was over and they said no. I saw the parents walk off and cry because they knew that there was a good chance they were gonna get captured.

Question 7: How badly did hiding Jews in your store affect it?

Borys response: It affected my business a whole bunch. I had to be careful of who I let in the store. I had to make sure that it was a German soldier trying to search my business and I had to make sure that I did different things to make sure that nobody got caught. I had to make sure no matter what that I protected these innocent kids who were being targeted for having a certain religion even if that meant I had to risk my own life to make sure they were safe.

BORYS BAZEK



Carson N.

Aaron Cohen

Upstander: Interview with Aaron Cohen Introduction and Biography

I interviewed Aaron Cohen on August 6, 2005, in Greensboro, NC at a local park near his home. At the time of this interview, Cohen was 81 years old. Cohen talked about events from his early life before the Holocaust in Germany living with his two sisters and his brother. He was only 17 years old when he and his family experienced the Holocaust. A year after the war started Cohen came home with his parents gone as they were taken away to a concentration camp. With 3 younger siblings and no one to take care of them, Cohen stepped into action building a safe room where they could hide so they would not suffer the same fate as his parents. He took excellent care of them all by himself and was able to save his siblings from the horrors of the Holocaust successfully. After the war, Cohen moved to the United States with his brothers and sisters living in a house with all of them. Unfortunately, his sisters and brother whom he had saved all passed away in recent years due to old age.

Interview:
Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Cohen's Response: During the Holocaust, it was tough already to get through life as the fear of dying and being taken away was always on my mind. My parents could barely support our family and I didn't get to see them often. At age 17, I came home to my parent not there. I thought they were just staying at their jobs later like they do frequently but as the hours passed, no one showed up and it was just me and my siblings with no one to take care of us. Later, I figured out that they were taken away to Auschwitz and killed as they arrived.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Cohen's Response: The moment I realized my parents were not coming back I felt sadness and anger inside wanting to fight back against the Germans who had taken them away. I knew that I could not let my siblings I love suffer the same fate and be taken away. I realized that I had to take action to prevent my sibling from being taken away. I thought for a while about how to protect them and decided to build them a safe room where they could hide.

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

Cohen's Response: I built a safe room inside the walls of our house where I could keep them safe. Every day I would bring them food and supplies knowing that I was doing the right thing. The fear of losing them the same way I lost my parents kept me going from day to day. I had to trade and convince others to help me out and it was hard to take care of all of them by myself. I had to be very careful because one wrong move could get me caught and end both my life and my sibling's life. After 3 years of hiding them, I had saved their lives and they were able to live in the real world for the rest of their life.

Question 4: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say the whole experience affected you?

Cohen's Response: This experience during the Holocaust helped me realize that I could be an upstander and do something to save others during hard times. I felt braver and more powerful after pushing through 3 years of taking care of my siblings. I do not regret anything that I did and I would not change how I helped them. Every second spent protecting my family was worthwhile. The experience will be something that I will never forget.

Question 5: Now that many years have passed, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better people?

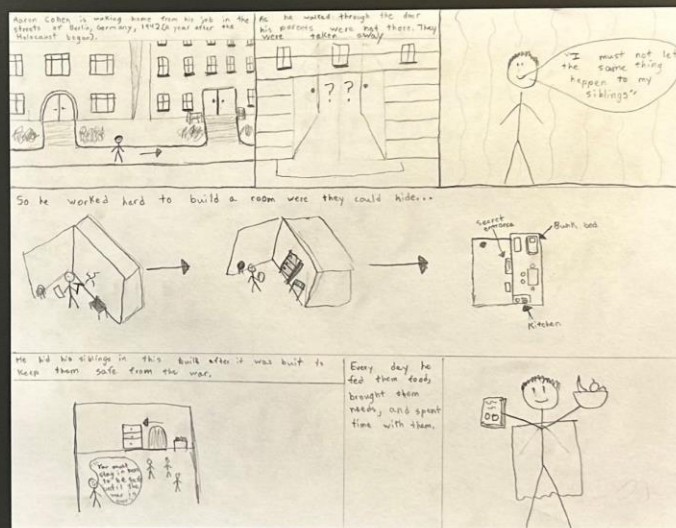
Cohen's Response: One piece of advice I would give to the world would be never to give up or lose hope after a hard time or moment in your life. The best thing to do is to be strong and do something about it. Make it better for yourself and others around you. If I had given up and did not hide my sibling from the Germans chances are that I would not be at this interview today and my siblings would have been alive as long as they were. I chose to act up against the hard moment of losing my parents and I made things better for my siblings instead of giving up.

Question 6: What happened to you and your siblings after the war?

Cohen's Response: Shortly after the war my siblings and I decided to move to America for a new life. We found a home here in NC where I raised my two younger siblings sending them to school here and giving them many fun normal experiences. As for my other sister, she moved into a home near us and got a job as a teacher. Me and my siblings lived the rest of our lives peacefully.

Question 7: How did your siblings first react to losing their parents? What did they say when you told them that you were hiding them?

Cohen's Response: All three of my siblings were filled with similar feelings when my parents were taken away. They were very scared of that happening to them and were accepting of my plan to hide them. They were very cooperative and were brave to stay there for 3 years. It was hard for them to get along with each other and it was hard not to let them go out but things worked out in the end as they were all safe from the war.



Connor D.

Interview With Ajax Miller

I interviewed a Holocaust Upstander named Ajax Miller on January 1, 1983. At the time of this interview, he is 81 years of age. He lives in Whiteing, New Jersey, and he was originally from Berlin, Hungary during the Holocaust. He is the eldest sibling amongst his three other siblings. He was 41-45 during the events of the Holocaust. He was born May 1st, 1900. During the Holocaust he helped over 200 Jewish people get to safety, stay well nourished, and/or hid them. Once the events of the Holocaust ended he moved to the United States and to New Jersey, where he worked as an English teacher, and a widder. He never married again after a tragic accident with his girlfriend, Rivka, during the Holocaust.

Question 1: "Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?"

Response: "Ah yes, the moment I realized that everything was changing... My love, Rivka and I were just going to go for a walk. The weather was wonderful that day. She asked me if I could get an umbrella for her so I went quickly back into our house to grab her favorite umbrella. As I came back out to hand her her umbrella I came back to see her getting brutally beaten by a Nazi soldier, till her death... That... that image... of her lifeless body, just lying there, as I went to hold her in my arms... changed me beyond repair."

Question 2: "How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?"

Response: "It made me sadder than you could imagine. Aggravated... I realized... In my mind, that I needed to stop what was happening, that I needed to save her. Save her from the death she didn't deserve. But I didn't. I couldn't. I couldn't move."

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

Response: "I stood there. I was frozen in shock. I wish I did something. But I couldn't. I won't forgive myself for that... So then, I told myself that I would help many other people of the Jewish religion. I hid them, fed them, then helped them escape. I had much land so it was slightly easier to help them get away. I believe I helped at least 200 or more Jewish people survive the Holocaust in honor of my Rivka."

Question 4: I'm curious, Can you describe Rivka? What was she like? How long were you two seeing each other?

Response: "Oh she was a beautiful girl. She had long brown hair. The most glorious brown eyes. She was also quite tall. ~~She was the perfect girl I'd ever met.~~ She was the sweetest girl I'd ever met. She was never rude to anyone and she and I never fought. She was the perfect girl... Up until... the incident, we had been seeing each other for about 2 years or so..."

Question 5: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Response: "I'd say that it affected me quite a bit. Those awful memories and images. They all kept themselves in my mind. I saw many many things during that time that I wish I could unsee. But alas, I must unfortunately keep them with me till the day I pass on. Helping all of those people, I feel was the right thing to do. I saved so many people from a gruesome death and that makes me feel happy and well accomplished with myself and my life."

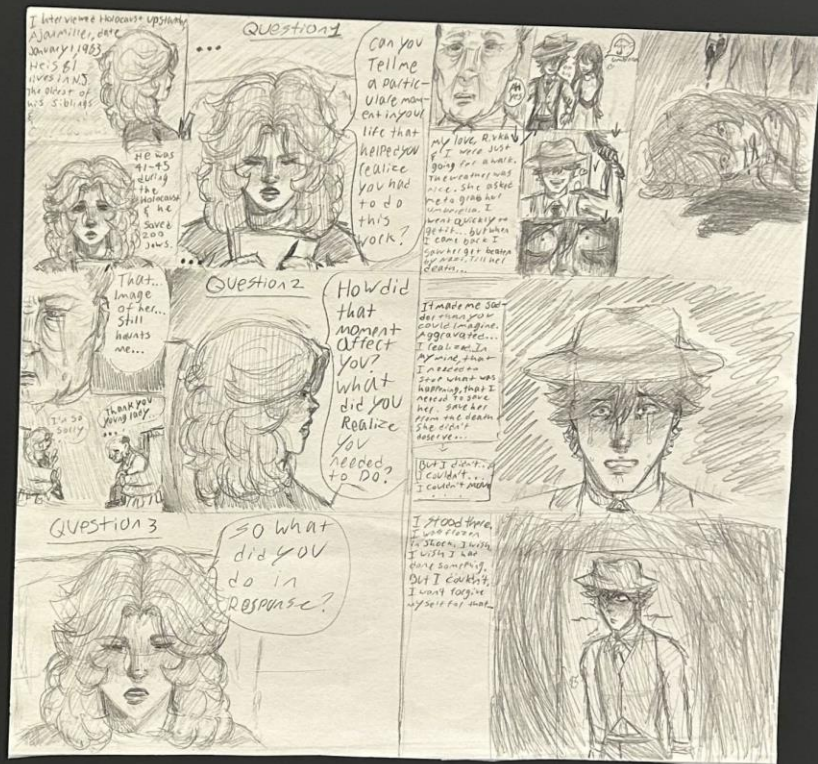
Question 6: Did you saving those Jewish people affect anything with your family?

Response: "Oh no, It luckily didn't affect my family in the slightest. Me and my family lived in separate places. They lived in a much safer and farther area in Hungary than I did. My three siblings lived with my parents at the time. At the time they didn't even know what I had been doing. My siblings are all still alive and healthy. My parents died quite a while ago, from old age."

Question 7: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Response: "I would say to people of your generation and generations ahead, that they should always help those who need it. But let us hope that no sort of event like the Holocaust will ever happen again."

Ajax Miller



Deborah W.

Interview with Charlotte Fischer

Introduction and Biography:

I interviewed Charlotte Fischer on June 21, 1950, at her home in Los Angeles, California. At the time of the interview, Charlotte was twenty-three years old. Charlotte relayed events from her teenage years in Quedlinburg, the countryside of Germany, living a wealthy life with her parents as an only child. Charlotte's father was a famous German actor, and her mother was related to the royal family of England. Charlotte shared her experiences in the war, being sixteen in 1943. Charlotte was involved in the Holocaust because she and her parents helped hide a Jewish family from 1943 until the end of the war. After the war in 1948, Charlotte moved to the United States with her husband, whom she hid during the Holocaust. She now has a one-year-old daughter.

Interview:

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Charlotte's Response:

The reason I started this work is because when I was sixteen in 1943 my best friend and her family were taken to Auschwitz. Her older brother Walter was on a trip to Marburg another countryside town in Germany when the family was taken. I found out they were taken after he had gotten back. He came to my door broke down and said "My family is gone they have been taken to Auschwitz." Tears started coming to my eyes. After that, I would never see my best friend Emilia again.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Charlotte's Response:

That moment affected me because I would never see my best friend again. I realized I had to hide her brother Walter because the Nazis would find him and take him to Auschwitz as well. His mother's sister's family of seven was also in trouble if they did not leave Europe because there was no way out of Germany without getting stopped at the border if you were Jewish. So, Walter asked me if I could hide them.

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

Charlotte's Response:

I immediately said yes without hesitation I wanted to protect his family. It was already hard enough having his parents and siblings including Emilia gone to Auschwitz. I did not want his other family to be taken to Auschwitz. If I had not said yes I would have had guilt for the rest of my life if something happened to them.

Follow-Up Question: Did you hide him as well?

Charlotte's Response:

Yes, I did also hide him. At first, he did not want me to hide him. He did not want to be hidden in a basement for at the time we didn't know how long the war would be. I ended up convincing him to stay with my family, and he stayed there until the war was over. Then in 1948, we got married and moved to Los Angeles.

Question 4: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Charlotte's Response:

Looking back on this experience it affected my life a lot. It made a lot of grief in my life having someone very close to me be taken to Auschwitz; before that day I thought nothing like that would ever happen to me. A lot of good things though did come out of it. Walter and I fell in love while he was living in my house during the Holocaust, we spent a lot of time together during this time. We now have a beautiful baby girl. I helped save eight people during the war. I couldn't even imagine if I had said no and they were also taken to Auschwitz.

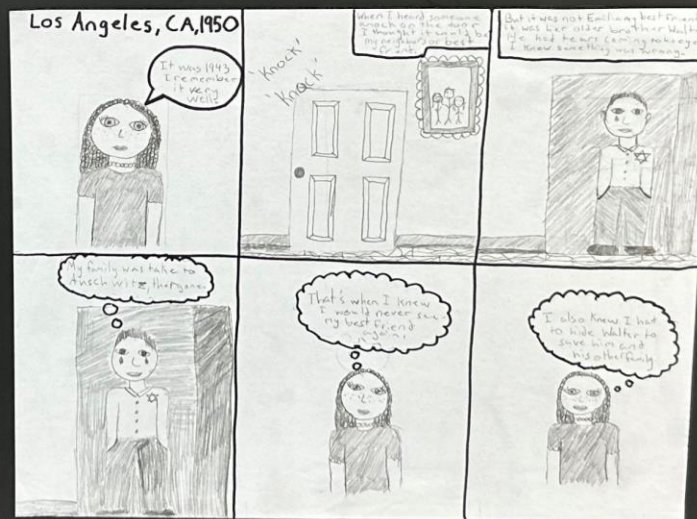
Question 5: Now that a few years have gone by, and you are looking back, what lessons can people learn from your experience that might help us be better adults?

Charlotte's Response: I think no matter how old you are you can help people in need, people who do not have as much power as you. I was only sixteen when I did this. I also think that parents should teach their children to always help people who need it.

Question 6: If you could go back in time would you do anything differently?

Charlotte's Response: Yes if I could go back I would try to help more people hide from the Nazis. I wish I would have helped more people because millions of people died during the Holocaust. So even one more person would have made a difference it's one more life not lost.

CHARLOTTE FISCHER



Ellis R.

Paige May: An Upstander

I got the chance to interview an upstander from the Holocaust in April of 2010. Her name was Paige May and she grew up in Bielefeld, Germany. During the time of the Holocaust, she was 20 years old. At the time of the interview, she was 78 years old. Before the Holocaust occurred, her life was peaceful and calm. She lived with her family and then moved right before unfortunate things started happening. Paige helped shelter a family and kept them safe during the Holocaust. After the war, Paige continued to live a normal life however she will never forget this experience.

Question: Paige, as an upstander can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

The reason I began to do this work is because of an event that took place while I was walking in my hometown. Not too long before this situation began, I saw a Jewish man being beaten when he was in his own store. You could hear the amount of pain that he was in and knowing that there was nothing that I could do to help him, broke me. I never saw this man again in his store or anywhere else. This happened to many other men too. They were taken from their business and beaten for nothing. Just because they owned stores and were Jewish, didn't mean that they had to be treated with any other amount of disrespect. It was always hard for me to watch this happen.

Question: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

This moment in time really makes me upset to think about it every time it is brought up. I always think about what I could have done instead of what I actually did. Standing there and just watching it happen was awful and I never want to do something like that again. This experience showed me that it is important to risk your life to try and better another person. This situation that I saw helped me realize that I needed to start helping rather than just watching.

Question: So, what did you do in response?

In response I gathered a group of people and we helped hide many others. A family had asked me to help them find shelter and if I could hide them until this was all over. I said yes right away with no hesitation. Ever since the man and his business, I wanted to help and now I was finally getting that chance. I took them in and hid them for a long time. I got house searches very often and it was hard to hide them, however I am glad that I didn't give them up. This family will always hold a special place in my heart.

Question: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

This experience really showed me that it can change a person's life when you decide to help

them no matter the situation. Acting fast in a situation like this could really help somebody and we as people need to work together to make sure nothing like this happens again. I could have easily turned this family away and not put my own life at risk however I didn't. I showed them how I could be useful and how I could provide them with the things they needed to live.

Question: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

I would say that you should always take your chances. Take your risks. You never know how it may impact somebody else or how they may take the help. You need to look at the situation in a different view and see if it is a good time to do something. Nobody deserves the treatment that the Jewish people got and I hope we never have to experience it again.

Question: Do you ever regret what you did?

Absolutely not. I will never regret something that I did if I help somebody else out in the process. What is important to me is the fact that a family was able to survive a hard time period because I was able to take them in and hide them from the public. I will always relive this experience in my head when they found out it was all over. It gave me joy that I was able to help them out and I will never be sad or regret doing that for them.

Question: Has this experience helped you become more accepting of what you have?

It most definitely has. Whenever I saw what little materials people had, it always made me remember what they were going through and how unfair it was to them. I always remember to take a second every once in a while and just think about everything that I have. I can see that I have all that I need and that it is what is important. I am so happy with what I have now and I will never let that go after living through this.

Paige May



Emmalyn D.

SANDRA JONES

I interviewed Sandra Jones on April 22nd, 1998 at a local cafe near her home in Berlin, Germany. Sandra grew up in southern Poland before being forced to move to Germany around the age of 12. Sandra identified as German because of her parents and their ancestry as well. She later became an upstander at the age of 19. Today I asked Sandra some questions about how she became an upstander.

Question 1. Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

"I was walking home when I saw my Jewish Neighbor running in a Panic down the road, with two trucks owned by the Gestapo closely following. She was attacked seconds later and dragged into the truck. It was the last time I would see her.

Question 2. How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

"I was depressed for weeks after witnessing what had been going on. I had this gut-wrenching pain of guilt that made me stay in bed for days in pain."

Question 3. So, what did you do in response?

I knew I had to do something so I forced myself to bear the pain of guilt and began to set up bunkers and profits to earn money and protect people being targeted by Nazis.

Question 4. Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

It gave me a reason to be thankful that I did not have to go through some things others did.

Question 5. Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Put yourself in other people's shoes, and see other people's life from other perspectives. Question 6. Were there any moments you regretted being an upstander?

Things became a hassle with money and safety with people I hid, I couldn't prepare enough food for all of them.

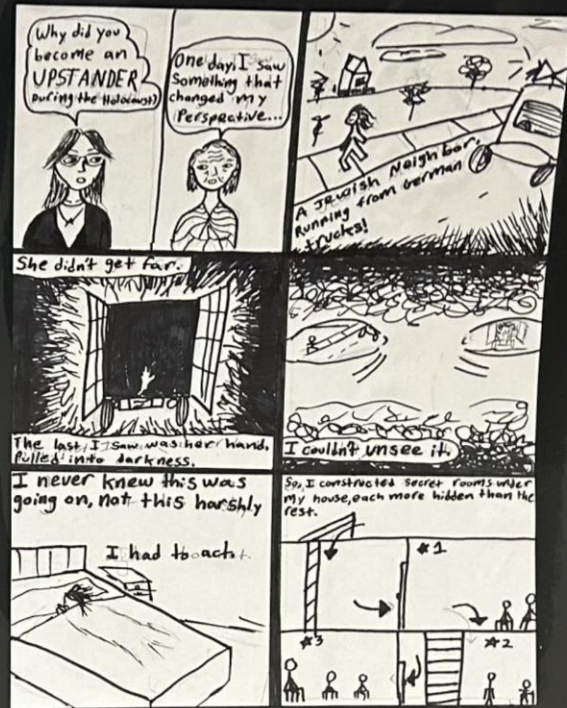
So how did you feed them?

I often collected rations or sometimes we would have to starve.

Question 7: If you could go back and change something, what would it be?

I wish I was able to save those who lost their lives, it is truly terrible to think about how many people I could've saved, but I was unable to.

Thank you for attending this interview today, I enjoyed learning more about your story and what it means to be an upstander.



Eryn H.

Upstander Interview

By : Ethan Brewer

Introduction:

I interviewed Bruno Bergenhauser on March 15, 2012. This interview took place on Bruno's countryside farm in Western Oklahoma. At the time of this interview, Bruno is 87 years old. Bruno was an only child and his father passed away at the age of 41. Bruno was 16. He goes over the many experiences he has had throughout the war which began when Bruno was only 14, in 1939. Bruno was involved in many things like smuggling Jews and other unfortunate people in Auschwitz to safety. Before he was devoted to helping the unfortunate, he was one of the unfortunate people that needed safety. His mother, Jamie and him tried and tried so hard to get to the U.S many times but were unlucky each time. After many attempts, they finally were accepted and went on to live there, but Bruno had different plans. He wanted to help the prisoners that were in Auschwitz. After this, he went and joined alongside his mother in the U.S, in which he found the love of his life and had a beautiful happy family.

Interview:

Question 1: Bruno, you were known as one of the great rescuers during the Holocaust. Can you tell me more about how this job came to be your passion even after you were accepted into the U.S?

I really didn't have a reason for it but I was just provoked to help others because I saw the people that were being treated very badly and I felt very bad about how they were there much longer than me and it made me feel sad how much they were going through. It was very unfair to them and they didn't deserve to go through that much.

Question 2: When this feeling hit you, how did you feel afterwards and how did this affect you, what did you realize was really going on?

This made me feel very sad and it made me feel in my heart as if I was called to help them because when I saw them and talked to them, all of their voices were so frail and they looked as if they were skeletons roaming around.

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

I planned out a way to get through the barriers around Auschwitz and save up to 55 people at once. In the end I made up to 20 trips back and forth saving many at a time. This made me feel

very grateful for what I had and to ever judge another person again.

Question 4: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

I would say it affected me very well because it was very worth it in the long run and I still have some of the people I saved as friends now. This helped me as now I have colleagues in a new country and I am very grateful for what I have done and what others have done too.

Question 5: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Yes, I would say to not relive your past and learn from all of the mistakes that people have made, so you don't make them yourself. This has helped many people because bad things should not happen again. With that said, you should look back on your accomplishments and learn from those to keep excelling and to have greater growth than others.

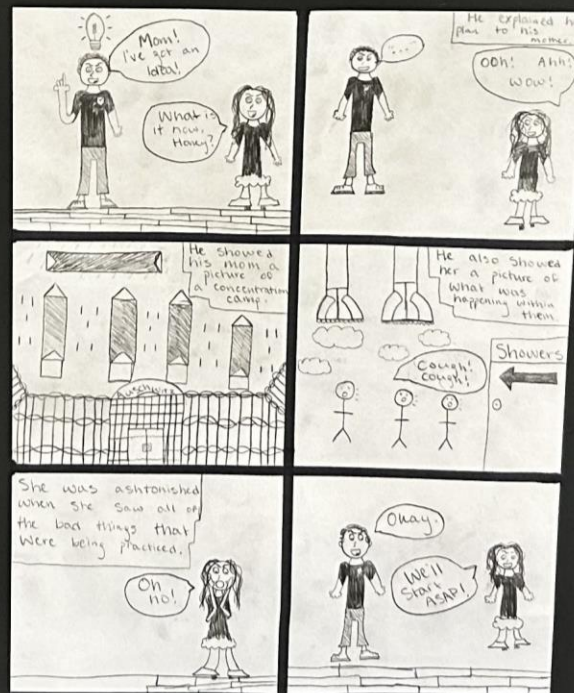
Question 6: What were some of the hardships that you had to overcome throughout the Holocaust?

There were many. From barbed wire to SS officers outside my door. These were all very scary and some led to many distresses against me and others. They tested my mental and also physical strength throughout the process of trying to get out and far away from Jewish persecution.

Question 7: How did you get through these hardships that you went through over the time of the Holocaust?

I got through these hardships by focusing more on the future than what has happened in the past and only seeing the bad that has happened to me. This got me through most of the problems that I have been associated with.

Bruno Bergenhauser



EthanB

Biography

Evangelyn Mack, The nun who saved the jews. Born in Ireland to a Scottish family by the age of three her, her father and her mother immigrated to germany. While in Germany her father became quickly ill and too poor to afford medicine they didn't receive treatment and died by her fourth birthday. Soon after this now with no money at all her mother falls ill and brings her to the church so that she will not fall ill as well and asks them to raise her in the name of the lord. The convent accepted her and raised to be a nun. It is unknown what happened to her mother. Raised in the church by several nuns, she learned German and Latin and was already speaking english. She got an amazing education in the catholic school attached to the church.

In later life she became a nun and in her many years as a nun she also became a teacher for the adjacent catholic school at the age of twenty one. As a very intelligent young woman she learned to keep a low profile and would often walk unnoticed by all seemingly invisible constantly surprising her students and her fellow nuns.

In her older years she became abbes by the age of thirty four and while the war was over her church stayed a safe place to both christians and jews alike for the years she lived there. The church was renamed after her becoming the church of sister Eva. Now many jewish families whose mothers were saved by her come to pay her respects and often give her grave both coin, cash and letters thanking her for her serves.

Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

The moment I realized that I had to do this work, It was the day I was on a trip with the convent and we had passed this jewish church. And we saw tens and tens of people first the women then the children then the men all dragged out by police. Me and several of the other sisters wept for them and wept that we had no way to fix this horrid event. At the moment we got back to our church I was struck with the best idea I've had in my life, To take them in here and hide them in plain sight.

How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

This moment of seeing all these poor women and children taken and split from one another, first I wept then I knew I needed to take some action. I was enraged and my fellow sisters had to convince me down from taking direct action against the nazis. My sister Ann talked me down from... well a wrathful response towards all the green police. I've saved many women in my life but I still only think of all the womens I couldn't save... It brings tears to my eyes envisioning all the horrors they faced...

So, what did you do in response?

Knowing I had to do something to save these people, me and sister Ann came with an idea other than murder, with Ann's temperament this was quite difficult and resulted in taking them here, to hide in plain sight! We called this the false nun plan. We would bring in jewish women and call them nuns, dressing them to fit the role and many jewish families would give their children to us so that the false nuns would raise them in jewish tradition but appear catholic.

What issues with religion did you face during this time?

Mmm well we all worshiped the same god, just did it differently, just different points of view not one better than the other and even then we were all still human.

What little details made this difficult?

Well, materials but the cross thing was also difficult, they couldn't wear them so they wore their initials, the ones and they kept a star of david under their clothing. Oh and the holidays, we simply celebrated in private. And when things would be outward we'd all do it, we would keep candles in our windows so that come hanukkah it would be normal. A few of our nuns were not inclined with our beliefs.

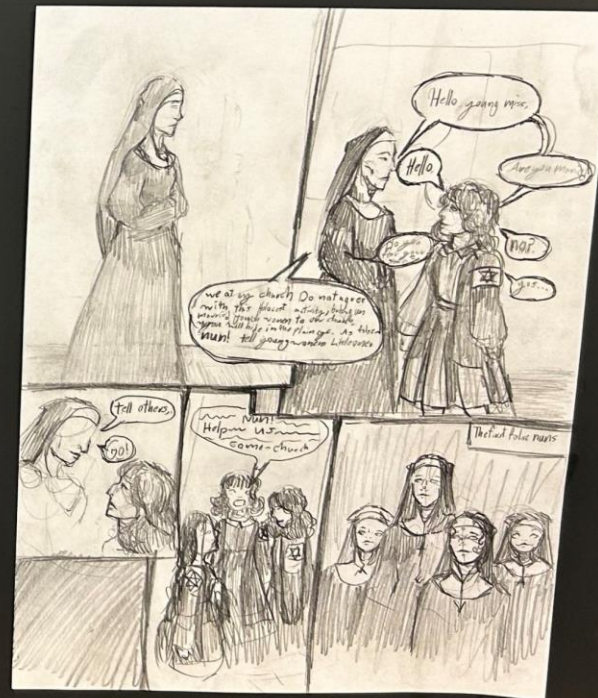
Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

I think it's what drove me to be an abbess of the church. It affects me emotionally knowing that those women and the first day wouldn't be saved everytime I see the women that were saved. I think only of those who weren't... (she looked down at the ground)

Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

My advice, well use your position to help others, use money fame to bring attention to issues, I used my position to help hide not to be seen so from issue to issue it may vary but use your position dont care of reputation but if you got one use it, It's not a drastic idea that power helps. On top of that never be blind to pain of course my cataracts I'm half blind at this age.

Sister Evangelynn



I have interviewed one of the youngest updaters during the holocaust, Ania Kowalski. Ania was born in Warsaw, Poland. She grew up with antisemitism so she wouldn't mind being by herself. She would occupy herself and her parents by walking outside and drawing what she saw. Being only 15 when the war started, she was an important person to many people of today. She took care of 20 children during the holocaust, supporting them when their parents weren't there. Ania never gave up even though she went through many struggles of her own. Today we can have more insight into what went through her mind during the most memorable part of her life.

Question 1- Can you tell me a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

My parents were always on top of everything. They would always listen to the radio making sure to listen very carefully. When my parents figured out that Germany invaded Poland we knew what was going to happen next. In a rush, my parents explained everything to me. They told me that this would be the hardest job of my life. I instantly knew I had to get to work to mentally and physically prepare myself for what would come. My parents were very dear to me. I would risk my life over theirs by going out and being the ones smuggling supplies for us. One day when I was getting supplies for the people in my basement, I couldn't find my parents. I never let them leave without giving me a warning. I rushed to see if the people downstairs were okay and if they knew where my parents were. I didn't find any adults. The only ones left were the 20 young children. I assumed the worst that could have ever happened. At that moment I knew my parents were taken to the camps along with any adult left. I couldn't leave these children on their own. I was their mother from here on out.

Question 2- How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

The day when my parents were taken away I realized I had no one to rely on if I had a problem of my own. I had to figure out everything myself. These children were depending on me. It was a lot of pressure. I never would have thought I would make it out of the war with all 20 children. Every day during the war I would wonder if the kids had missed their parents as much as I missed mine.

Question 3- So, what did you do in response?

All I can say is that I just grew up, and had to shake off all the immature parts of me. I knew this was going to be very serious so I changed. The day I realized my parents were never coming back I had to put on an act for the kids. I changed from being very dependent on my parents and being very childish to being more serious like my mother. I guess you could say I changed a lot. I had to stop going to school and drawing for the most part because I had children who were relying on me for their food and water. The main reason I kept going was for my parents. They were very loving and I knew I couldn't let them down. I knew they didn't start all this just for fun, they had morals and wanted me to learn from them.

Question 4- Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander how would you say this while the experience affected you?

Looking back at this experience, I have noticed that it has affected me in the most negative way possible. This situation took my parents away from me. It forced me to grow up at such a young age. I was a mother of 20 at the age of 19. I was still very young and had so many things planned ahead of me. I have always had the thought of the Germans taking me instead of my loving parents. But now, I cannot think about how my life could have been. I have to learn to move in the right direction and let the past be the past.

Question 5- Now that many years have passed, is there any advice you have for the people of my generation that might help us be better adults?

One piece of advice that I have for this and every future generation is to never think about only yourself. Selfishness is very deadly considering you are putting yourself over everyone else. I had this mindset before my parents were taken away during the war. I thought that everything that I had to do to save them wasn't necessary. This makes me very guilty now knowing what danger we were all in. The only thing that now puts me at ease is that I made it out with all my children. All of them are living their lives in other parts of the world.

Question 6- During your experience, did you ever think of giving up?

I get very emotional when I think of this. My answer is yes! I have thought about leaving and never coming back. I would wonder how easy my life would have been and how carefree I would be. I never gave up though because these children were a part of my life. I grew up with them. We learned the same life lessons and the same ways of living life during the war. If I did ever give up, the guilt of leaving these children would never let me lay my head down at night. I'm glad I pushed through and kept going. I knew these kids needed me and if I'm being very honest I needed them too.

Question 7- Now you were born here in Warsaw, Poland why did you decide not to move out after the war ended?

I have decided to stay here in Warsaw because many major events in my life happened here. My parents were taken away. I learned how to take care of over 20 children, and the rest of my life. I grew up here and so did my parents. I will never leave my parents here alone. I will never forget how badly the Germans wanted to take my people out of Poland, and I will never let them take me. No matter how much stress or pressure I was under, there will always be people that do not affect me.

Ania Kowalski



Created by:

Haizel

Izaan

I met Lewis Elton, the British hero who saved 500 Jews across Western Europe.

By: Izaan Iqbal

Introduction:

I interviewed Sir Lewis Elton on his 99th birthday on February 7, 2015, at his Chelsea home in South London. Sir Lewis relayed his story of saving over 500 Jews across Western Europe, while he was a journalist for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). As an Elton-educated upper-middle-classman from Wembley, Lewis was swiftly hired as a journalist by the BBC in 1940 and was sent to Paris in May of that year to report on the Western Front of World War II. After the Fall of France, Lewis was unable to return to Britain, so he dedicated himself to saving Jews from Nazi cruelty across Western Europe. From 1940-1944, Lewis saved over 500 Jews. Lewis was awarded a knighthood by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, for his services in 2010. Lewis was also awarded the Legion of Honour by the French president, Jacques Chirac, as well as being awarded the Order of Leopold by King Philippe of Belgium last year. Lewis is remembered today for his integrity and perseverance during the Second World War and is recognized as a hero amongst millions.

Interview:

Question 1: Lewis, Can you tell me about a particular moment during the war that helped you realize that you had to do this work?

Lewis's Response: After I realized that I couldn't get out of Paris in June of 1940, and I saw the horrific crimes being committed by the Wehrmacht as they marched through France, that is when I knew I had to take action. I could not sit around in hopelessness and do nothing, I had to do something. I had to help those who could not help themselves.

Question 2: Mr. Elton, you are most remembered for saving French Jews. What inspired and motivated you to take direct action and help Jews?

Lewis's Response: I heard about Kristallnacht in 1938, I heard about the hate crimes committed against Jews which were promoted and condoned by the Nazi government of Mr. Hitler. I knew that the treatment of French Jews would be no different from the treatment of the Jews of Berlin, Munich, or Vienna. I had to save the Jews of

Paris and Northern France before the German warmongers would swiftly exterminate them.

Question 3: Let's go back to June 14, 1940. How did the moment that you saw the Germans enter Paris affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Lewis's Response:

When I saw the Nazis horrifically shoot innocent people when I saw them grab people by their collars on their shirts and throw them to the ground, I knew that I couldn't sit down and do nothing. If I couldn't get out of France and back to London, I had to save as many people as possible.

Question 4: That's spectacular. What did you do in response then? What was your course of action to save the Jews?

Lewis's Response:

Well, I established links and connections with the newly formed French resistance movements, such as the Bureau Central de Renseignements et d'Action founded by Charles de Gaulle. I developed a strategy of using my connections with the French Resistance to thus utilize the strategies and routes that they employed to wage a guerrilla war against the Germans, to use such routes in the French countryside to help Jews escape. I first began my operations in September 1940.

Question 5: Were you not afraid that you would be caught? You could've been imprisoned or even executed.

Lewis's Response: I must admit, I was not high or mighty, I always had a sense of fear that I could be captured. However, the feeling of heroism, the feeling that the moral rewards always outweighed the risks, allowed for me to keep my chin up. I was not concerned with my life, I was always ready to sacrifice myself if it meant saving countless lives. I had no fear for Mr. Hitler or for the Wehrmacht, Gestapo, or SS. My resolve and the resolve of my companions always would be bigger than the resolve of the hungry German warmongers in Berlin. In terms of "being afraid", I was only afraid of my mother and God!

Question 5: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Lewis's Response:

This experience affected me tremendously. It taught me not to take things for granted, and that it didn't matter if I risked my life if it meant saving countless others. I do not like to describe myself as an "upstander", as I am just a simple old man who did what was right at the time. The memories of my experiences during the war will forever be engrained in my head, but if I had to, I would do it all over again.

Question 6: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

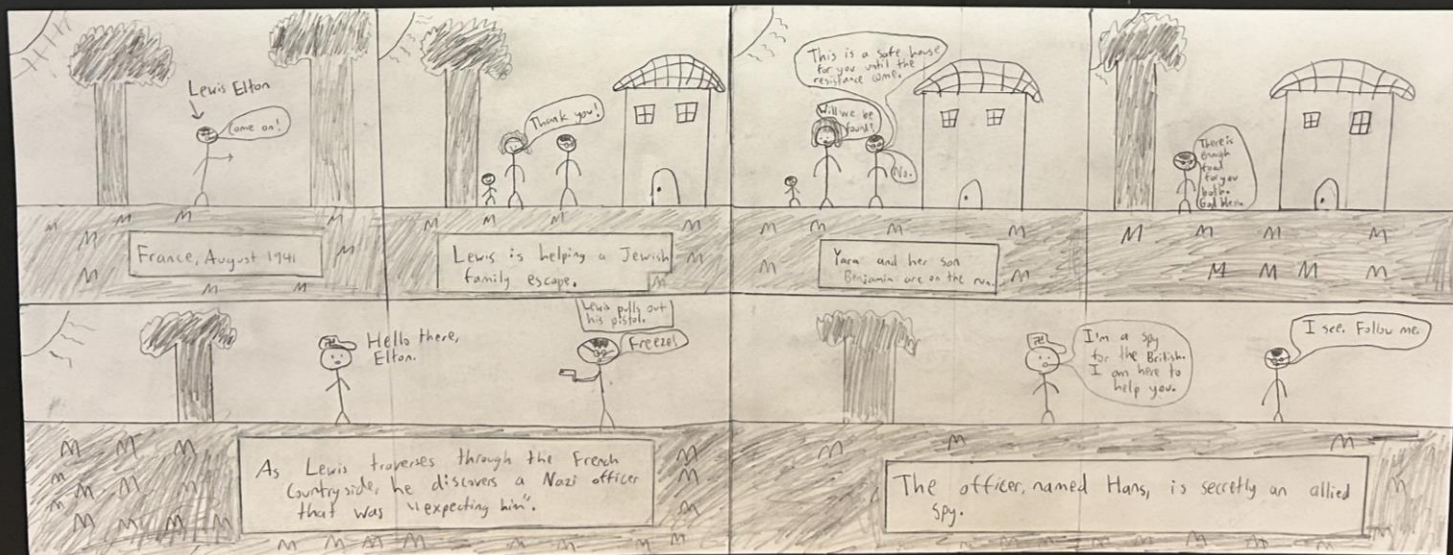
Lewis's Response:

If I may offer one piece of advice for today's generation, I would say this. Hate and bigotry have no place in today's society, therefore, you must not be a hateful bigot. We are all equal in this world, and our time is limited. War is brutal, not a beauty, therefore our society and younger generations must work towards peace, learn how to cooperate, and establish a system of harmony and collaboration in our world.

Question 7: Sir Lewis, you saved around 500 Jews across Western Europe. This also included young children who were orphans. Have you met any of the people that you saved?

Lewis's Response:

That is an excellent question. I have indeed met a few of the people that I saved, and by a few, I met 78 of them. In 2002, I was invited to Caen, France, to deliver a lecture about the treatment of European Jews during World War II, at the University of Caen. As I concluded my lecture, the doors to the auditorium opened, and I saw 78 people walk in. I was informed that those beautiful people were the beautiful souls that I saved all those years ago. I made sure that I hugged them all and shook all of their hands. The youngest person was 58. She was only 3 months old when I saved her from Liege, Belgium, in 1944. It was so incredible to see all those people, and it made me realize how much of an impact that I made.



Introduction and Biography:

I interviewed Bob Duell on April 22, 2010, in his home in Oak Ridge, North Carolina. At the time, Bob Duell was eight-one years old. Bob told me about his early life and his experiences growing up being an only child, and his experience in the war, which began when he was 13 years old in 1942. Bob helped shelter Jews along with his father once they had escaped the concentration camp Krakow-Plaszow. Bob is known for sheltering and saving around 25 Jews during the Holocaust. After the war he moving to the United States, where he became an engineer, got married, and had 1 child. One of the survivors he helped save from the holocaust was at the interview.

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in our life that helped you realize that you had to do this work?

One moment where I realized that I needed to help and do this work was the first time I saw someone be killed in a concentration camp. I remember it like it was yesterday. I had just arrived in Krakow-Plaszow, a hellhole near Krakow, Poland. The first hour I was there, they separated me from my mother, and I was sent off with my father. I had looked up to my father my whole life, he was such a smart, brave, and thoughtful man. Now he and I were about to go through one of the most horrible events in history. My mother, the same way. If only I knew that was the last time I was going to see her, I would have reacted differently. I miss her still to this day. They had sent us towards the barracks, and someone was walking too slow and yelling for help. The Nazis instantly pulled out their rifles and shot the man dead. Being only 13, I was scared for my life.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

This moment opened my eyes up to the horrors of the situation I was in. I realized that I needed to escape this concentration camp, or I would suffer the same fate that man had. When my father and I had arrived at the barracks, I told him we needed to escape. We need to form a plan to escape this horrible place, and once we do help other people escape. I still remember the way the man looked, the way he screamed, the way he lost his life in the blink of an eye.

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

My father and I had previously hidden our watches while we were being sent to the barracks. We created a plan to bribe an officer to let us be free. We had heard rumors of an officer that was extremely easy to be bribed, and we decided to try and bribe him. The officer's name was Hans, and during our ridiculously small lunch break, we saw him. We went up to him, and we made a deal for him to let us free by bribing him with our watches. Hans set us free secretly, and we went back to our old home, finding it completely deserted. We got to work, fixing the interior of our home while remaining silent. Being sent back now would mean being sent to a death camp. I found people that were like us, resisting the Nazis and hiding Jews. We wanted to help Jews also. While it was very risky, it did not matter to us at the time. All we knew was that we had to help these people.

Follow up question: How did you help hide Jews?

My father and I had formed a plan. We would become another hiding place for Jews to be sent to. With the help of our friends who also hid Jews, we began taking in Jews, feeding them, and helping them. Our friends supplied us with all the supplies we needed; we just needed to hide them.

Question 4: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

This experience has made me realize multiple things. We need to make smarter choices and decisions on who we are allowing to run our country. This experience has also made me realize that there are some horrible people in this world that want to do horrible things. Everyone needs to try their best, no matter the situation, to help people when they are in need. The smallest ideas and actions can make a change, for good or for bad. It is up to you to do the right thing.

Question 5: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Overall, just do the right thing. Whether that thing is big, like saving someone's life, or small, like donating some money to a homeless shelter, you can make a change. If everyone would do at least one small act of kindness a day, our world would be a better place. Educate other people and get them to help other people. If the world came together and we all decided to help each other, imagine the changes and amazing things that could happen.

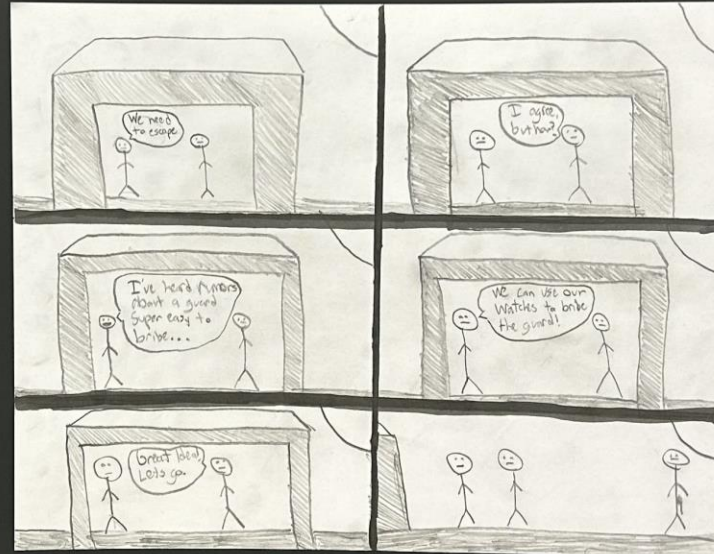
Question 6: Were there any times where you wanted to give up? If so, can you specify?

There have been many things that have gone wrong and discouraged me from keeping going, but there is one moment that really stands out. It was January 22, 1943, and my father and I had just started hiding Jews. We were taking in our first few, and one of them turns out to not be a Jew. They were an Officer trying to find Jews and take them to prison. We had to bribe him similarly how we had in the concentration camp, and he eventually left us alone. But even though we had bribed him, we were still worried that he would tell others where we were and what we were doing. You could not trust anyone back then. We made the tough choice to move locations, and it was incredibly stressful.

Question 7: Do you believe that there will be another Holocaust like event in the future?

It is up to us to decide if there will be another Holocaust like event. I believe that there will not be another Holocaust event in future, only if we continue to educate and inform people on the event. It is up to our nation and world to educate and inform people on the Holocaust. If people do not know our history, then we are doomed to repeat it. If we do end up repeating it, who knows what will happen and the horrors that may occur.

Bob Duell



Jack D.

Jay [redacted] 3/19/24
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HOLOCAUST INTERVIEW : amalia meyer

Amalia Meyer

I interviewed Amalia Meyer on September 19th, 1953, near her home in Los Angeles, California, at a local Coffee shop. At the time of the interview, Amalia was 40 years old. Amalia was a holocaust upstander who helped save the lives of many Jews during

World War 2. At the age of 29, Amalia hid Jews in her basement and safely took them to Hungary. Amalia moved to the United States immediately after the war to start their new life in Los Angeles, California with her husband and twin daughters.

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

The reason I decided to do this is because I had witnessed many riots outside of my bedroom window, of the Gestapo rounding up innocent Jews who we never saw again after that. I thought about helping but never thought it would be able to happen. Then one day, when my Jewish friends and I were spending time together, they told me how badly they were being treated, how they had to come home by 6:30 every evening, how they could not feed their families because they did not get enough food. Still, the words that changed it all were when they told me they were getting deported in a few days. Later, I told my husband about it, and he fully agreed to do it.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

The moment my friends told me they were getting deported, my heart sunk to the floor. These were the people I grew up with, who I have been raising my children with. I could not see them go just like that. In that moment, I knew I had to help them out.

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

I told my husband about what happened. I told him we should help them, and he was instantly on my side. We headed to the furniture store across the street and brought multiple items to get ready for them. We bought beds, chairs, tables and more. We got many looks, but thankfully, we were never stopped or questioned by the Gestapo. We set up everything in our basement. Nobody knew we had one, so it was a good hideaway. We moved everything downstairs and set it up for them. We picked them up in the middle of the night and headed back home. We quickly took them and their baggage down to the basement and headed to sleep. In the mornings bring them food for the day, and at night we would all eat on the first floor. We managed this for 2.5 years.

Question 4: Have you ever got caught during that time? What would you do if the Gestapo were nearby?

Almost! Never completely caught but we had many knocks on our door. After some of our neighbors suspected we were hiding people in our house, the Gestapo would come almost weekly to do a house check! Luckily, it was very complicated to enter and exit the basement. The entryway had to be opened by a panel on our floor which was hard to find. Whenever they came, I would stand on the panel so that they didn't suspect anything.

Question 5: Did they stay with you for the whole time until the end of the war or did they ever escape? Do you know if they made it?

No. The Gestapo in our area got bigger and bigger. Some of our trusted friends smuggled Jews into safer places throughout Europe, so we got in contact with them, and we sent them off to Hungary. After they got to Hungary, they sent me a postcard and told me how they loved it here and thanked my husband and I for everything we did for them. And soon after the war, they moved to San Francisco, not too far from here. We are still in contact with them today!

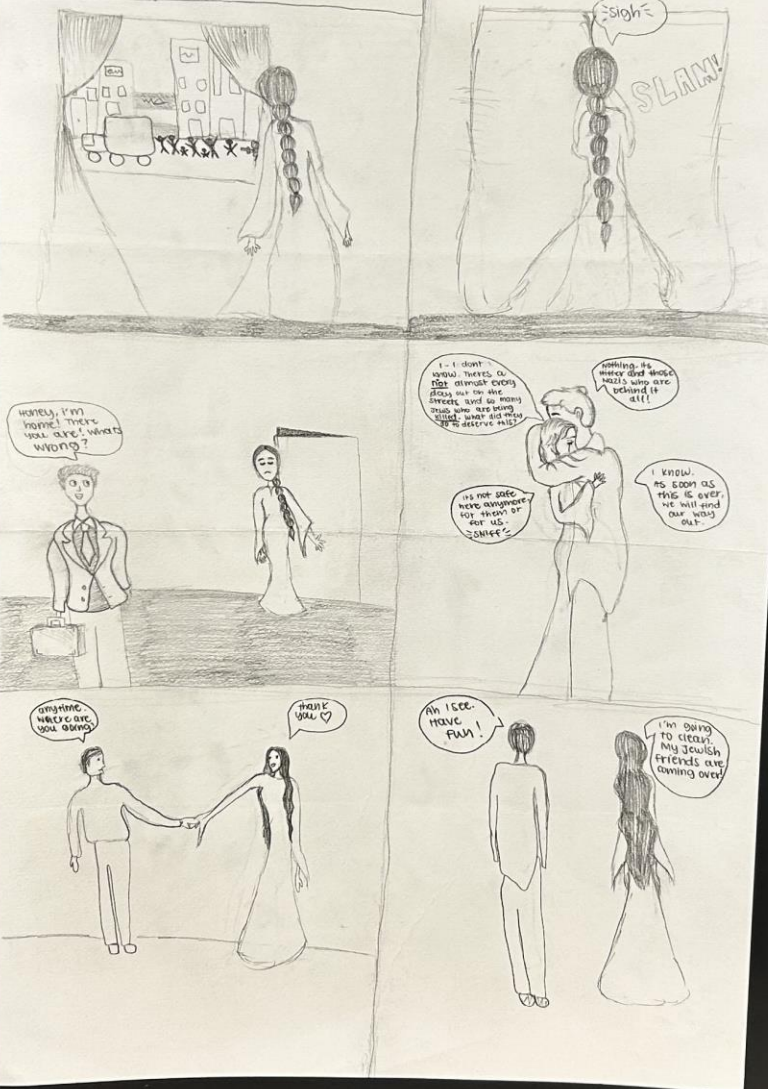
Question 6: Did you help any other Jews after they left?

Yes, after they left, many other Jews showed up on our door pleading for help. We willingly took them in! We didn't get rid of the setup from when the previous people left, so we didn't must redo anything. We ended up saving 22 Jews.

Question 7: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

It affected me in many ways, physically and mentally. It was scary, knowing that we could get caught at any moment, knowing that if we did get caught, we could get punished, or even worse, killed. It was scary to even leave my house to go get groceries, knowing that I was leaving them alone there. But now, I am happy. I feel successful, if I could do it all again, I'd do it in a heartbeat.

As the war got worse, so did the riots. Hundreds of Jews would be arrested, beat, and rounded up on the daily basis!



Julie Vega's Story

I interviewed Julie Vega in 2001, in New York City at her home. She was one of the many upstanders during the Holocaust. At the time of the interview Julie Vega was 73 years old. During the Holocaust she was 17 years old. She grew up in a rich family and was raised by her mother. Her father was always away on business. She describes meeting the love of her life Adam. Julie told me the story of how she helped many Jews during the Holocaust. She told me the story of when she met the love of her life Adam. She describes what her life was like before the Holocaust. In this interview she will tell us what made her want to help the Jews.

Question One: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Follow-Up Question: What did your mom have to say during the Holocaust and what did she think about the Jews?

Julie's Response: "Umm... I remember I was walking back home from school and heard a ruckus in the woods. I went to see what was the cause and I saw two Nazis punching a boy a little older than I was. I remember screaming 'Stop hitting him. You are going to kill him'. When they did stop punching the boy you could see they have been hitting him for a few minutes without stopping. When they left I decided to stay and help the boy. I later found out his name is Adam. I snuck the boy inside my house and gave him some of my father's close to change info and I cleaned his wounds that he had. I later became friends with him and learned everything about him. I knew his name, where he is from and he talked about his loving family. When I got to know him some more I fell in love with him. On the other hand my mother hated the Jews. She said 'They deserve what is happening to them.' Little did she know that I was helping the Jews."

Question: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Follow-Up Question: Where did the Jews that you helped go?

Julie's Response: "So like I said I witnessed Adam gotten beat by the Nazis. That was the time I decided to help the Jews. I thought if that boy could not defend himself then other Jews probably couldn't. So he was the first Jew I helped. The Jews that I helped I hid them behind my house. So I grew up in a rich family and lived in a huge house. Behind the house there was a small house. We called it the mother sweet."

Question: So, what did you do in response?

Follow-Up Question: Did your mother ever catch on about you helping the Jews?

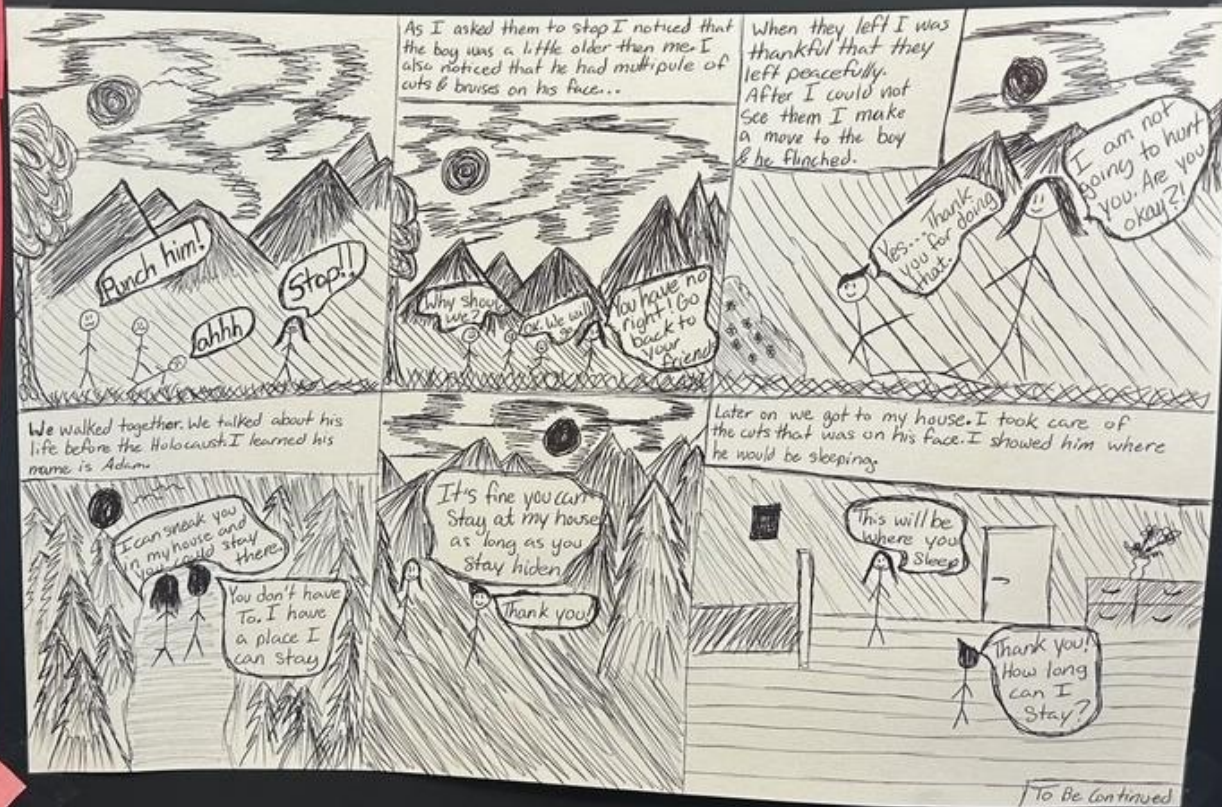
Julie Response: "Umm... after I helped Adam and snuck out a couple times and saw many Jews in a couple places. I took notes on where the Jews would be. A week later I remember going back to the places that I saw the Jews and I told them I would help them and I took them to the back of my house and hid them. I think that my mom did know something was going on. I remember one time I was going to the place that I had behind my house and my mom stopped me and asked why I been going over there alot. I had to make alot of lame excuses."

Question: How that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Follow-Up Question: What was the best part of helping the Jews?

Julie Response: "I think the experience affected me in a positive way, because I remember when I was little I wanted to help people that were in trouble. I think the best part of helping the Jews was learning multiple of story's and what their family was like before the Holocaust. Adam's story was the story that to me was the saddest because he had younger siblings that he was taking care of and then all of a sudden there was a bang at the door. He told me when he opened the door the Nazis hit him with the end of the gun and dragged his younger siblings out of the house and they put them in the trucks they had. That was the last time they saw his siblings."

Julie Vega Holocaust



Interview

Question #1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

"On a Sunday morning, while eating breakfast, I was listening to our old family radio when all of a sudden, I hear the news of a Nazi officer brutally killing a 3-year-old child for crying too loudly. The radio cut to an audio clip that seemed to resemble a horrible screaming sound. I only then realized that the sounds I was hearing were the screams and cries of that young child. I was stunned and wondered, 'What if that had been my younger brother?' After that morning, I was even more eager to help my parents save as many lives as possible."

Question #3: So, what did you do in response?

"I was even more keen on helping aid my parents in their tasks and I got more attuned to the needs of my younger brother and helped raise him. From that, I learned many different ways to calm a child and how to keep them distracted and used that knowledge to keep the children of runaway Jews calm and quiet during the day to prevent suspicion."

Question #4: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

"This experience taught me the true value of compassion, and how essential it is during dire circumstances and situations. My parents were very wonderful and passionately compassionate people who would not even hurt a fly. They taught me to always be open and kind. I learned that family wasn't just blood relatives but people you share not just joy with, but pain and suffering. Anyone who has cried with you or laughed with you can be considered a neighbor."

Question #5: Now that many years have passed, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

"My message to the future generations is to always be kind and compassionate, but also firm and alert. Never be afraid to show kindness and provide help but also never be afraid to ask for help and assistance. During the Holocaust, we didn't survive because of one person, we survived because of our dependence on one another. We survived because of trust and love. You weren't made to live life alone, so never be afraid to make a friend or ask for help."

Question #6: Were there any habits or reflexes that were born from the Holocaust? (I.E: always looking through windows or biting nails)

"Even decades after the Holocaust, I still retained some old habits such as always closing doors quietly and flinching at the sound of knocking on a door. I am also rarely seen in a room without at least 2 or more exits due to my prolonged exposure to a fear of getting ambushed. From the Holocaust came many side effects that still stick to me today and is a reminder of my past and childhood."

Question #7: Did the Holocaust strengthen or weaken your connection to Christianity?

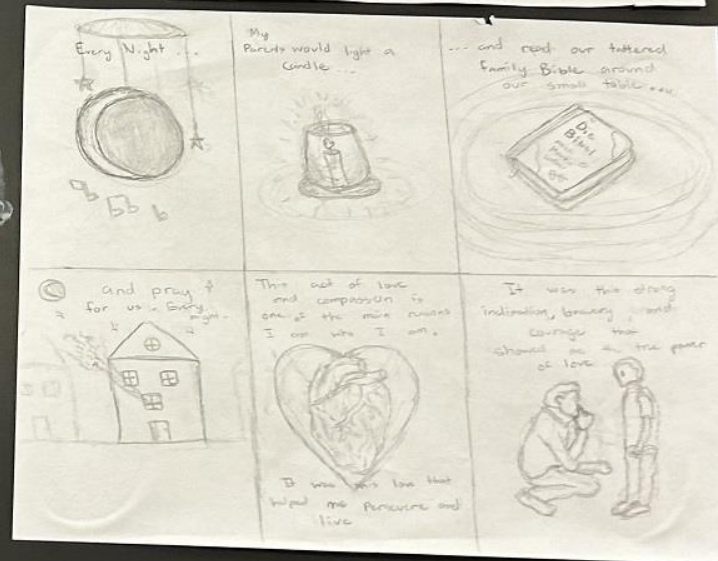
"As I mentioned before, my parents were very kind people - but they were also very devout Christians. We (as a family) would everyday read from our very tattered copy of the Bible and pray every night before we went to sleep. From the Holocaust, my faith in God and strength as a Christian strengthened. A major factor of that was watching my parents pray to God every day and almost always reassuring us that God would protect all of us. Seeing my parents emanate strength and reassurance always inspired me and I always wanted to follow in their footsteps."

Question #2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

"I was traumatized by what I heard on the radio. I will forever remember those guttural sounds of agony that escaped that poor child. After that event, I realized the true reality of what was going on in Europe and I didn't want any more children to suffer like that child on the radio."

Joe Marge Interview March 18, 2024

Joe Marge is a Christian Holocaust upstander who was born on February 6th, 1932 in Bergen, Norway. Joe was born into a Christian household with a mother and father who, before the Holocaust, helped the needy. Joe frequently helped his parents shelter and hide runaway Jews and later, helped take care of his younger brother Cale (born in 1936). From that, he learned how to take care of Jewish children in the day so that they would remain quiet and calm during the day. After the Holocaust, Joe moved to America and started working as a counselor at a school for foreign exchange students. Joe lives in Abilene, Texas with his wife, Patricia Marge, a Holocaust survivor.



Joe Marge

Jeffrey K.

Yara Schwartz

Introduction and Biography:

On May 29, 2005, I interviewed Yara Schwartz about her life as a Holocaust upstander. I met her at her eldest son's headquarters of his organization which records interviews with Holocaust survivors and talks at schools. At the time Yara was 60 years old and living in New York. Yara and I talked about her teenage years during the Holocaust. When the Holocaust began she was 16 years old. She told me about how she and her family helped young Jewish children during the Holocaust. After the war, Yara moved to the United States, married, and had two children.

Interview:

Question 1: What was your life like before the Holocaust?

Before the Holocaust, I lived with my father, younger sister, and mom. We lived in an apartment in Paris, France. It was so much better before the Germans invaded. I was a student, my parents were very concerned with academics, and my sister and I were always in school. Our parents always made sure we went to the best school. We were in private school for our entire schooling career. My mother was a teacher at our school and my father owned a tailoring shop down the street from our home.

Question 2: What work did you do as an upstander during the Holocaust?

During the Holocaust, my younger sister and I lived alone after my father was drafted into the war. My Jewish mother was taken from us a week and a half after the Germans invaded Paris. What we did was very risky and I do have some regrets. I have no regrets about helping but about how I did it. What we did was hide Jewish children from our school in our home to keep them from going to the concentration camps.

Question 3: What moment in your life during the Holocaust inspired you to do the work you did?

When I was 15 at the beginning of the Holocaust when the Germans invaded Paris I witnessed German soldiers dragging young Jewish children out of the school. My mother worked at and where my sister and I went. I had an idea of where they were bringing them, the concentration camps. I wanted to help these children. I couldn't imagine all of these kids dying in the camps when they had their entire lives ahead of them.

Question 4: How did that moment affect you?

After that and after the invasion of Paris by the Germans I never looked at anything the same. I didn't take anything for granted. Not long after my mother was taken from me, I took everything in me not to resist. I realized I needed to do something if I wanted to help it, I wanted to save people. I didn't do it for the fame, glory, or honor I did it because I just couldn't stand by and watch it happen.

Question 5: So what did you do in response?

I asked my teacher if there was anything I could do. She was part of a resistance group so I asked her if there was anything I could do. This was very risky considering both of us could get punished for our talk of helping. She said I could house Jewish children with fake documents. She told me I would have to pretend they were family and protect them from being taken to the concentration camps. I didn't even consider saying no, I just couldn't.

Question 6: Looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

After the Holocaust was over I wanted to leave Europe. I tried to convince my family to come with me but they couldn't imagine leaving their home. I could. Every night I remembered what I went through. I wanted a fresh start. But since then I have tried to help everyone that I can, however I can. Recently I've been moving on. My sister and I met up with the three children who stayed with us during the Holocaust. They are not children anymore. I think about them often. It makes me so happy to think about how grateful they were.

Question 7: Is there any advice you would give people?

I would give advice to help people no matter who they are or the risk. There were many moments when I had regrets about helping the children and now I regret that. I should have never regretted helping them. It is the biggest accomplishment in my life. It had the biggest impact on me. After that, I was never the same. I just hope something like the Holocaust never happens again. That evil and hatred don't get so strong that it happens.



Interview with Margot Smith:

Interview & biography:

I interviewed Margot Smith on June 14, 2010. The interview took place at her house in Arlington, Arizona. At the time of the interview Margot was 88. She started her heroic work in the Holocaust when she was only 21. At the time, she was a college student, working at a local diner. After the war in 1960, Margot moved to the United States where she has been ever since.

Question 1:

Interviewer: Ms. Smith, can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Margot: One day I was working at the diner. I had been there for about a year, and I loved it. Every morning, a group of people around my age would come in for coffee. There were 3 boys, and 2 girls. Over the year, they had become my favorite regulars. They all were Jewish, which worried me due to the war issues, but they would always assure me they would be fine. One morning when I arrived at the diner, I noticed that the group had not come in the past few mornings, which was very unusual. I decided to ask my manager, who went on to tell me that the group was found and taken away by the Nazis. I didn't know what to think, but I knew I needed to help.

Question 2:

Interviewer: Margot, how did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Margot: I felt so much pain. They were the sweetest people and never failed to make me smile. I knew I had to help. I couldn't let any more innocent people lose their lives for no reason at all. When I got home that night, I organized a list of people around town that would be willing to help. After about a week, our plan was set.

Question 3:

Interviewer: So, what did you do in response?

Margot: We all worked to create hidden passages and rooms across our properties to hide the Jews. We also tracked every raid and how it happened to try to predict the next one. We did this in case we needed to move the Jews to safety. Even though it was extremely risky, it worked out pretty well. We all split our money to help pay for food and basic necessities they would need in hiding.

Question 4:

Interviewer: Now that you are looking back on your Holocaust work, how would you say the whole experience affected you?

Margot: It really made me look at the world with a whole new perspective. I never knew I was that passionate about helping people until the Holocaust. Yes, of course I would help people when they needed it, but it was different during the war. Everyone was there for each other. We were family.

Question 5:

Interviewer: Now that many years have passed, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Margot: Don't hesitate to help others. No matter the situation, you could have a huge influence on their lives. To this day, I still talk to many people I worked with during this period of my life. I even talked to some of the Jewish people that I had. I couldn't imagine my life without them. If you see an opportunity to build a better world, take it.

Question 6:

Interviewer: Margot, do you ever have dreams about the people you saved? If so, what are those dreams like?

Margot: They don't come very often, but when they do they are always special. It reminds me of the people I helped and has a positive effect on my confidence.

Question 7:

Interviewer: Lastly, if you had to change anything about your Holocaust experience, what would it be? Why?

Margot: Not helping sooner. I believe if more people got together before my friends were taken, or anyone at all, we could've saved so many more lives.

MARGOT SMITH



Karsen H.

Interview with Julie Bells

Introduction and Biography:

I interviewed Julie Bells on April 10, 2024 near her childhood home at a park in Berlin Germany. At the time of the interview Julie Bells was 26. Julie relayed events from her life in Berlin, she's the oldest of one sibling. She shared her experiences during the war also, which began when she was working to build safe houses and smuggle Jews. After the war she moved to Arizona to pursue her dreams of becoming a doctor and had children of her own with her fiancé Mark Johnson who was not present at the interview in Berlin, Germany.

Interview:

Question 1: Julie, you are known as an upstander. Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Julie's Response:

The moment I realized I had to help was on May 17, 1943 at 5:30 when I was walking into my job at the Berlin Doctors office. At this moment I saw my boss David being forced out of the door of the office when I was entering. He was obviously in fear but tried to keep calm when he saw me because I was 15 at the time and he didn't want to startle me. He looked at me calmly and said "I'm okay, tell my family I love them. Take care of this place."

Question 2: So what did you do in response?

Julie's Response:

I was too stunned, even though he reassured me that everything was okay, I was still scared and confused. Within the five minutes I saw all of this happening all I said back was "But what do I do.?" The only thing I was thinking at the time was could I be next? After the police officer left to put

up for yourself. Do you like it when people walk all over you? I didn't think so, you must stand up for yourself and know how much you are worth and treat yourself with the respect you deserve. It will never hurt to speak up for yourself and your peace. Another characteristic I think is important would be to be giving. This is an important characteristic because if you give to people and help many people then many people will help you if needed. Never back down from a challenge and do all you can to help others even in hard times.

Question 6: How did you continue to stay positive during this time?

Julie's Response:

I think a big factor in me staying positive would be that I know that I am helping people and benefiting others. I knew that in the end many people would be benefited by me and it really just felt good that I was helping others so I kept pushing.

Question 7:

Julie's Reponse: Now my final question that has been on my mind this whole time is, how did you manage to build a two story house without being suspicious?

I was very sneaky with it, I even kept it from my family. All I told them was that I was ready to be independent on my own and have a life on my own and have my own space. I was able to start building this house with my dad because I had a good job and I was making a good income. My dad helped me build this house and we finished building this house in like 6-7 months. There were some rough patches but overall it was a success and I was able to help hundreds of people. Hundreds of people stayed in my house I built because they didn't care about being cramped if they just had a semi-safe place to stay.

Interview With Julie Bells

my boss in the car I tried to sit down at my desk and have a better day. After a while I just couldn't do it anymore and I went home for the day.

Question 3: How did this moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Julie's Response:

I would say it affected me terribly, it felt like a knife going through my chest to see such a wonderful man getting taken away from our community for now reason. All I thought about for the next couple days was, would everyone be taken away? I realized that I need to step in and do something for our community. I spent a long while trying to figure out what to do that would make a big impact on us all. But then ultimately decided that what I had done would be the best way to help a large number of people.

Question 4: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Julie's Response: As I am looking back on this experience of my life, I have always wondered what would have happened if I didn't act on this? What would have happened if I ignored this situation? I have learned a lot from this time in my life and I think one of the big things I have learned is to be patient in life and don't rush things when they do not need to be. Another thing I learned was that it is important to be a leader, if I had not stepped up and helped these pitiful people they would have a chance not to survive and they would've had to live through torture.

Question 5: Now that many years have gone by and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us to be better adults?

Julie's Response:

Many people are scared to stand up for themselves, it is now a necessity of my life. It is honestly an important aspect of anyone's life to be able to stand



Holocaust interview



The story of Holocaust upstander Schmol Appelbaun Introduction

I interviewed Schmol Appelbaun at his home in Montreux, Switzerland on March 13, 2024. At the time of the interview, Schmol was 99 years old. Schmol was born in Kempton, Germany, and lived his childhood life there in isolation. When Schmol was 18 years old his parents were taken, and this influenced Schmol to make a stand against the Nazis. After hiding until the war was over, he moved to a beautiful city in Switzerland to escape any future conflicts between countries. In Switzerland, Schmol got a job to sustain his living until he retired. He has been living in his home in the Swiss Riviera for 30 years since retirement.

Question 1: Your childhood must have been unbearable, could you tell me more about what went on in your life then, and why you lived a childhood of isolation?

Schmol's Response

When I was just a little boy, maybe until I was 8 years old, I had plenty of friends and went to a nice public school. I lived a normal boy's life. I remember the day, January, 30th, 1933, everything changed for me. Reich president Paul von Hindenburg appointed Adolf Hitler as Reichskanzler. My parents were very aware of what Hitler's plans were with Germany, even though I was so young, I knew they had intel that the normal people didn't, and I'll never find out why. Because of Hitler becoming more and more powerful, my parents decided it would be best if we disconnected from German society. We bought a farm with a bunker on the outskirts of Kempton with neighbors at least 2 miles away in each direction. From then on all I knew was to keep on working and providing for my family.

Question 2: Did you experience any major events up until the middle of the war?

Schmol's Response

Yes, when I was around 18 years old I was working on my farm as usual, my parents rarely snuck into town for intel, but today they stayed hours longer than usual. It's been years since I've been in town, but I decided to find out what was happening. I saw so many Nazi flags and people dressed up in weird uniforms. I made sure to stay undiscovered as I was looking for them. Eventually, I made it to the train station where I saw these people wearing the Star of David on their shirts. In that crowd, I saw my parents. I wanted to do something but I couldn't, they were surrounded by German men with guns. Once they were loading those people on, I then knew this would be the last time I would ever see my parents again.

Question 3: How did this experience affect you?

Schmol's Response

I was extremely angered by this, I had to survive completely on my own on the farm. I fell into a deep trance in my mind, thinking about why such a thing could happen. As I searched the farm I found more and more information on what was happening in the real world. I learned of Hitler's plans and his wrongdoings in Germany. My thoughts were twisted, and I could not stop thinking about the day they were taken from me, I knew I would have to do something, anything.

Question 4: What did you decide to do to take action?

Schmol's Response

Living alone let me think deeply and hard about my plans to injure the Nazi plans. I planned for weeks on destroying cattle cars and train tracks to bring Jewish transportation to a halt. I gathered the supplies by trading on the black market and making deals with friends. At night, once everything was ready I followed through and snuck into the train station. I destroyed hundreds of feet of train tracks and I blew up all the cattle cars resting in the train lot. People must have heard this attack from at least 5 miles away. I knew the Gestapo would arrive any minute to eliminate me. While traveling back to my house I hid on a stranger's property hoping not to get caught during the day. I snuck to my house at night because it was too risky to travel during the day.

Question 5: How did you feel after completing that action?

Schmol's Response

I was very proud of what I did that day. I gave time to hundreds of Jews to run away instead of being transported to those mysterious concentration camps. I felt that something had to be done, I did something and I felt relieved. I never wanted anyone else to experience what I had when my parents were taken from me, but the fact that it was happening all over German territory made me extremely mad. I could only do so little in this big world, but since I could do something to save people I knew I had to do it.

Question 6: As a Jew how were you able to avoid the Germans for the rest of the war?

Schmol's Response

Back at my farm, I got rid of any entrances leading into my farm, I was completely off the grid. I was in complete isolation again. Because on the outskirts of the town, I was able to avoid the German armies passing through the town. I am very thankful that my parents purchased this property or else I would have been captured very easily. For the next couple of years, I never traveled back to the town again, it wasn't until one day in May in 1945 that I heard the sound of American liberation. I immediately sold all of my valuables and bought a property in Switzerland. I moved and have lived the rest of my life happily.

Question 7: Looking back on your experience, what advice would you give to Jewish men and women if this were to happen again?

Schmol's Response

No matter the situation you should always be prepared for everything. Knowing is the most important thing you can obtain in your life. If you know a situation you can prepare for it better than anyone else. My parents made the wrong decision of staying in Germany, had they decided to move to Switzerland or the Americas they would have lived a much happier life.

Biography

I interviewed holocaust survivor, Eliza Kiser on April 5th 2011. At the Poland park - The Szczecin Lagoon Nature Park, at the time of the interview she was 90 years old. She retold the journey she took with families for three years when the holocaust started to affect her friends. She took Jews across Poland to Sweden. After the war she was surprised to see her little brother excurted from a camp for being faulty accused of being "Jewish" and worked to help build her little brother's life back up...

Interview Question 1

Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Eliza Answer 1

W-Well... Probably after my brother was faults accused of being Jewish and taken to a work camp... it was a miracle he made it out alive... It was around then that I had realized the severity of the holocaust...

Interview Question 2

How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Eliza Answer 2

It hurt my soul, my brother was always my best friend... We grew up close... then I thought if it were my father what would he do? So... I studied the world map for months and helped take in anyone crossing near my home... And helped take them across from Poland to Sweden...

Interview Question 3

So, what did you do in response?

Eliza Answer 3

I fought... fought for my brother, and the rights of the people and their lives... The holocaust was when I realized that this was truly bigger than ourselves, and if we wanted to win... We'd be in for a hell of a ride...

Interview Question 4

Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Eliza Answer 4

I would say... well... I wasn't as consumed with fear as I was during the start... I was able to channel it into determination in order to keep going... That was the most important key to survival... never let them catch you with your guard down was what I always said, not only to the people I was helping but myself...

Interview Question 5

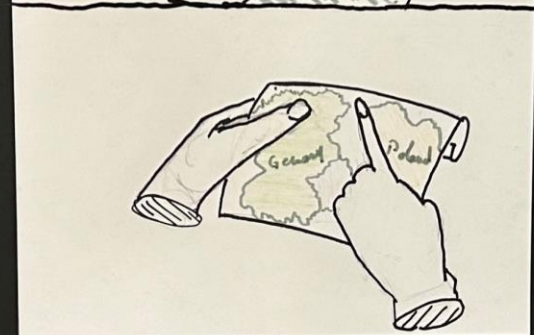
Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Eliza Answer 5

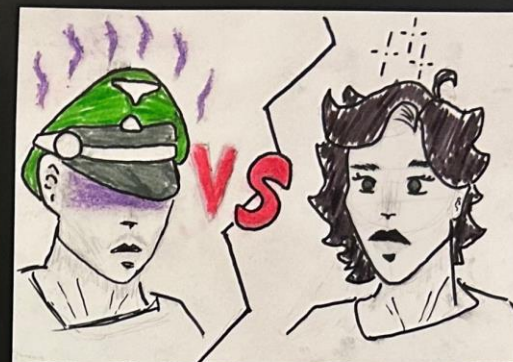
Never let the way you feel about someone or a group of people fill you with anger or rage... Just because we won the battle doesn't mean we've won the war, there is a lot more we must do before this battle is over... don't be the enemy this world needs less of...

HOLOCAUST
ELIZA
KISER
INTERVIEW

Eliza waiting there round in Poland



Planning the route was taking to Sweden



Eliza when the Gestapo took her brother.



Packing for the 2 day trip



Taking the long journey to Sweden

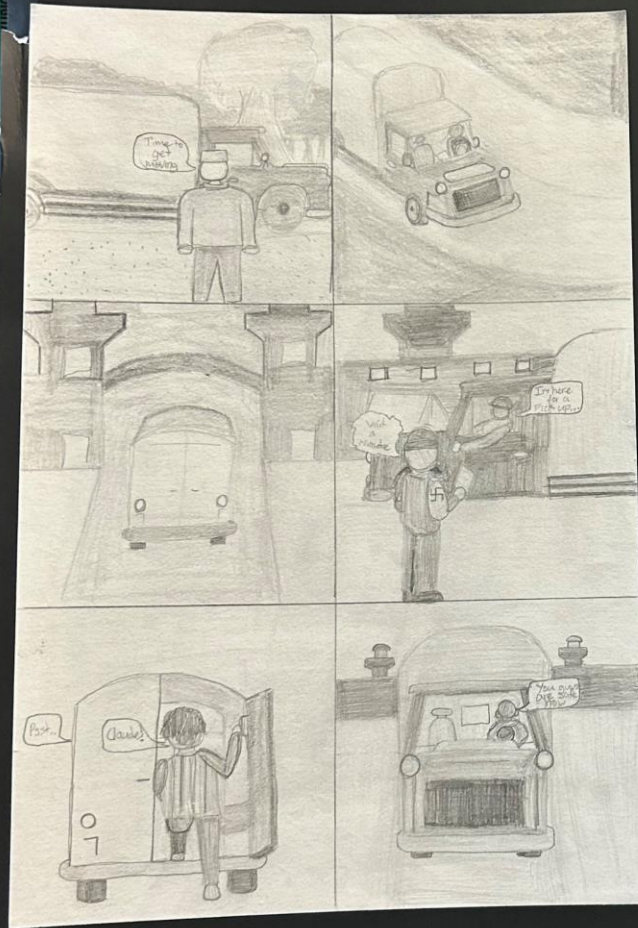
Saying good bye to the people that took to Sweden

A Likert
★ ★ ★

Introduction

Interviewed by Liam

I interviewed Claude Worheal on February 20, 2002, near his home in Lyon France, at the local cafe in the center of the city. At the time of the interview, Claude was 80 years old. Claude told his form his early life in Lyon, as a single child with one parent and shared his experiences throughout the war, which began when he was a young student at the age of 19. Claude was in a military program trying to become a transporter, he would soon rescue his Jewish friend and bring him to safety. After the war Claude moved back to his home and wrote stories about his experience as a French transporter fighting the Germans. He got married and had two children, one which works at the cafe.



Interview

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

I had a best friend that saved my life previously in my life and so I felt I had to return a favor. When we were younger we were walking home from school, and there was a car coming towards us and my friend pushed me away at the last second. To return the favor of rescuing my best friend's life I would help him escape the death camp that he was sent to. I would fake German and act as a Jewish transporter going to transport him to another camp, really I would drop him off in Sweden with others where they could not get captured again.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

That moment affected me emotionally because my friend risked their life to save mine. I realized that I had to return that by saving my friend's life.

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

I saved my friend's life by going to the death camp that he was sent to and rescuing him with others as well.

Question 4: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

This experience made me feel good and happy about knowing that I did a good deed and saved many people's lives.

Question 5: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

I would say that if you do something good in the world, something good will happen back to you. My friend saved my life and the world brought back to him me rescuing his life.

Question 6: What Interactions did you have during the journey of the rescue?

When I was going to rescue my friend from Auschwitz, I saw many German patrol and transporting trucks driving past me. When I arrived at the camp, there were two guards monitoring people coming in and going out, there were also two snipers at the front in towers that watched people going out. So as I was driving the truck inside of the camp to the loading bay, there were various guards eyeing me down. One of the spoke to me and asked what I was doing here. I said I had been sent to transport Jews to another camp because they did not meet requirements, the guard said that they were not expecting anyone coming that day and I said they sent me because of emergency and personal purposes and they loaded me up with the first housing building which had my friend in it. After that I made it out quickly as I could.

Question 7: What did your friend do after he was captured and dropped off in Sweden.

When I dropped off my friend in Sweden he would continue to stay there until the war was over to be safe. I stayed with him for over a couple months and then I would return back once in a while to check in on him. After the War I would go back to Lyon to live with my beautiful wife and two children soon later and my friend would stay in Switzerland.

INTERVIEW WITH CLAUDE WORHEAL

Interview-introduction/bio:

I interviewed Heather Johnson on December 22, 2008, near her home in Austin, Texas, at the local bakery where she works. At the time of the interview, Heather was sixty-three years old. Heather shared events from her early life in Vienna as a girl who was always positive to people even though she was going through alot, like her parents dying in a car crash, and she treated people with kindness and was everyone's best friend. Heather shared her experiences in the holocaust. After the war Heather moves to the united stites, where she gets more reconization than before. She gets married to a wonderful man who treats her right and supports her story and trauma.

Introduction: Hi, my name is Heather Johnson, I live in Texas. I am 61 years old. I am originally from Austria, Vienna. I am a baker and a friend of many people even Jews.

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Current Response: I was working with my friends at the bakery. It was a beautiful summer afternoon, so business was booming. People were walking in and out all day long. Everything was great until these guys who were Nazis came into my bakery and dragged some Jews out.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Current Response: I knew I had to help them they did nothing wrong. I decided from then on, that I would do anything to help people so they wouldn't have to go through that.

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

Current Response: I didn't want to do anything for fame or money. I did what I thought was right and helped the Jews out. It wasn't the type of thing I had to take a step back and think about. I knew immediately what I had to do.

Question 4: Now that you look back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Current Response: It gave me adrenaline, but it gave me the strength to keep on going and working hard because I noticed how they felt. I put myself in their shoes and know that if I were them I would want help.

Question 5: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Current Response: I would want to say never give up keep trying and always be kind to others. It's not worth it being mean all the time. You don't get anything from it.

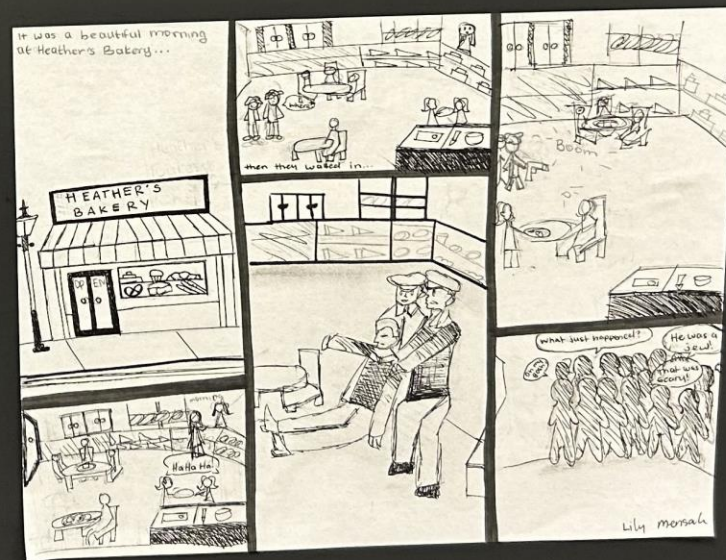
Question 6: How would you describe your experience in the Holocaust?

Current Response: It was terrifying. I just wanted to feed my customers. It was also stressful. Most times I would have breakdowns in secret because I thought I wasn't doing enough for them. I didn't want them to see me in this position even though they were going through worse.

Question 7: How did your friends who weren't Jews feel about this?

Current Response: They didn't support the idea at first, but they knew I wasn't going to stop what I was doing. They helped by making the food. They kept an eye on the Nazis and told me what I was doing was brave and they were proud of me for risking my life for them.

HEATHER JOHNSON



Lily M.

Interview of S.G. - Holocaust survivor

Sabina Grantclher was interviewed on September 25, 1994, at her apartment in Manhattan, New York. During this interview Sabina Grantclher was 63 years old. She was born in the city of Strasbourg, located in France. This interview allowed her to speak about her experience during the Holocaust and WW2. She spoke about her family and how life wasn't as hard before the war. She also discussed the topic of helping others in need. After the war she moved to the US, traveling around the country and eventually settling in Manhattan, New York with her disabled sister.

Question 1: Can you tell me what your life was like before the war?

Yes of course. My life before the war was not the best because I was constantly getting harassed and discriminated against in school and in public. However, I can say I would gladly go back to then. Besides that, my home was very content. My mother, father, 3 siblings and me were a close-knit family. Although my father was often gone most times since he was in the military at the time.

Question 2: When the war began to kick off what happened to you and your family?

As the war started my family began to slowly disappear from civilization. We had stopped going outside for walks, stopped going to school, and all the normal daily things. We refrained from buying food unless we ran out. But even then, we sneaked around town or traded others to get food. Despite all these measures, something still went wrong.

Question 3: What caused things to go wrong?

Many things went wrong all at once. The worst event that occurred was a night I can never forget. This all happened in November, November 17th, 1942. I was walking along the side street within a crowd of Jews, stumbling over each other's feet. The SS officers were forcing us to walk to the town hall. They had told us we were going to see a wonderful sight. But I knew that was a lie. The officers were pointing their guns and batons at us shoving us, making snarky comments such as: "You filthy Jews should all end up like that." What they were talking about we didn't know just yet. My mother, little

rotter, and oldest sister were together but not my father and older brother. The last time we had seen them was a few hours back. When I had gotten to the stage everything had changed. I was stuck frozen. In the middle of the stage was my brother and father, bloody hanging in the air by a long, thick rope.

Question 4: How did everyone react to this event?

Things began to change so fast. Too fast. Children were crying, others were trying to them, many guards were laughing, mocking us. Other guards were getting angry with all the commotion. Soon things boiled over. Guards were shooting they began shooting at us, everyone was running for cover. As all this happened my older sister was rushing us to cover. She was always a quick thinker. We were running into the woods as sneakily as we could, but one officer had caught up with us and shot my older sister down. We, however, had escaped. There were many, many days where we hid in abandoned buildings. We traveled as much as we could without getting caught but as well as trying to get necessities to survive.

Question 5: Why did you help others? How did you help others?

I believe what encouraged me to try and provide for others was the rights and situations I saw and felt. Seeing others struggling to survive, many innocent people getting shot, small children dying, families being torn apart, the only option was to help them as best I could. But as I said before my mother, and I helped others by providing them with food and shelter. As we sneaked into the city or anywhere, we could scavenge for food. If we saw anybody that needed help, we led them to a shelter, gave them food and some tips. But if they were too young, we took them with us. This was a dangerous business to participate in because the risk of getting caught would get us and others shot or sent to a deportation camp.

Question 6: How did all these events affect you?

It caused me to change my whole way of life. The guilt I will always hold, for the death of my family members and my anonymity; that guilt of not being able to help more

has been engraved forever in my brain. This is not heroic, but I am only human, so to cope and let others know about this struggle and pain, I help the public. I now go to homeless shelters to help anyone who may need food or shelter. I also go to do public speeches for schools and meetings.

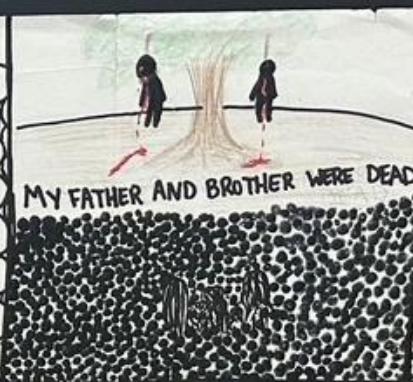
Question 7: How was your life like after the war?

After the war I was extremely depressed. I felt as though I had lost my purpose and my reasoning for life. Because of this I began to travel around the globe. Maybe about 3 years later, after travelling, I was offered a job as a writer to talk about my experiences. So, I moved to stay in New York because of this offer, I accepted the offer of course, and to take care of my younger sister after my mother's death. Ever since then my life has been relatively calm but never too happy, for the guilt I have stored within.

HOLOCAUST

interview of

SABINA GRANTCLHER



But my sister forced us to keep on moving...

We had escaped...

Phil Katz Interview

Introduction and Biography:

Phil Katz and his sister, Tamil Katz, were interviewed at a cafe during lunchtime in Verona, Italy. It was on the day of December 3rd, 2000 when he was at the age of 74. He was 15 during the Holocaust and still in school. He had a quiet life with only a few close friends he shared with his sister. He loved to read and his favorite thing to do was bake treats for his family. Phil and his sister would often go on adventures around the town together and come home to their mother and father at the end of the day. Phil never got married but lived peacefully after getting a job as a baker at that very cafe.

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Phil's Response:

When me and my sister had been taking a walk around town to meet our shared friend, we saw him and his Jewish family being dragged away by the Gestapo. They shouted out to us calling for help, but we had no way to stop them from being taken and just watched as they were pulled onto a large truck.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Phil's Response:

This made me feel useless for not doing anything about it. They had called for help and yet we weren't brave enough to help them. I knew we had to do something to keep others from having to go through what we just saw. I wanted to make up for being selfish and I was prepared for the worst.

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

Phil's Response:

I told Tamil right then that we needed to do something. We couldn't just stand and watch as everyone we loved get thrown around like dust and taken away. Often when we were out of the house, we would spread word about a hiding place we knew of, and offer to let people who needed help stay in our shed in the woods behind our house. We had to do it behind our parents backs, as they wouldn't allow it. They were strong supporters of Hitler and would be very disappointed if they found out what we were trying to do. We were constantly at risk and under a lot of pressure having to help keep many people fed. Some days we weren't able to bring food out, but we did the best we could. I would even sometimes bring them some baked goods I made in the kitchen. We had at least 16 people that we needed to watch and we were still able to do it without our parents knowing.

Question 4: How did you manage to keep it a secret from your parents?

Phil's Response:

It wasn't easy, but me and my sister came up with a system to alternate bringing food outside to the hiders. We would come up with excuses to go outside after dinner, whether it was cleaning the yard or taking a walk around the neighborhood. There were some moments when we thought they might catch us, but we would do our best to keep them distracted so they wouldn't suspect anything.

Question 5: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Phil's Response:

It made me feel more mature at a young age and brave for doing what most couldn't do or were scared of doing. Although, I will never be able to forgive myself for doing nothing as I watched one of my friends being taken away. I still think about it, wondering what happened to him and his family and what could've been prevented if I stepped in. There are some other things I wish I could've done differently looking back at it, but in the end it was worth it.

Question 6: What did you learn while keeping these Jews hidden?

Phil's Response:

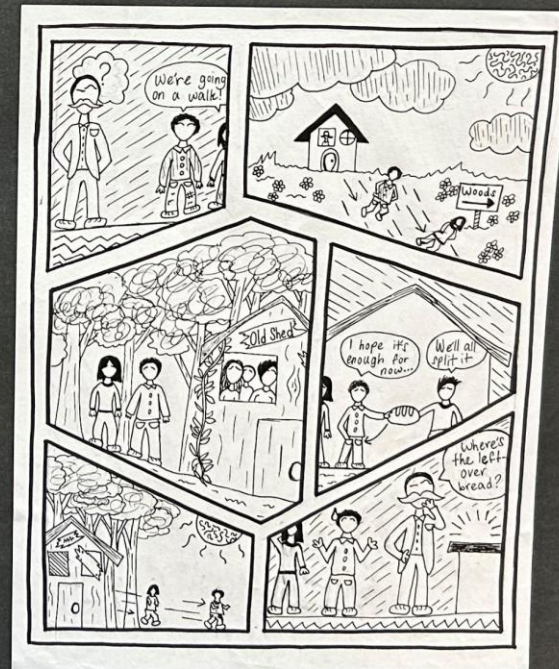
I think one of the biggest things I learned was that you should take matters into your own hands and never let anything get in your way. If I had let my parents or the risk of getting caught by the Gestapo stop me, I never would have been able to help save these few lives.

Question 7: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Phil's Response:

In the future, I believe people should never take things for granted. You never know when things will go wrong or you'll lose something special to you. But, don't be afraid to take risks as well. Without taking risks, you might lose that special something if you don't do anything about it. You can't live your whole life while being scared of what will come next.

Phil Katz



Maia T.

Interview with Alaric Schmidt

I interviewed Alaric Schmidt on June, 4th, 2010 in the garden of his current residence in Budapest, Hungary. At the time of the interview, Alaric was 92 years old. He described the events of his early life before the Holocaust, such as his musical talent and how much he adored the feeling of music, as well as his athletic abilities, being able to play Football, ice hockey, and tennis. During the Holocaust, Alaric worked as an SS Officer when he was about 23 to 24 years old. He guided Jews to safety by providing them with extra food and saving them from the gas chambers. After the war, Alaric married Alice Fischer in 2008 and had six wonderful children, three girls and three boys.

Interview:

Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

"Well, it was maybe one to two months after I got recruited as an SS officer. I was on duty, positioned next to the gas chambers. I had become this. *Alaric's face twists up as he tries to think of the right words.* He continues, "emotionless soldier dedicated to serving Hitler. I was terrible, mentally and physically. I was walking in routine, we were trained to pace the same area repeatedly, like robots. I saw a child, who couldn't be older than 5 years old, she was crying hysterically, she didn't know any better. *Alaric's voice trembled slightly near the end of the sentence as if he was trying to convince someone.* I had snapped out of the 'mind control', trying to find a way to soothe the little girl. *Alaric takes a deep breath.* But in the blink of an eye, another officer grabbed her by her tiny little leg and made sure to grasp her tightly before he threw her into the brick wall. I stood there. Frozen. The child lay there, lifeless. Not a bit of air to be breathed into her lungs again. I didn't notice how long I had been just standing there until the guard turned and looked at me with a suspicious look. I quickly turned away and went back in position."

How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?"

"I tried to brush it off. Tried to convince myself that it was what they deserved." *Alaric said this with a tone that made it seem unfavorable.* "That was what I was taught. I tried not to interfere with Hitler's system as I believed it wasn't my place to defy him. However, it seemed like my body had more integrity than my body did. I couldn't sleep, I couldn't do anything, without seeing it again. Clashing with my inner thoughts, I asked myself, "They are children. What could they have possibly done?" Then I thought about my daughter at home. Would I want someone to save my daughter if she was in this position?" I asked myself. And the answer was yes, without hesitation." *Alaric said with determination.* "In that moment it snapped. Whatever blinded loyalty I had towards Hitler completely vanished. I realized that Jews were the ultimate victims

here. We were all blinded by Hitler. We were so consumed in fear and hatred that we put it all on them. I realized that, with the privilege that I had, even if it wasn't much, I needed to do something, anything, or else I wouldn't be able to live with myself."

"So, what did you do in response?"

"I thought about it for a long time. What could I possibly do that would make a difference? And I remembered that I was put in control of serving food every once in a while. Knowing that the diet that they were given only supported their bodies for three to six months, *I had to do something.* So, when I was in charge, I gave the children and their families any extra food possible, attempting not to get executed in the process. There was this one time, I had just given a child an extra loaf of bread, and I noticed that that another officer was keeping a close eye on me. So I took 3 fourths of the bread and ripped it off. I nodded to the officer to assure him that I wasn't doing anything 'out of order'. Then, I gave the child one-fourth. After watching closely, the guard nodded back and walked away. I quickly threw the three-fourths of the bread back to the little boy before quickly going to the next child."

"Now that you are looking back at your experience as a resistor, how would you say this whole experience affected you?"

Alaric sighed before starting, as if he was ashamed of his decisions. "To be honest, it influenced me to trust no one but myself. I lost all of my friends because of my ignorance and ways of thinking. I became very overprotective of my daughter because I realized how evil people could get through influence. But who wouldn't? However, it made me weaker, mentally. I refused to listen to other people's opinions and kept to myself, shutting everyone out except for those I felt the need to 'protect'. I felt like I was vulnerable because I had someone to protect." The entire situation made me want to shield my daughter from the world itself, and I had a right to."

"Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?"

Alaric sits and thinks for a brief moment. "Do the right thing. I know it's typical but really it goes a long way. It benefits others while giving you a peace of mind. You can change the world little by little, just by doing the right thing. *Alaric says as if the fact couldn't be exaggerated.* Find yourself, form your own opinions, but listen to the opinions of others as well. Don't be influenced by the world around you. Your actions are yours and yours only."

"Have you told your daughter about this experience and how she impacted your decision?"

"Yes, actually. I told her when she was about 13 years old. She had a project on unknown history.

ALARIC SCHMIDT



I told her all about when I was recruited as an SS officer. Having to leave home in order to fulfill my duty. I told her how devastated I was to leave her. It was tough, telling a child about such a terrible experience. But I told her about how I thought of the possibility of her being in that situation and what it made me do. It brought her to tears. We both were crying for a while. It meant a lot to her because it proved what she meant to me. We love each other very much."

"Is this the first time you have told your story?"

"It is my first time sharing my experience. At first I was ashamed because of who I was during those times. I was a contributor to the evil, even if I didn't do anything. I still held the title. Then I realized that no one was perfect, not a saint. I wanted the child to be known. The child that was a victim to undeserved cruelty. It's not about me. It's about them, what they went through for absolutely no reason. I can only imagine the pain and sorrow the parents must have felt losing a child."

"Alright, that is all. Thank you for your time."

"No problem, thank you too."

Mr. Carah

Interview with Luisa Becker

Introduction and biography:

I interviewed Luisa Becker on March 7th, 2006 in Breslau Germany where she now resides with her kids and grandkids. At the time of this interview, Luisa was 87 years old. Luisa talks about her experiences as one who let many people take shelter in her house to help Jewish families and children from being separated in 1942 at the age of 23 in Sosnowiec Poland. After the war, she moved to Germany where she worked in a small coffee shop and raised her 3 children with her parents and husband. Her oldest child, Lia, is present at the interview with us.

Interview:

Question 1: What was your life like before the holocaust? Before 1942?

Luisa's response: I came from a really rich and powerful family growing up which would give me an advantage later on. At the beginning of 1940, I came to the age where I wanted to marry and move out to a new place. I met my husband in my senior year of high school I believe around 1937. I was in my 3rd year of college in Breslau Germany and I wanted to move out soon. My marriage was already set and I was being married to my now-deceased husband, Leo Becker, in 1940. Around a month after our marriage, we were going to move to Sosnowiec Poland where his family was. We bought a small house and had our first child in 1941. The next year, 1942, Leo was drafted into the war to fight for Germany. I was alone raising Lia by myself.

Question 2: You are known as a rescuer. I would like to know more about your story. Can you tell me an important moment that you witnessed that made you act?

Luisa's response: One day, I wandered around a neighborhood with my 1-year-old child to see my friends. While I was walking around the neighborhood, I saw a family getting pulled apart by the Gestapo to be taken to a concentration camp. Many Nazis were surrounding

the Gestapos and gave them orders on what to do with the people in their hands and where to put them. One of the Gestapo attempted to put the two parents into a big truck and then put the other three little kids into a smaller van.

I knew this family before, they used to work at a grocery shop down the street that I would go to frequently. They would always bring their kids there. These children always had the biggest grin on their faces and they would always help me and play with my baby. I have even invited them to a huge gathering a while back. They were fun, they were my friends.

The children were yelling and screaming to be let go. The youngest of the three was able to bite down on one of the Gestapo's hands, break free from his grip, and run toward his parents. One of the Nazi soldiers caught the little boy right before he was able to reach them. The fear I saw overcame both parents as the mom yelled for them not to touch her young boy. The fear I felt for the whole family as I was "shell shocked" from the view. I couldn't move. I looked down at my own child and then back up to the family resisting the grasp of the Gestapo. I covered my baby's eyes and looked the other way and started walking. Slowly, then I started to walk at a faster pace and then I started to run with tears in my eyes. This could have been my little girl and me if we weren't the desired religion and race everyone wanted us to be. The thought of it being me, or any of my friends with kids slaughtered me. I never want a child to have to be put that way, separated from the only guardians they know of.

Question 3: How did your experience affect you?

Luisa's response: This experience has made me feel ashamed of what I did and why I didn't help the little family that owned the neighborhood grocery store. I could have stopped the Gestapo and redirected them but I didn't.

Because of this experience, it made me want to help children and families. This could have been anyone, including me and my 1-year-old child, getting split apart from one another just because the Aryans and Hitler didn't desire us. I wanted to protect families so they wouldn't

have to experience the same fate that awaited them, just like what happened to the family I witnessed before.

Follow-up question: How did you feel and what were your thoughts at this moment?

Luisa's response: I felt frightened. When I was in college, I heard many stories about these kinds of things happening and what the Gestapo may do to Jewish families. I never thought that it was as bad as this. Now seeing this in person, I saw the reality of what the power of Hitler could do and what were the effects of it.

I thought about how the parents may have felt as they were getting pulled away from their kids who have spent their whole lives with them. And then I thought about how the kids may have felt when leaving the only family they know of. And how scared they must have felt not to be protected by their families anymore.

Question 4: So, what did you decide to do to take action?

Luisa's response: I decided to take in Jews and house them. I hid them in my attic so they were away from the sight of my neighbors on the street. I tried my very best to protect them from the Gestapo. I gave them food, water, shelter, and any necessities they required. If I saw any family that were in line to go to a camp, I would take them in and talk to the Gestapos that were going to take them. Because of the power I had before, they would listen to me and trust me.

Question 5: What was the hardest challenge you had to face during the Holocaust while you were hiding people?

Luisa's response: During the time I was sneaking people into my attic to hide them, many of my neighbors grew suspicious of me. They watched me get extra food, much more food than a mother and a baby would eat. They would also see me heading upstairs with the food in my hand. Some of them would even joke with me saying that I hid Jews from

persecution. The skepticism of my daily activities grew on them and they started to call the Gestapo and multiple Nazi soldiers many times to do a "Neighborhood cleansing". The "Neighborhood cleansing" was designed to spot any Jews living inside houses and to take them into ghettos. They would regularly come to my house and ask me questions while looking around for any signs of someone else. And then after every visit, they would leave because I had a lot of power over most people and I could deceive them into thinking that no one was there.

I had to risk my own life to try and help these people. At any time throughout this period I could have been caught, and everyone in my house, including me and my child, could have been sentenced to death, no matter how much money I had or how much power I held.

Question 6: Now that you are looking back at your experience as a resistor, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Luisa's response: This whole experience made me realize that we should always help people in need, no matter who we are. This can change someone's life drastically and shape the way they live from now on.

Question 7: Now that this is many years later for you, is there any advice you have for people my age?

Luisa's response: Your generation should always help people when they can't help themselves. To take care of people that can't take care of themselves. To protect people when they require protection. To stand up for people when they can't speak for themselves. As I grow older, I see many kids in your generation discriminate against others and become hurtful to one another. If I and many other people were like this, we wouldn't be able to save so many people from their "fate". We also need to take risks to help people who require help. If we don't take risks, we won't be able to do the things we do today and we won't be able to protect people who need help.

Luisa's Becker



Myesha A.

Erika Miller

Interview with Erika Müller

Introduction and Biography:

I interviewed Erika Müller on February 3, 1995, near her home in Charleston, South Carolina, at a local coffee shop she frequents. At the time of the interview, Erika was 72 years old. Erika relayed events from her early life in Wesbaden, Germany, as the only child of an anti-semitic man that was a member of the Nazi Party and shared her experiences during the war. Years before the war began, when Hitler came to power, she was only 10 years old. Erika and her mother worked to provide safe places for Jewish people to hide during the Holocaust. After the war, Erika moved to the United States, where she worked as a waitress, married, and had one child, who was present during our interview session.

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Erika's Response: When I was 11 years old, my best friend Esther, a Jewish girl, and I were at her house studying after school. My father never let her over to our house. I never minded. I liked being at her house. It was calm and welcoming, everything my home wasn't. It was a small home, but always clean. Especially her bedroom, which only had a small bed with beige bedding, a picture of her family on the floor, and walls covered in pale floral wallpaper. But no matter how calming her house was, nothing could calm our nerves as we heard a door in the other room swing open. I watched as strong men in uniform, with the swastika pasted onto their sleeve, came into her bedroom and took her away. We were both screaming hysterically, to the point I barely had any feeling left in my throat. I know they would have taken me too if my father weren't as prominent as he was in the Nazi Party at the time. That day was the last time I ever saw my best friend. But it's also the day I realized I couldn't be a part of what was happening in the world around me.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Erika's Response: Knowing that I would never see Esther again was heartbreaking. But that heartbreak helped me realize just how bad things had gotten. I didn't want to sit around and watch as people were unfairly taken from their own homes any longer. So, I decided that I wanted to provide a safe space for Jews when they had no one else to turn to. But, I was also still very young, my father would've been beyond angry with me, and none of my friends would've understood. So I realized that if I wanted this to work out, I had to turn to my mother for help. Which I did, and that decision may be the only reason I was able to help so many people.

Question 3: So, what did you do in response?

Erika's Response: My mother was cooking dinner and the smell of sausage and slow cooked vegetables were filling the air. She was cutting carrots with the sharpest knife we owned, they were all fairly dull, when I brought up the topic of my concern. She dropped the knife on the cutting board, it made a small rattling noise that seemed to raise my heart rate even more, but instead of being mad or angry with me, she looked up at me with an expression I could only describe as relief and heartbreak. I didn't know what to make out of it, but I continued nonetheless. I told her about Esther, about how I thought all of it was wrong, and how I felt like I needed to do something. She was reluctant and made sure I knew just how dangerous all of this was, but eventually agreed to help and support me as long as my father never found out about any of it. The two of us decided on a plan to build a shed in the woods behind our home where we could hide and shelter Jews in their time of need. We lived in a decent sized home, but the risk of my father ever finding out was too high, so we had to make sure the shed was far enough away to keep everyone safe. My mother and I spent the next few weeks building this shed, but ultimately it was worth it. Throughout the Holocaust, we were able to successfully protect over 30 Jewish people from being sent to the same fate my best friend faced.

Follow-up Question: What was the hardest part about what you did as an upstander?

Erika's Response: The hardest thing about everything my mother and I did was having to essentially withdraw from my father. Despite his beliefs, my mother and I both still loved my father very much, and he loved us. But, it was difficult to be close with him when I knew that we were doing something like this behind his back. Because of that, I barely talked to him. I missed him, I missed having a father. But I knew deep down that the decline in our relationship was purely because of the decision I chose to make, which hurt me deeply.

Question 4: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Erika's Response: Looking back, I have no regrets about what I did. The people we saved never deserved anything that happened to them. I like to think that I only did what any sensible person should have done. But my experience helped me realize just how important it is to help those in need. The ones that don't have anyone else by their side. I've carried these ideals throughout my life after the war. As far as I'm concerned, I'll continue to help others, whether their issues are big or small, until my very last breath.



Question 5: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

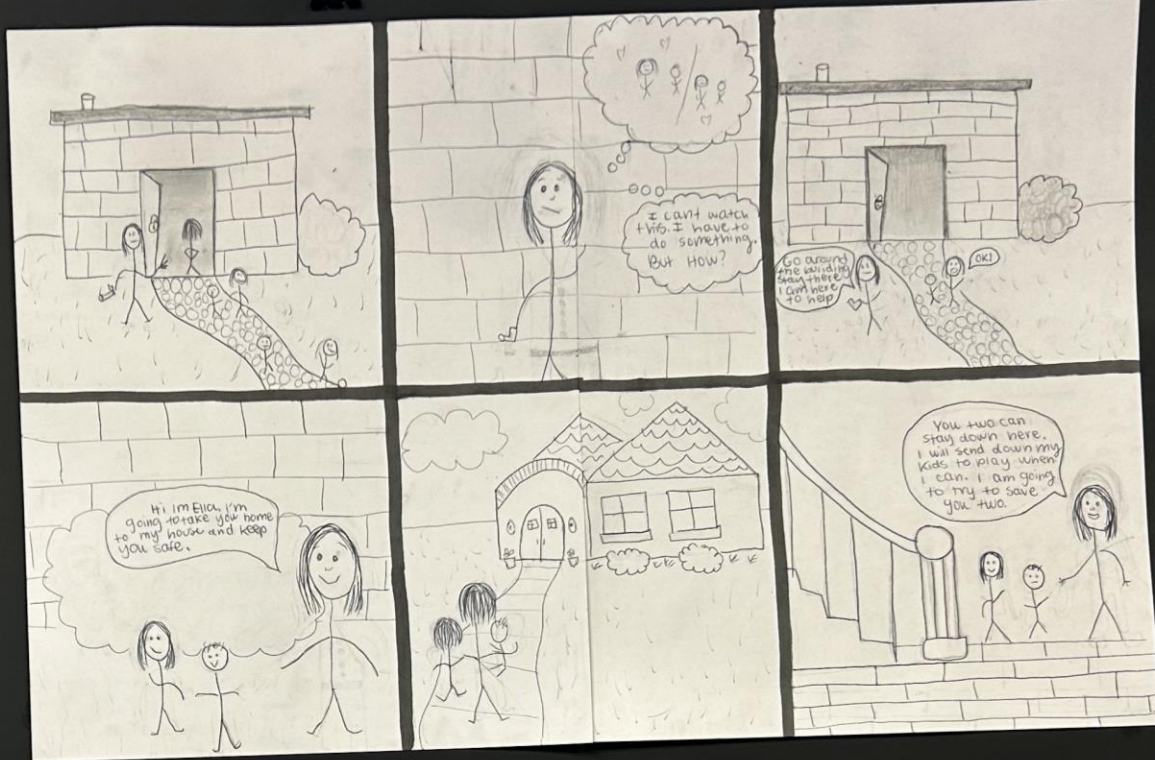
Erika's Response: I think it's important that everyone, despite their age, remembers how much of an impact they can have on someone's life. The ability to be kind and empathetic is inside of everyone, but that doesn't mean that they have to change the world to have an impact, which I feel is where many people decide to give up. Sometimes, changing someone's perspective on life is just as important as changing the world. I believe that everyone should work to help whenever they can, because any small act can make a change.

Follow-up Question: Is this something you had to learn yourself, or something you feel you've always known?

Erika's Response: This is definitely something I had to learn. Nobody is born with any sort of ideals, so the way you're brought up can definitely change the way you see the world, whether that's good or bad. Growing up in a home that was filled with hate certainly had its effect on my mindset towards others. However, seeing how so many others in the world were being treated made me realize I couldn't just stand by and watch it happen, which is something I believe everyone is capable of. Just because you were raised under one mindset, doesn't mean that you can't grow and change into the person you wish to become.

Paige L.

Interview with Ella Lively



Interview with Ella Lively

I interviewed Ella Lively on June 5, 2000, in Scottsdale Arizona. She is 85 years old. Ella grew up in a wealthy family in Berlin. She grew up to be a teacher. Ella then got married to her husband Noah. Ella and Noah then had Taylor and Oliver who during the holocaust were ages 5 and 1. When Hitler dictated Germany during the holocaust Ella was recruited to put little kids into gas chambers at Camp Bergin Belson. Ella saved about 15 kids by taking them home to her family. After the war, Ella and her family moved to Arizona to enjoy the nice weather and a peaceful neighborhood.

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to help?

Ella's response: I realized I needed to do something when I saw two siblings about the ages of my kids in line to go into the gas chamber. A girl was clinging to her little brother who was barely walking. They looked just like my kids and I didn't even want to think about my kids getting killed at that age. I imagined how I would feel if I was their mom. It was heartbreaking to see.

Question 2: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Ella's response: That movement still lives with me, making me look at my kids and hold them closer. It makes me realize that this world needs more good people. I wanted one. That's when I knew I needed to come up with a plan to save at least some of the kids from getting brutally killed.

Question 3: What did you do in that movement with the kids?

Ella's response: I quickly glanced around to see if there were any more officials nearby. When there weren't I whispered "Go around the building and stay there. be super quiet. I am here to help you." The older sister looked terrified but led her brother off quickly. It was near the end of the day so I could finish my work and go around the building quickly. I saw the two kids sitting there together. I picked them up and raced to my car. Because I was a well-trusted official I could park in the back lot by the gas chambers. I put the two kids in the back of my car. They were quiet. I was able to take care of them in my house's basement. They were both so sweet. I did this as often as I could.

Question 4: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Ella's response: It has made me aware of how we as humans need to think about each other disregarding religion politics and beliefs. It made me think of the kid's mom and dad. I thought about how I as a mom would want someone to help my kids. No matter what I think we need to realize how what we do affects people. For the good or the bad.

Question 5: How did you choose the people to save since you couldn't save them all?

Ella's response: Whatever ones I felt called to. It was so incredibly hard because I knew there was nothing I could do to save them all. I was especially led to save the ones around my kids ages. It is so horrifying to see such little and innocent kids get killed. But as much as I just wanted to choose the ones I wanted to save the most I needed to be strategic. If they

were not calming down or if they were screaming I couldn't take them because we would get caught.

Question 6: Was your husband Noah okay with the whole hiding situation because he was also a high-rank Nazi?

Ella's response: From the start when Hitler was just getting started, Noah and I knew it was wrong. We knew killing people because of their religion or where they came from was wrong. So when we were both forced into the Nazis movement we decided we wanted to find a way to help. After my first day, I came home with two kids and he was very happy. We were fortunate enough to be able to feed and house the kids it wasn't perfect but at least they were safe. I'm so thankful he was understanding and we were on the same page.

Question 7: Were you worried about the repercussions if you would've got caught?

Ella's response: I was worried. How couldn't I have been? I was risking my kids my husbands and my own life. But I also knew that if I didn't I would always regret it. I didn't want to help kill these kids. So every kid was a challenge. I did figure out a very smart way to get the kids out safely so no one would notice but there was always a chance we'd get caught. One wrong move, one wrong sound, or one kid who didn't follow directions and it was all over.

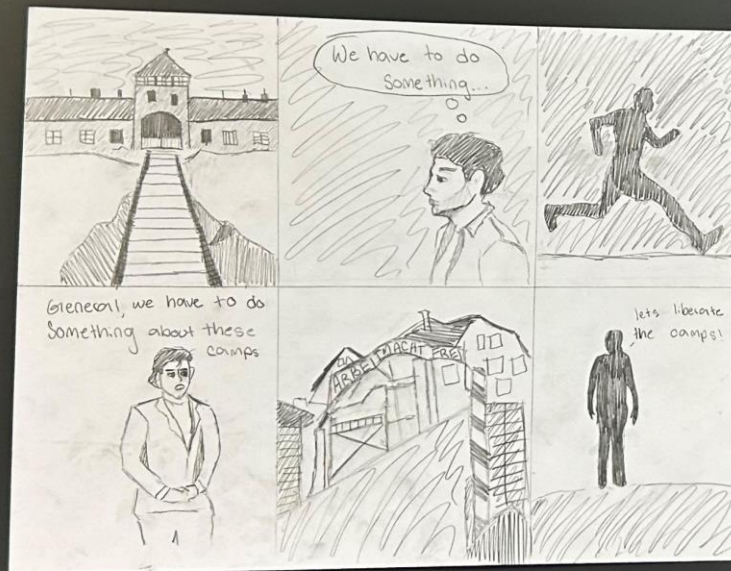
HOLOCAUST

interview with Dale Jackson

responsibility to lead these men to freedom. My parents always taught me to be responsible with anything.

Question 7: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Response: I would tell the younger generations to look after each other. And to stand up for everyone, if we don't work together, how are we supposed to save humanity? I think we all need to help each other.



I visited and interviewed Dale Jackson in 1978 in his home in Brooklyn, New York. At the time of the interview, Dale was 52. Dale recalls his experience fighting and leading camp liberations during World War 2 as a young man at 19. Dale led the liberation of 3 concentration camps, including Auschwitz, and fought earlier on the front lines. After the war, he married his fiancée and had 2 children and moved to Brooklyn.

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Response: Well my dad was the real reason I joined the army. He was drafted when I was 18 and he unfortunately died in the war. I had to leave everything behind, including my fiancée, Judy, she was devastated and begged me not to go. Once I got across the sea to Europe, I realized I had to help after I saw the miserable Jewish people being led away and when I heard of the camps during my time there.

Question 2: What happened to Judy?

Response: As I mentioned, she was devastated. The whole war she wrote letters to me. In these letters she would speak of how life was in America and how excited she was to be married and have children. Of course, I was just as excited, if I survived.

Question 3: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Response: First of all I realized how bad it really was in Europe. In America, we didn't have much information on what was happening during the war, especially with the mail delay. Once we got there, and I saw the horrific events, I realized we needed to figure out a way to find the camps and liberate them.

Question 4: So, what did you do in response?

Response: In response, I went to my General, a very stern and strict man, and told him we needed to do something. Of course they all thought I was crazy, even my buddies did, they thought that we would get killed in the process of liberation by the Nazis. But eventually, he agreed and I helped plan it. We sent out planes to find the camps first, we had rough ideas but not an exact point.

Question 5: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Response: We saw a lot of bad things, malnourished people, bodies, and smoke. It was horrible. The smoke and smells were terrible. I think this experience taught me to look after everyone and care for everyone no matter the situation.

Question 6: Why did you specifically lead groups to liberate the camps?

Response: Well, I have always believed that if you find a problem, you should be responsible to solve it. I felt a

Rewley B.

The Interview of CATHERINE AIDER, a ★ Holocaust Upstander ★

In this interview, we dissect the life of Catherine Adler. She joined me in Buffalo, NY, in February of 2020. She shared about her time in the Holocaust. At the time of the interview, she is 94. Her time in the Holocaust used to only be a tale for her children, but after some convincing from her son, she has decided to tell the world.

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

I was going to school, like I usually would. 2 of my Jewish friends were getting beaten, I couldn't do anything. I wasn't very strong. Only 17. When I figured out I could house them, I immediately took action.

Question 2: How many Jews did you house your first time helping?

The first time I helped, it was the 2 friends and their siblings. Each had about 2 so I was housing 6 people at that moment.

Question 3: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

It made me more cautious of money and taught me to shut my mouth. Having any chance of getting caught was not an option.

Question 4: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

It showed me the gravity of the situation, I needed to help however I could. I couldn't just sit and let that happen to people.

Question 5: So, what did you do in response?

First, I hid my friends and their siblings. Then, I hid a young man, around my age, and I housed him throughout the rest of the war in addition to other people that I housed. I brought him food, and we shared my rations. We got married after the war was over. I housed many others, I cannot even remember most of their names.

Question 6: When you were sharing your rations did you ever have to seek help that wasn't legal?

While hiding my husband, I did not seek help from the market. But when I started hiding more people I had to turn to the black market.

Question 7: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

For youth that want to make a difference, I want them to know that they can. Risking your life to help other people isn't necessary to help others. It could be as simple as smiling at someone or sharing some food when you've already had enough.



On The Run!

Catherine Alder

Henry [redacted]

Interview of Eddie Malcolm - A Holocaust Upstander:

Intro.

I interviewed Eddie Malcolm at his home on September 5th, 1972, in Cork, Ireland. He was 47 at the time. Eddie told me about his experience as an upstander during the Holocaust during WWII. It began after his father joined the German army when they invaded France. As a 15-year-old, he secretly hid Jews in his room and attic, then sneaked them over the Swiss border that was near his home. After the war, he became an author and wrote about his experiences. He married and had three children. He became world-renowned for his heroic efforts during the war.

Interview

Eddie, you are popularly known as an upstander. Can you tell me about the specific point in your life that made you realize you needed to do this work?

When I first moved to France during the war, I was introduced to a lot of violence. One time I was at school. In the middle of class, the SS came in and ordered all the Jewish students outside. They shot them all that day, right in front of us. Most of my good friends were killed. At that moment, I knew I needed to do something. To save the innocent people who were killed that day and who were dying in the camps.

How did that moment affect you? What did it make you realize about what you needed to do?

I didn't know exactly how to feel. I was too shocked that someone would do that to innocent children. I never saw them as different, but they were portrayed as bad. I was so young I didn't understand why. I was scared I was next. I was so surprised that no one stopped them. Even my teachers. It made me realize that my father's cause wasn't as good as I had thought. I wanted to help, but how was I to go against them? Against my family, my friends. I knew I had to take action, in secret.

So, Eddie, what did you do in response?

In that moment I decided I was going to do as much as I could to save the Jews. They were just as good as anyone else. They didn't deserve to die. Since my father was in the German army, he was stationed in France right after they'd invaded. We were right at the Swiss border. I knew that Switzerland was neutral, I could smuggle Jews over the border at night. It was a dangerous idea, but I knew I had to do it. I would go into the few Jewish businesses left when I went into town and tell them I could save them. They knew they wouldn't have much time left if they stayed. So, at night, I'd guide them through the woods with a map and candle. As we got there, I'd sneak them under a spot in the fence. I never got caught once.

Did you ever think of giving up?

Well, at times I did. When we were almost caught it would scare me half to death. Knowing I was betraying my own family's beliefs, that alone almost made me give up. But then I'd think of the poor innocent children that were killed at school. I remembered the sound of the gunshots. That's what reminded me why I was doing this. For the innocent people being prosecuted just for being a little different. I knew I had to keep going. For them.

Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

The whole experience was inspiring. I was proud of myself first. I knew I had done something to help people, even if it was only one. It's made me inspired to tell my story to show the world that differences don't tear us apart, they bring us together. Everyone has different qualities that are different, and that's okay. I believe that it has given me purpose in life. To preach about acceptance. It's shown me not to judge other people because they can judge parts of you too.

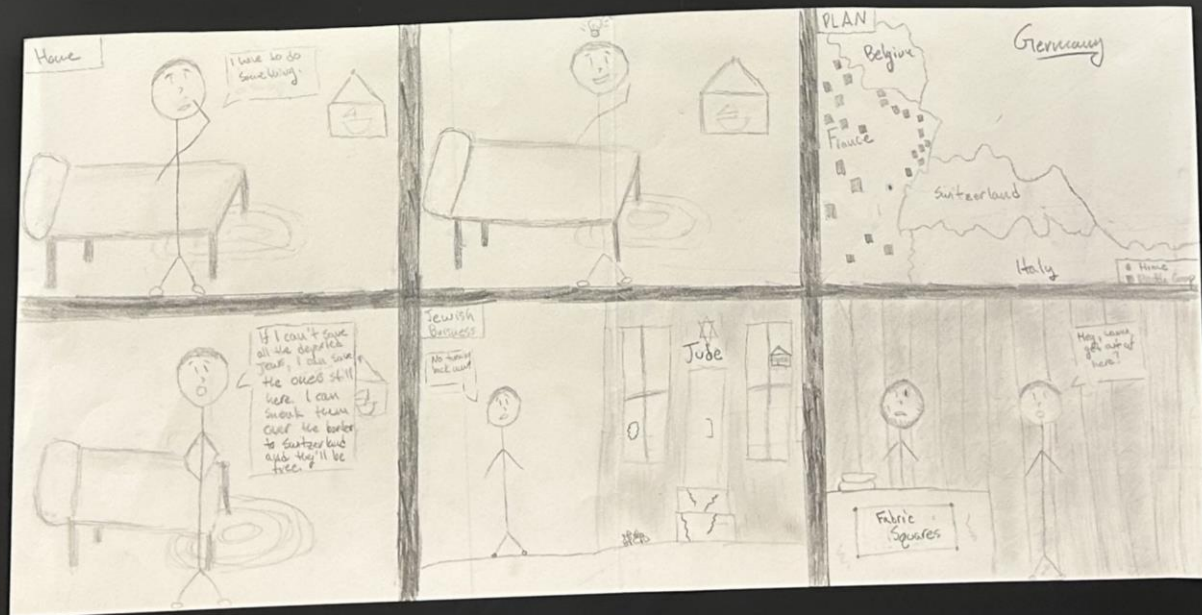
Have you made your actions known now?

After the war, my actions weren't known, even by my closest friends. I tried to be as secretive as possible. But then I slowly saw other upstanders speaking out about what they did. I knew I needed to tell my story. To inspire others. I published my first book in 1960. By 1962 I had sold over a million copies. I was even featured in the New York Times. I never realized how much my actions impacted people. People would shake my

hand and tell me how much I'd inspired them. I felt euphoric. Like my hard work meant something to people. That I had done something worthwhile.

Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

I would say to stand up for what you believe in. If no one ever stood up for what you believe in nothing would ever change. Uniqueness is what defines us as who we are. Don't change your opinions just to go with the crowd. If you follow your heart and speak your feelings, things will change. Nothing ever happened by everyone lying low. Make a ruckus and see what happens. You might just change something. You never know unless you try.



The Interview of Elodie Schmitz

I interviewed an elderly lady named Elodie Schmitz. She is an eighty-eight-year-old woman who survived the Holocaust. Her Schmitz was seven years old when the Holocaust started. Her parents both died when she was three. She lived in an orphanage for four years until the Nazis took over to gather all the Jews to send them off to camps. Mrs. Schmitz didn't remember much about her parents but she wished they were still alive and with her then, so she didn't have to be there all alone and miserable. "No kid should go through that at such a young age," she said, which was the beginning of her upstander journey.

Question 1

Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Yes, it was around the time when I just lost my parents and I was heading to the orphanage I wasn't there long because this was just before WWII began. I remember that memory like it was just yesterday. When I got older, I knew that I probably wouldn't survive, so I decided to escape. I made a plan to get out of there.

Question 2

How did it feel to be in that moment when your parents died and when you were shipped off to that camp?

When my parents passed felt a bottomless pit in my stomach. Of course, I only remember it vaguely I was only three at the time but even so, I was traumatized by that incident. I remember being shipped off to an orphanage and how I didn't want to talk, I was lonely and I was scared. I was missing my parents and I was missing my home. I was missing everything slipping away from my mind, I couldn't bear it. Four years later, when I was seven years old and brutally taken away to a camp, I was terrified for my life. I got there and they shaved my hair, gave me raggedy clothes only a little food. They gave us burdensome work to do every day and we were being punished. I was scared, I was lonely, I was missing my home, my family, my good side. That took me years and since I never got in trouble they didn't suspect me to do something like escaping and that's exactly what I wanted them to think. I got a Nazi uniform and helmet so I wouldn't be seen and I took a car and drove out of there. It took weeks for them to find out I was missing. I realized what I had to do save people and help children to meet the same fate as I DID.

Question 3

How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

There was a moment when I was a child and I was playing on the orphanage swing set about a week before I was shipped off to the camp. I saw a woman being dragged out of her house and was beaten in broad daylight right in front of her kids that were sobbing at the traumatic incident. While the woman was whaling in pain on the ground unconscious. I was paralyzed by her own blood, they took her kids and left her on the ground unconscious. I was paralyzed from the legs down. I didn't know what to do, hide, call someone for help or even try to help her. I was shocked, PETRIFIED from what I just witnessed, not knowing what to do just lie there. She collapsed on the ground and bled out. Luckily, the Director of the orphanage found me and took me back inside. But even when I woke up I was scared, depressed and tormented.

Question 4

So, what did you do in response?

I started a secret organization, told people about it that were also looking to help out and do the same. We found kids one by one, gave them food, clothes, weapons and a secret escape plan. We also had a radio to communicate secret messages. Miranda my close friend, was an expert in morse code, so if we were ever suspected, we would hide until we knew we were safe again.

Question 5

Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

So what happened to me at a very young age and it shaped the person I became. I would say I don't regret anything that I did. I was really happy with helping people have a sanctuary, or I place that they could feel safe in. My goal was to help keep people from having to feel the way I did after losing everything. I believe I did reach that goal. All of it was very traumatizing for me and even though I was only three, I still remember of the passing of my parents. It had a very strong impact on my life but it lead me down a path that I wouldn't change at all.

Question 6

Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

That is actually a very great question! So much time has gone by and I certainly am astonished of how the world has revolutionized over time. But one message I would convey to the world would probably be to always treat people like you want to be treated. To always live with empathy and kindness because I believe if you're good to the world then the world is good to you. I hope this world will keep prospering and grow into a better community, that people will join together as one because it would be amazing if that idea came true.

Question 7

One last question before I leave you today is, What is your image of what life would be like if the Holocaust could have been avoided?

If people could accept each others differences instead of tearing each other down and condemning people that are not the same as them. We are just people, we're all part of the human race, so we are all brothers and sisters and connected somehow. That would be a wonderful way to live. Avoiding the horrific trauma inflicted on an entire race would have changed the world.



I interviewed Lina Zimmermann on January 27, 2010, at a park near Raleigh, North Carolina. At the time of the interview, Lina was 81 years old. In her early years, she was the second oldest of four children. She was a student at the age of 16 when the war happened. Lina was involved in helping hundreds escape Dachau into Switzerland. She was later known as a courageous hero.

Question 1: Can you give me some background information, like, where did you live? How did that affect what you did?

Lina's response:

I was the second oldest of four children. Frederick, Emilia, and Gunter. In oldest to youngest order. We are all three years apart. I lived in Karlsfeld, Germany which was close to Dachau which made it easier for me to help the Jews. I went to school at Facherschule with my friends I had excellent grades, and I played girl's ice hockey. I don't play anymore obviously, but I liked it. I'm not sure what else to say. I guess all I had were friends that were Jews who got persecuted so I guess that's mostly why I helped people escape the Nazis. Because my friends and their families died in a concentration camp.

Question 2: Can you tell me about an experience that made you want to help?

Lina's response:

I had this best friend from high school, and she was Jewish, I am not. Her name was Naomi. One day at school she came up to me looking traumatized and told me that the Nazis barged into her house brought her dad to a concentration camp, and killed her mother right in front of her for refusing to go without her children. Luckily, she wasn't in the room when that happened, but her brother was. He was only 8 years old and he was and her brother started screaming and crying and attacking the Nazi. The Nazi had enough of it and slammed him off his shoulder into the ground and shot him. That's when I knew I had to help and do something about what was happening. I couldn't let Hitler and his army treat people like this. Naomi told me that she would escape this horrible place and go to Switzerland. I supported her and helped her go. Later, I kept in touch with Naomi; she knew someone who could help me smuggle Jews into Switzerland.

Question 3: What did your family think about your idea to help?

Lina's response:

Umm. My father thought that I shouldn't do it but if I did, he didn't want anything to do with it. All of my siblings didn't even know what I was talking about and thought I was joking. On the other hand, my mother didn't like it because she didn't want me to die trying to help. She thought I should just mind my business and live my life as it was. But, I couldn't think of myself NOT helping. For a couple of days, I listened to my mom but it was hard, I felt some sort of guilt like I wasn't doing the right thing, so I followed my gut.

Question 4: Were there any challenges you went through that made it difficult?

Lina's response:

Yes, there were many. One time, when I was leaving in the middle of the night to go bring people to Switzerland, I ran into my mom, she looked so disappointed. You had to be there to see how dismaying and appalling she looked. I will never forget her face when I saw her. "sniffle... I'm sorry... This is very emotional for me. After that, I never talked to her again and about a year later I learned that she killed herself because she felt so bad about me she couldn't live with herself anymore. Let's talk about another incident... So I was smuggling about 10 Jews into Switzerland, we were on the border of Germany and Switzerland. But still in Germany. We were on a train on the way into Switzerland and suddenly we heard people talking about Nazis being on the train and they were checking for Jews before we officially got into Switzerland. It was so scary because I thought we were gonna get caught. The Nazis were right behind us when a person who worked on the train snitched on someone and said there was a Jew on board. I started sweating so badly, then they turned around and went to another car on the train. I felt so relieved until I heard screaming and then gunshots. I got so scared again, there were children on the train too and I had to look calm so that they would stay calm. But on the inside, I felt like a hundred needles were poking at my body and made me numb.

Question 5: What happened next?

Lina's response:

Well, we made it to the next stop, we still had 3 more stops to go before we got off in Switzerland. At the first stop, 5 Nazis got off and started walking along the tracks back to where we heard the gunshots. I told the Jews I was traveling with that I would be right back and that I was going to check what happened. I walked over to the other car and asked someone. They said "Nazis came marching in her demanding to say who the Jew was. Someone rattled them out and the Jew kept denying it until he was held at gunpoint at the head. He finally confessed and he said that he had a very nice family and he couldn't die. The Nazi didn't believe him and the Jew started resisting and the Nazi got ticked off at him and shot him. Everyone freaked out and went silent. The Nazi demanded that we stop the train and the train service crew member told them that we couldn't stop in the middle of the tracks so the Nazis opened the door and threw the dead Jew out of it. And I guess they went to go back for him." I went back to my car on the train and told the Jews what happened. They got so scared but I told them that it was going to be okay because the Nazis got off the train. But... I saw 2 more Nazis on the train but didn't tell them because I didn't want them to freak out. I knew this would scar me for life. So finally after that, we got off the train and met up with one of my friends that Naomi got me in touch with and they brought the Jews to a safe place. Then I went back to Germany to help more Jews. I kept going back and forth between Germany and Switzerland. I almost got caught about a dozen times. But, I kept calm which made me safe and alive today.

Question 6: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Lina's response:

It affected me because it made me more of an assertive and poised person. I am more confident that I can do things that I didn't think I could. I know I am seen as a hero and upstander, but I like to see myself as a person who is doing the right thing. Most people would try to look cool by acting morally, but they would get hurt because of their pride though it was needed. Others, like me, would do the right thing just because it's the right thing. They wouldn't need sentiment and admiration for doing something that had to be done.

Question 7: Is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us to be better adults?

Lina's response:

Well, I saved one person from going to Dachau. Later, I saw them and they were with a whole family, he came up to me, because he recognized me, and he told me that he was so thankful for me to help him otherwise, he wouldn't be with his family right then. He had such a sincere personality and tone, I could tell that he really meant it and was SO grateful. So what I learned from that was, that such a small act could lead to something so much bigger than it was. They could see me as a victor, and I could see myself as a kinder person by giving a small act. My advice to you guys would be to make a difference in the world, one small act at a time.

LINA ZIMMERMANN INTERVIEW



Sydney

Introduction and Biography:

I interviewed Felix Kluas August 9th, 2004, at a Py-r, which is a fine dining restaurant in Toulouse, France which is where Felix has been living for the past 55 years. At the time of this interview, he was 77 years old. Felix relayed his events during the Holocaust telling me about his struggles and how it was during these times. Felix was the last-born child of 4. He has a wife and 2 kids, 1 who was present during the interview because he had heard these stories so much, he could correct his dad when mistaken. He told me about how his life was normal before the Holocaust, his family activities were fun but when he was 7 everybody started being protective and at age 9 his parents told him about what was really happening. After the Holocaust Felix moved to the US for 2 years until he was 22. He then moved to Toulouse, France where he has been living here for the last 55 years.

Question 1: Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work?

Felix's answer: The reason I got started was because of a terrible smell I encountered when I was 14. I remember it so well, on a nice sunny spring day I smelt something so awful. I asked my mom what it was and she said it was the cremation centers and the smell of the camps. I asked why they smelt so bad and she said it was because they were burning people. This traumatized me so I knew I needed to change that.

Question 2: What did your parents think of this?

Felix's answer: I can't remember the best but I'm pretty sure my parents were scared of me doing this and they told me I shouldn't because they didn't want to lose me. My parents weren't doing anything about it and that is why it kept continuing so I knew that I needed to help to save the lives of others.

Question 3: How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do?

Felix's answer: This moment influenced me to change that because I didn't want people to keep on dying. I knew that if I didn't put an effort in to help solve these problems, I would feel guilt and feel like their deaths were because of me. This was when I realized I needed to start helping people escape.

Question 4: Did you know anybody that got captured?

Felix's answer: I know a few people that got captured but one of my best friends Arnold got captured and it was my first close experience to death. Losing a close friend made me fall into a pit of sorrow until a close friend told me that everybody else that is close to people in camps also feel this way. I thought that if I could save somebody or family they could live on and experience the life they might not have experienced.

Question 5: So, what did you do in response?

Felix's answer: I remember that I and a few friends went to slash their transport vehicles tires and take people out of the transport vehicles. We would also cut holes in the fences and let people at night escape. This was a very daring act and I was very scared to do it but I knew if I made successful trips, that would be saving other people's lives, that were important.

Question 6: Did you create the group or someone else?

Felix's answer: I was the 4th person to join the group. The person who made this group's brother was captured and he tried to get him which he did, and he realized how easy it was and decided to get a group to help. Before I joined the group my friends tried to persuade me, but I was scared of what would happen to us or me. I only took the job when they put it into my mind that these are innocent people who are just dying left and right because of their religion, and this shouldn't be happening.

Question 7: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Felix's answer: This experience really hit me hard knowing what was happening to people, but I am strong mentally, so I didn't let it alter my life. I have experienced little trauma to this, but I have been strong and persevered with them.

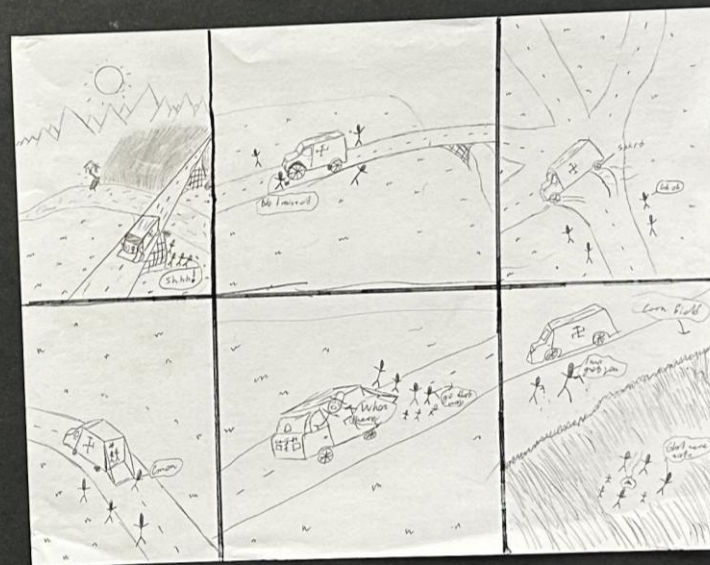
Question 8: Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults?

Felix's answer: I think you should find a way to solve problems and stay strong because sometimes they don't work. If I wasn't strong those 836 people would not have been able to come back home and continue their life. Whenever you are admiring the world just remember that this world was once under bad control and if you don't do something to help you will feel sorry for yourself.

Question 9: Was this the scariest thing you have done?

Felix's answer: This was the scariest thing I have ever experienced because it was high risk and there was a chance of death. I remember my mom telling me to be safe and how we exchanged I love you's back and forth. I remember on my 3rd mission when I was 19 me and the group were waiting to slash the vehicle's tires so we could unload the Jew's, but Max missed his tire he was going to slash and he, and Arnold were the tire slashers. Only slashing one tire meant they could travel still to the concentration camp, but luckily the driver stopped. We started unloading the Jews and the driver came out firing shots at us. I was weaving in and out of the corn fields we were near hoping to avoid the shots. This was by far the scariest thing I have ever done but I know this action saved many people's lives.

Felix Kluas



Talan C.

Interview of Bella Stafford

I interviewed Bella Stafford on January 28th, 2024, near

her home in Lisbon Portugal, at a park where she used to play as a kid. At the time of the interview, Bella was 96. Bella shared her story of her experiences during the War with her sister and both of her parents. She also talked about her experiences in the War, which began when Bella was only fourteen. At such a young age Bella had a huge impact on the War. She helped people hide in huts, basements, attics, and more. After the War Bella moved to the United States, where she worked as a Nurse, married, and raised two kids.

Can you tell me about a particular moment in your life that helped you realize you had to do this work? When I was younger I loved to help people as much as I could. I loved to see people happy and enjoying whats around them. During the War a lot of people had to run away from guards, and I decided to make hiding spots for some of them who desperately needed to rest.

How did that moment affect you? What did you realize about what you needed to do? I realized that people needed help and somewhere to stay.

So, what did you do in response? I started "building" or making huts and hiding places for people to stay and hide.

Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience

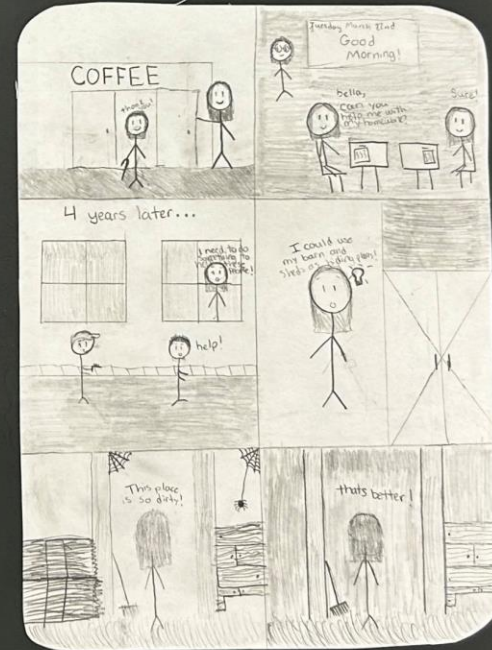
affected you? It made me realize that doing what I did was very risk because I could've been caught and killed.

Now that many years have gone by, and you are looking back, is there any advice you have for people my age or future generations that might help us be better adults? Dont be afraid to help others, even if they are strangers.

The act of bravery an courage you showed when you were 14, what is something you regret doing and what wouldve you done to fix it. I dont really regret anything I did. I am very propud of myself and the smart choices I made at that age.

Did anyone ever repay you for your act of bravery and kindness? Yes, there was this one 8-year-old girl who was with her sister, they were running away from guards and I offered them a place to stay, they both stayed for about 2 days, after that her sister wanted to leave immediately to get to their destination, but her sister repaid me in food.

I nterview of Bella Stafford



Holocaust Interview

with Iwan Lech

Watson

Interview with Iwan Lech

Introduction and Biography:

I met with and interviewed Iwan Lech in 1985 at his home in New York. At the time of the interview he was 80 years old. He and I discussed his time in Lublin, Poland and the events that took place when he was a young professor at the Catholic University of Lublin at age 35. Iwan played a key role in rescuing his mentor and some of their students from the prison of Lublin Castle. After eluding the Germans, he escaped to America where he served as an architecture professor at Columbia University in New York.

Interview

Question 1: Iwan, thank you for meeting with me today to discuss your time in Poland during WWII. Although you were still establishing your career as a professor of architecture, you were well known for your knowledge of the Lublin Castle both before and after its remodel. In fact, it was this knowledge of architecture that you used to help save the lives of your colleagues and students. How did you come to know Lublin Castle in such detail?

Iwan Lech: As a young student, I studied with a professor who was known for his deep knowledge of European architecture. His name was Alfons Dutka and he seemed to know everything about everything. He was brilliant and I was fascinated by his knowledge specifically of the structures in Poland. In fact, it was he who inspired me to continue my studies in architecture, which led to my personal research on Lublin Castle both before and after its reconstruction.

Question 2: Lublin Castle. That is the site of your great rescue and also the setting where you became known as an Upstander of the Holocaust. It was here that you saved not only Alfons Dutka, but also many others from certain death. Can you tell me about the events that led up to this moment?

As I said before, Professor Dutka had a big impact on my studies in school. I admired his work and I wanted to follow in his footsteps. After graduating from my studies in architecture, I accepted a job at The Catholic University of Lublin. I was fascinated by the castle of Lublin and its history. However, Professor Dutka knew so much more than I. So I invited him to give a lecture to my students where he compared and contrasted the castle before and after it was remodeled. That was the moment an unpredictable journey of survival began.

our differences make us unique. They do not make a specific group of people bad. Inside we are all the same. We all deserve to be treated with respect and fairness and we should all be alarmed by anyone who attempts to tell us otherwise.

Question 7: If you could go back in time to Lublin during the War, is there anything that you would have done differently?

Iwan Lech: Yes, I would have tried to save more people.

Question 3: What was this particular moment in your life that brought you to this realization?

Iwan Lech: In November of 1939, I witnessed and was almost a victim of the operation known as the Intelligenzaktion, an operation where the Germans came in and arrested hundreds of intellectuals, politicians and religious leaders, anyone who they thought would be an obstacle to the Germanization of Poland. I watched as my mentor and friend, Alfons Dutka, and many of my students, were pulled out of a lecture hall while he was teaching. I looked very young at the time, so the Germans didn't realize I was actually the professor in charge and not a student listening to him.

Question 4: How did that moment affect you?

Iwan Lech: I greatly admired Alfons. I watched in disbelief as they carried him and many students away for no apparent reason. I didn't understand what was happening at the time and I was confused, as were my students. Soon after, though, I heard that this happened all across campus. As a matter of fact, the occupiers quickly closed the university. I felt terrified. I knew that if the Germans realized I was a professor, they would probably have taken me, too, like they took him. They ended up housing Dutka and the students, along with many others, at Lublin Castle. When I realized this is where they were being taken, I thought I would have a chance at saving them. I began to come up with a plan.

Question 5: So, what did you do in response?

Iwan Lech: I assumed that more arrests and supposed "disappearances" of intellectuals would happen again. I was correct. A few months later a second wave of arrests and murders began taking place. The Nazis were once again targeting the intellectuals, but this was part of my plan. Because I knew the castle well from my own personal studies, and because I assumed that Alfons was still being held there, and he knew the castle well, we would have a chance. I allowed myself to be arrested, even though I knew that I could be tortured or even killed. However, I had to get to the others and being arrested was a sure way to do it. Once I was inside, I found Dutka and we devised an escape route using our knowledge of the castle grounds. Dutka, having been tortured while in the prison, died after we broke free, but I went back through our secret pathways determined to save more people. All total, our plan saved 22 lives.

Question 6: Now that you are looking back at your experience as an upstander, how would you say this whole experience affected you?

Iwan Lech: This whole experience brought to light how blinded the followers of Hitler were. They were misguided by an irrational hate while they followed a madman that they loved. How has it affected me? It has made me realize that we need to know that

I invited Dutka to lecture for my class. He was one of the best. All was going fine and well until...



The Gestapo came and took him away!!!

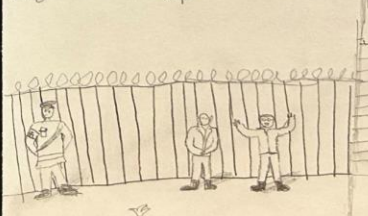


I had no idea what was happening...

A few months later, there was a second round of mass arrests.



Once I was in, Dutka and I met up.



As part of my plan, I allowed myself to be arrested by the Gestapo, in order to get into the prison, which was built into the castle.



And eventually, with some time and our knowledge on the castle, we escaped!

