Karkomi Permanent Exhibition Personal Narratives

Gallery By Gallery 2023









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JEWISH LIFE BEFORE WWII – 2

ARON AND LISA DERMAN

- Aron Derman was born in 1922 in Slonim, Poland, near the Russian border.
- There was a vibrant Jewish community and Aron joined a Zionist youth group.
- Lisa Nussbaum was born in 1926 in Raczki, Poland, near the German border.
- Raczki had a small, but active Jewish population. However, there already existed some antisemitism.

AARON ELSTER

- Born in Sokołów Podlaski, Poland, around Feb. 4, 1933
- Grew up in a religious household with 2 sisters.
- Father was a butcher in a shop frequented by gentile Polish population, giving them connections.

ALICE FINK

- On August 12, 1920, Alice Redlich Fink was born to George and Ella Redlich in the German capital of Berlin. She lived in a third-floor apartment in a Jewish neighborhood with her parents and her brother, Heinz. Her grandmother, uncle, and aunt lived in the same building.
- Alice's father owned a tobacco business, and her mother helped in the office. Alice has described living in the 1920's as not quite easy for ordinary people.
- Alice's mother grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home; her father did not receive a Jewish education. Consequently, Alice's childhood was imbued with both Jewish culture and German patriotism.

JOHN FINK

- John Fink was born Hans Finke on August 12, 1920, in Berlin, Germany. His father, Julius Finke, owned a dry goods store in a suburb of Berlin, which he lost in 1923 when the economy began suffering from hyperinflation.
- John, his parents, and his stepsister Ursula shared a four-room apartment in Berlin's inner city.
- Growing up, John attended local elementary school, and once a week he attended religious school.

BETTY ZWANG FLEISCHMAN

- Betty Zwang was born to Herman and Flora Zwang in Stein am Kocher on November 12, 1912.
- Growing up, Betty attended the local public school with her four siblings, Victor, Jenny, Ludwig, and Selma.
- Her father was co-owner of a textiles business, and the mayor of Stein am Kocher for several years.

FRANKENSTEIN AND FLEISCHER FAMILY

- Julius and Martha Frankenstein, parents of Carla and Heinz, lived in Swinemunde, Germany
- Carla met Leopold Fleischer in January of 1937 and they married on May 30, 1939

JERRY GLASS

- Born in Chicago, IL on April 14, 1926

LEAH GUTMAN

- Leah Gutman, née Grochowsky, was born on December 10, 1919, in Bialystok, a city in the northeastern part of Poland about 100 miles east of Warsaw.
- Leah's family was part of the local Jewish community, spoke only Yiddish at home, and supported all efforts for the creation of a homeland in Palestine.
- Leah remembered going to two movie theaters in the city, walking and playing in the beautiful public park with her parents, taking piano lessons, and being a part of sport teams.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Makkabi Basketball team, Bialystok, mid-1930s



Leah preparing for a Makkabia sporting event in Israel, 1937



Friends at a farewell party for Leah, Bialystok, mid-1930s



Leah and friends skiing, Bialystok, mid-1930s



Class photo from a private Hebrew gymnasium, 1937. Leah is 6th from the right, second row from the bottom

LUDWIG HAAS

- Born to Adolf and Anna Haas on October 26, 1924, in Landau, Palatinate in Germany.
- Growing up, Ludwig, his parents, and his sister Friedl lived in a two-story home in Ruelzheim with their grandmother, aunt, and uncle. They had a barn and a garden. Their father made his living as a cattle dealer.

SAMUEL HARRIS

- Samuel Harris, whose birth name was Szlamek Rzeznik, was born on May 13, 1935, in Deblin, Poland, about 40 miles in the southeast of Warsaw.
- His family lived together with his cousins, aunts, and uncles in a Jewish neighborhood. He also recalls that life in Deblin was peaceful and secure.

GISELA HESSE

- Gisela Emily Hesse, née Meyer, was born in Berlin, Germany on February 15, 1913. Her family moved to Delmenhorst; Germany before World War I broke out so they could be close to her father's sister.
- Gisela says that she had a very nice childhood. Her family often joined her aunt for gatherings, and her parents made many friends, so they always had company.
- Gisela attended a Catholic school for three years, receiving a good education without being required to say Sunday prayers or attend church.
- Gisela attended Jewish school weekly, where she learned Hebrew and history. The family celebrated both Christmas and Easter, but they did not celebrate Jewish holidays at home. Instead, they went to their aunt's.

WALTER HESSE

- Walter Hesse was born in Leer, Germany on June 30, 1907. The youngest in his family, he lived in a house on
- Main Street with his father, birth mother, a half-brother named Max, and a sister named Paula.
- Walter's house was situated on a harbor, and he had many friends, all of whom were gentiles. As a young Jewish boy, he did not experience antisemitism.

BORIS KACEL

- Born Boris Katzel in Riga, Latvia in 1922
- Found antisemitism uncommon in his mixed neighborhood.

CIPORA KATZ

- Born Cipora Fuchs on July 10, 1938, in Semiatych, Poland
- Cipora was an infant at the start of the war. Her first memories are of life in the ghetto.

SIMONE LIEBSTER

- Simone Arnold was born in 1930 in the Alsace-Lorraine
- The Arnold family converted from Catholicism to Jehovah's Witness in the late 1930s.

KATE LIPNER

- Born Marie Catherine Rossi on May 29, 1925, in Nice, France to a Catholic family.
- Grew up around many Jewish children.
- At age 8, Kate was sent to live in a convent in the hopes that she would learn to behave. Kate continued to rebel and was frequently punished by the nuns. Due to harsh treatment, she was drawn to the Jewish faith.

HANNAH MESSINGER

- Hannah Messinger was born Hannah Löwy on October 16, 1920, in Karlovy Vary in the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. She lived in an apartment with her parents and her older sister.
- Though the Löwy Family was Jewish, they were assimilated to the non-Jewish community; they did not keep kosher, but they attended synagogue.

IRENE K POLL

- Irene Poll was born Johanna Elisabeth Kahn in Mannheim, Germany on June 29, 1921. The family lived together in an apartment and had a live-in maid as well as a nanny to look after the children.
- Irene remembers that because poverty was rampant, it was extremely difficult to live in Germany during the 1920s. Though she describes her childhood as quiet and pleasant but without luxury, she wishes she had not been living in Germany.
- Her parents were not Orthodox Jews, so they celebrated only the main Jewish holidays. The family dressed up, went to synagogue, and had friends over.

MAURICE RAICHEL

- Moses Reichel (birth name M. Sohkliar) was born on December 27, 1907, in Ponewcesz, Poland.
- At a young age, Moses moved to Kovno, Lithuania where he went to school and later to college.

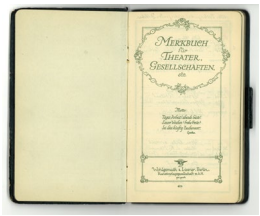
RALPH AND RUTH REHBOCK

- Ruth Rehbock, née Nussbaum, was born in Schmalkalden, a small town in Thuringia, Germany, on November 24, 1906. When she was eleven years old, the Nussbaums moved to Ohrdruf.
- The Nussbaums were not devout but observed the Jewish holidays. In her childhood, Ruth did not experience any antisemitism.
- After finishing school at the age of sixteen, Ruth moved to Gotha. She trained as a dental hygienist and learned how to sew and type.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Wedding photo of Ruth & Hans Rehbock, 1933



Hans Rehbock event Diary

WALTER ROSENBUSH

- Walter Rosenbush was born on June 23, 1913, in Kattowitz, Germany (now Katowice, Poland).
- Walter lived a very comfortable life with his two older sisters, who grew up speaking only German and living a very happy childhood free of antisemitism.

KLAUS SCHAAP

- Klaus was born the only child of Moritz and Erna Schaap on August 9, 1933, in Nordhorn, Germany. His father, Moritz, owned a butcher shop in Nordhorn. When Klaus was a year old, the family moved to Holland to escape antisemitism.

AVA KADISHSON SCHIEBER

- Ava Kadishson Schieber was born in Novi Sad, Yugoslavia on April 12, 1926. She lived in an apartment complex with her older sister, her parents, and her grandparents.
- Ava and her family lived a traditional Jewish life by attending synagogue, celebrating the Jewish holidays, and actively participating in their town's small Jewish community.

FRED SINAY

- Born Fritz Sinai on November 16, 1921, in Vienna, Austria
- Grew up in a very religious household in a friendly, non-Jewish neighborhood.
- In secondary school, Fred experienced antisemitism, particularly from his professors

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Scissors from the Sinay family tailoring business



Business card from the Sinay family tailoring business

ADAM AND PELA STARKOPF

- Adam was born in Warsaw, Poland on April 1, 1914, and lived in a Jewish neighborhood.
- Pela was born on November 18, 1914, and lived in Warsaw, Poland
- Adam and Pela were childhood sweethearts. They married in 1936.
- Both had close-knit, well-to-do Zionist families.
- Neither family was very observant, but they celebrated Jewish holidays.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Adam and Pela walking



Adam and Pela's wedding photo

HILDA STERN

- Born Hilde Pander on March 25, 1923, in Bochem, Germany and attended a school with children from different religious backgrounds.
- Hilda's father fought in WWI and received an Iron Cross. He thought of himself as German first.

PAUL STIEFEL

- Paul Stiefel was born on February 9, 1923, in Furth, Germany. A busy town of about 50,000-75,000, it boasted a strong religious community with about 2,000 Jewish residents. He lived with his parents and older sister.
- The Stiefels were upper-middle class and employed a maid as well as a governess. Arthur owned a successful chemical factory with his father.
- The Stiefels were conservative Jews, and their synagogue was conservative leaning towards Orthodox. Though they did not keep kosher, the holidays and traditions were important to them.

ALINE WINTERGREEN

- Aline Eva Wintergreen was born Aline Haspel in Tarnow, Poland on June 20, 1922.
- Aline was raised and educated in the town of Przemysl where Jews represented ten percent of the population.
- Aline commented that her Jewish friends were not religious. Her family did not keep kosher or fast, and she recalls that they attended only the High Holiday services.
- She attended a public elementary school where both Catholics and Jews were present. She completed the last two years of high school attending the new Jewish Community High School.

LUCILLE WOLF

- On October 11, 1923, Lucille Wolf was born to Walter and Lili Wollmann in Breslau, Germany. Her given name was Liselotte Wollmann.
- Lucille remembers a very happy life with her parents and two sisters, Ilsa and Susan. The girls frequently played games, read books, and played instruments together.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Wollman Family Storefront

Germany: A Fragile Democracy – 3

ARON AND LISA DERMAN

- Lisa's father's business came to an end, and non-Jews stopped buying goods at her mother's fabric store.

ALICE FINK

- One of the first changes Alice witnessed once the Nazi party rose to power was the boycott of Jewish businesses, which led to the closing of her father's company.
- At her father's behest, Alice stopped attending school in favor of something more practical, so she received training in nursing at a Jewish infant's home, graduating in 1938.

JOHN FINK

- By the 1930s, John had become aware of the turbulent political situation in Germany.
- One day, John's sister accidentally dropped something from their balcony and hit two SA men standing below; enraged by what they considered a trick, the two men came upstairs. They left only after Mr. Finke bribed them with the precious few goods he had.

FRANKENSTEIN AND FLEISCHER FAMILY

- Heinz had difficulty attending school and procuring an apprenticeship in a bakery.
- After *Kristallnacht*, Julius imprisoned in Sachsenhausen concentration camp for 6 weeks.

LEAH GUTMAN

- Although Leah Gutman had positive memories of her childhood, she was confronted with antisemitism by Polish gentiles long before 1933, when the Nazis came to power.

LUDWIG HAAS

- Ludwig attended the Jewish school in Ruelzheim for two years before the Nazis shut it down. Following his school's closing, he transferred to a public school where boys were taught by male teachers and girls by nuns. After a short while, the German government replaced the nuns with young Nazi teachers from out of town.
- To explain what a true Aryan looked like, one of the new teachers pointed out Ludwig's sister, the only Jewish girl in her class, commenting on her blonde hair and blue eyes.

WALTER HESSE

- Around 1935, Walter began noticing that things were changing. For instance, he recalls a time when he was walking down a street and noticed that some people walking the opposite direction crossed the street to avoid walking past a Jew.

BORIS KACEL

- Latvians knew little about Nazi Germany. Some even considered Nazis as liberators from the Soviet Union.

SIMONE LIEBSTER

- Beginning school in 1936, Simone remembered strong antisemitism directed against Jewish classmates.
- Simone was also bullied and often called "dirty Jew," despite being a Jehovah's Witness.
- Simone read news from Germany of Jehovah's Witnesses in concentration camps in Germany.

HANNAH MESSINGER

- In 1936, Hannah began feeling the effects of increasing antisemitism when her non-Jewish friends began treating her differently.

IRENE K POLL

- In 1927 Irene began noticing graffiti swastikas on her way to school, but she had no idea what any of it meant.
- In 1931, children in the Hitler Youth started wearing armbands with the swastika, and she started to realize Jews had no place in the lives of these children.
- On April 1, 1933, the boycott of Jewish businesses started, and Irene recalls that a big sign was placed in front of her father's business.

RALPH AND RUTH REHBOCK

- In 1933, the proliferation of antisemitic propaganda began, and the Nussbaums.' neighbors stopped talking to Ohrdruf's Jewish families.
- Through her father's acquaintances, Ruth met Hans Rehbock in Gotha. He was an intern at Ruppelwerk, a metal factory in Gotha that exported products to European countries as well as the United States.
- Although Hans's mother did not fully agree with his relationship with Ruth, Hans married her in 1933.
- Convinced that the political situation against the Jews would pass by, they wanted to raise their son Ralph, born on July 11, 1934, in his homeland of Germany.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



1000 Reichsmark note showing rapid inflation

WALTER ROSENBUSH

- He finished his German high school degree in 1930, leaving him with the choice to go to university in Poland or Germany. Walter chose to study in Germany.

ADAM AND PELA STARKOPF

- Adam and Pela were doubtful that rumors about the situation in Germany could happen in Poland.
- Pela first noticed antisemitism at university where Jews had to stand in class; she chose to leave school rather than have such treatment.

PAUL STIEFEL

- Many of Paul's memories of being discriminated against as a Jew took place at school. One gym teacher would single out his Jewish students, forcing them to stand in front of the class while he pointed out their "Jewish" noses and mouths.
- Paul wondered why he was treated differently, but he felt so ashamed he never mentioned the incidents of frequent bullying to his parents.

LUCILLE WOLF

- Slowly, change came to Lucille's world. At school, her grades steadily declined as teachers began ignoring Jewish students and refused to give them any grade higher than a "C." The situation worsened, and the principal finally suggested to Walter that he withdraw his daughter.

JEWISH COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO NAZISM – 4

ALICE FINK

- Though life for German Jews had become difficult, Alice's father belonged to a Jewish veterans' organization, and most of the members, her father included, were convinced that the new government would not interfere in their affairs.
- Alice's cousin moved to England with his wife, where he founded a hospital in London. Seeing an opportunity to continue her nursing education, Alice prepared to immigrate to England.

JOHN FINK

- After his first boss was forced to sell his business, John found work with a small contractor commissioned by the Air Force Ministry to build new offices. His worksite was guarded by SS-men who knew him by name.

BETTY ZWANG FLEISCHMAN

- In 1938, Betty's older brother Victor emigrated from Germany, arriving in New York on September 27.
- Less than one month later, all German Jewish passports were invalidated. To be honored as legitimate, Betty's would need to be stamped with a large "J," a policy suggested by the neutral Swiss government.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



German identification card issued to Betty "Sara" Zwang, 1939

FRANKENSTEIN AND FLEISCHER FAMILY

- The family sold the store below its value and was stripped of possessions.
- January 1939 obtained ID cards and passports and immigrated to Shanghai.
- March 6, 1940, Judith "Daisy" Fleischer was born to Carla and Leopold
- They lived in the Hongkew ghetto, where they tried to maintain a normal life. There was sufficient food but unsanitary conditions.
- An Allied bomb accidentally landed on the ghetto causing injuries and casualties.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Judith's dress she wore in Shanghai



Carla holds Judith at the beach



Cantor Leopold, Carla and Daisy pose in Shanghai



Martha's identification card to exit and enter the ghetto

On Nazis in Power: Kennkartes and Reisepasses wall (See diagram on page57)

Leopold
ID certificate in position 9

Julius
ID Certificate in position 26

Martha
ID Certificate in position 11

LEAH GUTMAN

- When new antisemitic laws were passed in Poland, Leah decided to leave for Palestine against her family's wishes. The road to Palestine was rough and exhausting; Leah took several trains as well as a ferry.

LUDWIG HAAS

- In 1937, all Jewish cattle dealers' licenses were revoked. Ludwig and his sister were kicked out of the public school and forced to travel to a neighboring town, where a Jewish school remained in operation. Ludwig's Christian friends told him they were no longer allowed to play with him.
- On January 20, 1938, about three months after Ludwig's bar mitzvah, his father passed away. He was buried in the Jewish cemetery, but his family was not allowed to place a gravestone in memory of him. The next morning, the names of all Christians who attended the funeral were printed in the local paper.

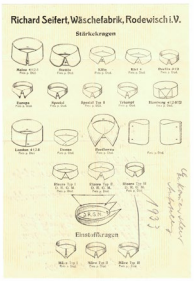
WALTER HESSE

- While travelling, Walter came across a small town in Northern Germany where he would meet his future wife, Gisela.

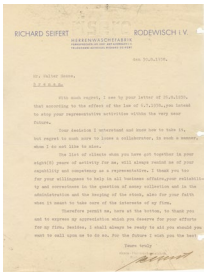
EXHIBITION OBJECTS:



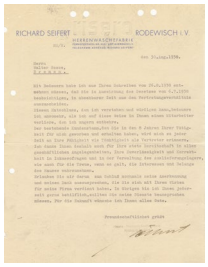
Walter Hesse and his business partner



Advertisement for Walter Hesse's business.



Letter from Richard Seifert



Letter from Richard Seifert

HANNAH MESSIGNER

- Just months before Germany annexed the Sudetenland, Hannah and her family moved to Prague. Her parents were unable to find work as they could not speak Czech, so Hannah, who worked in an office, was the family's sole financial provider.

IRENE K POLL

- One day, she fell on the playground in school and cut her hand, and when she asked a teacher for help, he started laughing, saying he would not touch dirty Jewish blood. It was the single-most significant moment that convinced her she needed to leave Germany.
- In March 1934, Irene left her family to live with her aunt and uncle in Lille, France. She learned French and attended school there until she graduated in 1940.

RALPH AND RUTH REHBOCK

- Eventually, Hans and Ruth decided to leave the country as well. They planned and applied for papers at the beginning of 1938.

WALTER ROSENBUSH

- He received his doctorate in 1936 and moved back home with his parents. One year later, his oldest sister and her husband immigrated to Palestine—they were the only family members to escape Europe before the war broke out.

KLAUS SCHAAP

- With the public's growing hostility towards Jews, Moritz decided Germany was no longer safe for him and his family and moved to Angerlo, Holland, where there was little antisemitism.

AVA KADISHSON SCHIEBER

- In 1939, Ava's family moved to Belgrade because her father decided it would be a safer place for them. Ava remained in Novi Sad with her grandmother to finish the school year before joining her family.

FRED SINAY

- Many Jews left Austria after the *Anschluss* (annexation of Austria), but the Sinays chose to wait until they could leave with the entire family, despite the rapidly increasing antisemitism.
- One day, all Jews at Fred's school were ordered to leave and go to a Jewish-only school. When they left through the front entrance, SS officers were waiting to beat them. Fred escaped out the back.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Fred's father with other Jewish Austrian soldiers in World War I

HILDA STERN

- Her father's store was vandalized, and the Gestapo prevented customers from entering.
- In 1938, Hilda and the other Jewish students were expelled from school.
- The family believed the Nazi movement would soon pass.

EXHIBITION OBJECT

Nazis in Power: Kennkartes and Reissepasses

(see diagram on page 57)

ID Certificate of Hilda's mother, Berta Pander in position 15

PAUL STIEFEL

- In 1936, all Jewish children were forced to go to separate Jewish schools. Luckily, Furth had a pre-existing Jewish school for Paul and his sister to attend. Many Jews began to avoid going out in public.
- The Stiefels listened to Hitler's broadcasts on the radio, but Arthur, a World War I veteran, believed that there were enough Germans against Hitler to overpower him. Matilda, however, wanted to leave the country as early as 1936.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



German ID card issued to Paul Stiefel, 1938



German ID card issued to Mathilde Stiefel, 1938

LUCILLE WOLF

- In 1933, Lucille's uncle fled Germany. Several years later, her sister Ilsa followed suit, immigrating to
- Rochester, New York shortly before the November pogroms.
- When word of the Kindertransport came to Breslau, Lucille's mother and father became embroiled in a great disagreement over whether to send their daughter. Eventually, Lucille chose to go.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Kindertransport Pass for Lucille dated May 1939

NOVEMBER POGROMS – 5

ALICE FINK

- When Kristallnacht began on November 9, 1938, Alice was on her way to England. Once she arrived, she called her family only to discover that her father had been sent to a concentration camp.

JOHN FINK

- On Kristallnacht, John's family was spared because of their apartment's remote location. However, one of John's uncles was arrested. He later immigrated to Shanghai.

BETTY ZWANG FLEISCHMAN

- Shortly after Kristallnacht, Betty wrote to a Mrs. Laura Willstaedt in London, seeking employment with her family as a domestic servant. She arrived in London by April of that year.
- Betty's younger sister joined her in London, but unfortunately, Betty's parents and sister Selma were unable to procure emigration papers. Hermann died in Mannheim in 1940.
- Betty began working for the Fleishmann's in 1942; they had previously employed Betty's future husband, Julius Fleischman.

LUDWIG HAAS

- After Kristallnacht, the family moved to Mannheim, where they stayed with friends.

GISELLA HESSE

- Gisela was apprehended by the SA on Kristallnacht, and she had to register her name before she was allowed to return home.
- Gisela's father was arrested and taken to a concentration camp. Though he was released to sell his business, he was rearrested after a neighbor heard him declare he would outlive Hitler.

WALTER HESSE

- On November 21, 1938, Walter Hesse received a tax assessment levied against Jews to pay for damages on Kristallnacht. The Jewish community was fined one billion *Reichsmarks*, which was then assigned to individual Jews to pay.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Tax assessment levied against Walter Hesse for damages caused on Kristallnacht

IRENE K POLL

- During the Kristallnacht pogrom on November 9, 1938, Irene's father was arrested and sent to Dachau along with some 30,000 other Jewish men.
- Once he came back, Irene's family left for Luxembourg. Since Joseph had family in the United States, he applied for a visa.

RALPH AND RUTH REHBOCK

- Ruth submitted all forms and finally got an appointment to apply for a visa at the American embassy on November 10. To ensure they were on time, the family travelled to Berlin several days in advance.
- There, they witnessed Kristallnacht. The burning synagogue by their hotel is one of Ruth's strongest memories.

FRED SINAY

- Business of Fred's father was destroyed during *Kristallnacht*.
- Fred's father was arrested and sent to Dachau concentration camp. His whereabouts were unknown for a month.
- The SS bought his company for pennies on the dollar, which they operated with non-Jewish workers until the end of the war.
- Fred returned to school, but his mother feared for his life. She bought him a ticket for a *Kindertransport*.
- Fred was one of the oldest children on his *Kindertransport* to Great Britain. Family friends took him in, but while he was away at summer camp, they fled to America.
- While sitting on a bench waiting for help from the government, a woman approached Fred and offered him a place to stay. Fred spent the next year with her family.
- Fred contacted a cousin living in Chicago and asked for an affidavit. The cousin provided affidavits for him, his mother who was in Vienna, and his father who was in Dachau.
- The family reunited in Chicago in 1941.

HILDA STERN

- During *Kristallnacht*, Hilda's father's store was destroyed, and the remain merchandise was stolen.
- Hilda's father was arrested and taken to Sachsenhausen concentration camp. When he returned, he refused to speak of the experience, but he knew he needed to get Hilda out.
- January 4, 1939, Hilda left on a *Kindertransport* from Germany to Amsterdam where she lived in a dormitory with hundreds of other Jewish children.

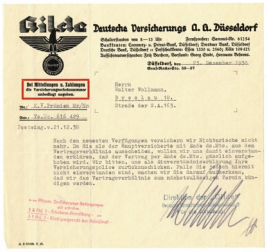
PAUL STIEFEL

- The Saturday morning after Kristallnacht, Arthur received a frantic phone call from his sister. She was surprised that he answered, telling him that their father along with almost all other Jewish men had been taken away.
- Shortly after Kristallnacht, Paul's father had to see his business and give the profits to the German government; the same happened to the family's house, but all the Stiefels cared about was leaving Germany as quickly as they could.

LUCILLE WOLF

- On the night of November 9, 1938, the rabbi's wife called to tell Lili the synagogue was on fire and Jewish men. were being arrested.
- At the time, Lucille was baby-sitting for another Jewish family, the Sterns. When she arrived the morning after Kristallnacht, the couple told Lucille they were going to spend the day driving around, hoping to avoid Mr. Stern's arrest. The Gestapo interrogated her about their whereabouts, but she told them nothing.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS


Gilde Deutsche Versicherungs A. G. Düsseldorf

Insurance Letter

WORLD RESPONSE – 6

GISELA HESSE

- After Kristallnacht, Gisela and Walter decided to flee Germany.
- They were granted passage to Holland. They shared a small, sparsely furnished room with another couple.
- Gisela's brother joined them around Christmastime.

WALTER HESSE

- Shortly after Kristallnacht, the Gestapo told Walter to evacuate his dwelling within four weeks.
- Recognizing that he had only a short time to get out of Germany, Walter obtained three green cards from the Dutch government for his wife, his brother, and himself.
- Once in Holland, Walter and his wife were taken by a couple to a big building where they housed and rehabilitated seamen who had fallen ill.

HILDA STERN

- With help from his brother-in-law in the US, Hilda's father booked the family passage on the *St. Louis.*
- Hilda rejoined her parents in Germany and boarded the ship to Cuba.
- The voyage to Cuba was luxurious and happy. There was dancing, good food, and respect.
- The Panders and other passengers were shocked by the Cuban deception and disheartened further when the US refused to admit refugees.
- The *St. Louis* turned back, and Hilda remembers there was no dancing on the return voyage.
- The Panders were granted entry to the Netherlands.
- The *St. Louis* refugees were transported to Westerbork camp in February 1940. Under Dutch control, the camp conditions were favorable.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Hilda and a friend on the deck of the *St Louis*



Hilda in plaid on the left boarding the *St. Louis*



Passenger baggage/customs voucher of Hilda's father



Hilda's Cuban identification card

LUCILLE WOLF

- Lucille's uncles also chose to spend the day driving. When a German policeman came to arrest them at the home of Lucille's grandmother, she told them they were not home. Her uncles were never arrested, but her father was.
- When Walter was arrested and lined up at the train station, a police officer recognized him and pulled him out of line. He made a deal with Walter: report to the police station every day to show he was taking steps towards immigration, and he would not be deported.
- Shortly thereafter, Walter contacted a distant American relative requesting an affidavit. It would take almost a year for it to arrive.

GERMANY INVADES AND OCCUPIES EUROPE – 7

ARON AND LISA DERMAN

- When Germany invaded, the Soviet Union controlled Slonim. Aron's family considered themselves lucky; the Soviets were the lesser of two evils.
- Aron experienced *Blitzkrieg* while he was away at school, and he decided to return home to escape.
- Raczski, Poland fell to Nazi occupation, and Lisa's parents decided to leave. The family ended up in Slonim.
- Germans occupied Rackzi immediately, so Lisa's family left and moved to Slonim.

AARON ELSTER

- War prevented schooling.
- When the first bombs fell in 1939, Aaron and his family ran into the woods.
- There were rumors of concentration camps from fleeing Jews, but his parents did not believe them.

JOHN FINK

- When the war broke out in September 1939, John was still working for the same electrical company making. installations for the Air Force Ministry, and he learned firsthand about the Luftwaffe's brutality in Poland.
- John began doing forced labor for the Siemens electronics company, and his entire family was relocated to do hard labor in factories. Jews were told to have a suitcase always prepared.

BETTY ZWANG FLEISCHMAN

- Shortly after Kristallnacht, Betty wrote to a Mrs. Laura Willstaedt in London, seeking employment with her family as a domestic servant. She arrived in London by April of that year.
- Betty's younger sister joined her in London, but unfortunately, Betty's parents and sister Selma were unable to procure emigration papers. Hermann died in Mannheim in 1940.
- Betty began working for the Fleishmanns in 1942; they had previously employed Betty's future husband, Julius Fleischman.

LEAH GUTMAN

- Leah lived with her brother, Alexander, and his wife in Haifa until the spring of 1939, when she began school in Jerusalem.

SAMUEL HARRIS

- In September 1939, the Germans attacked Deblin. Alerted by the sounds of circling airplanes, Sam's family ran outside to see what was happening. A short while later, soldiers in tanks and men with machine guns arrived to take over the town.

HANNAH MESSINGER

- In March of 1939, the Nazis marched into Czechoslovakia, and life changed dramatically for the Jewish population. Hannah remembers that they were neither able to go shopping before 5 pm nor were they allowed to travel.
- In March 1940, Hannah got married to Karl Messinger, and the couple lived in Hannah's family's apartment.

MAURICE RAICHEL

- In 1941, Moses' life changed dramatically when Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union.

KLAUS SCHAAP

- In early May of 1940, German troops invaded Holland; the country surrendered six days later.

AVA KADISHSON SCHIEBER

- When the bombing of Belgrade began on April 6, 1941, the war came "like a black cloud," and Ava decided to join a youth anti-war organization.
- On April 12, 1941, the Nazis entered Belgrade. A few days later, all Jews were required to report themselves to the Germans, but Ava's father decided they would not do so.
- As soon as the Einsatzgruppen entered Belgrade in 1941, the round-up of Belgrade's Jews began, and Ava's family had to devise a plan for survival.
- Her father fled to Hungary, where he had connections. Her mother still had a Christian birth certificate from which she could obtain an Aryan passport.
- Because she was married to a Serbian, Ava's sister could also pass as Aryan.

ADAM AND PELA STARKOPF

- Adam was drafted into the Polish Army and sent to the Eastern front. En route, shrapnel injured him, and his toe had to be amputated.
- Adam returned to Warsaw. Upon his arrival, he learned his mother had died of a stroke.
- Pela and Adam searched for her brother, who had also joined the army, but her brother died from typhus half an hour before Adam arrived at the hospital. They told Pela's parents that he escaped to Palestine. Her parents never learned the truth.

ALINE WINTERGREEN

- In 1939, the Nazis attacked Poland and demanded Gdansk's surrender. One week later, Aline's family packed their things and moved south to the Romanian border.
- When the Russians invaded, soldiers moved into the Haspels' apartment. Eventually, the family was kicked out.
- Most of the family's fortune was in U.S. gold that had been sewn into a fabric belt. The rest was put into a tea can, buried in the snow, and forgotten

MOSAIC OF VICTIMS – 8

SIMONE LIEBSTER

- Simone and her mother smuggled bible texts to her father in a concentration camp.
- 1943-45, Simone lived in Konstanz Penitentiary House, a "re-education home," with about 40 other girls.
- The home was run by strict Catholics, and the conditions were harsh. Simone had to do hard labor, often outside as punishment.
- Simone snuck a small bible into the home and read it as often as possible. Her faith sustained her and kept her connected to her parents.
- Simone's father was subjected to medical experiments for malaria during his time in Dachau.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Simone (left) with her aunt (middle) and her mother (right)



Pouch Simone's father sewed into his camp uniform to hide smuggled notes



An envelope addressed to Simone's father



A smuggled note to Simone's father containing scripture

NAZI IDEALOGY SPREADS WEST – 9

AVA KADISHON SCHIEBER

- Ava alone could not obtain falsified documents, so she went into hiding.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Pencil drawing Ava made while in hiding, man playing a lute



Pencil drawing of three sailing ships, drawn while in hiding

BORIS KACEL

- Boris's family chose to live under the Nazi regime rather than Stalin's regime.
- Antisemitic vigilante groups in Riga associated with Nazi troops abducted and murdered Jews.
- Boris' father lied about being a stonemason, and Boris lied about being an electrician to be safer.

SIMONE LIEBSTER

- In 1941, Simone's father was arrested for being Jehovah's Witness was taken for "German re-education."
- Gestapo regularly interrogated her mother for names of more Jehovah's Witnesses.
- In school, Simone refused to say "Heil Hitler" and was publicly shamed by holding a sign all day. She was given a choice to either say "Heil Hitler" or leave the school. She chose to leave.
- At her next school, Simone was forced to sit in the back of the class and not talk to anyone. She refused to go to a Nazi-sponsored school camping trip and endured a multi-hour examination by Gestapo officers.
- At age 12, Simone was arrested and sent to a re-education home.

KLAUS SCHAAP

- Following Germany's invasion, school changed drastically for him and his classmates. Instead of learning in the classroom, the children spent most of their days hiding in bomb shelters.
- Shortly after Germany gained control of Holland, Klaus was kicked out of the school he had been attending because he was Jewish. Before he was forced to leave, his school's head hugged him, crying, and said, "When the war is over, you will come back to my school."
- Jews in Holland were forced to wear the Jewish star. Children who were once Klaus's friends mocked him and called him a dirty Jew. Signs declared "Juden verboten" ("Jews forbidden") in parks, stores, and certain areas of the city, and the Schaaps began fearing for their safety.

HILDA STERN

- Under Nazi control, Westerbork turned into a transit camp for deporting Jews to killing centers and concentration camps.
- Hilda's father's status as a valuable worker allowed her to be removed from the first transit east, saving her life. Everyone on the first transport was killed.
- Hilda fell in love with a man named Adolf Wolff. They became engaged.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Hilda with a friend at Westerbork



Barrack buildings at Westerbork



Identification card for Hilda at Westerbork

ALINE WINTERGREEN

- Aline attended a Russian business college, learned Russian, and made new friends. Her father, a capitalist, went into hiding, but people came to the house to visit, and they continued living as Jews.

THE GHETTOS – 10

ARON AND LISA DERMAN

- Lisa and Aron's families were forced into the Slonim ghetto when the German army arrived. This was where they met. Soon, Aron was visiting Lisa everyday.
- Starvation and disease were rampant, but Aron always had steady jobs and food for his family.
- The urge to live drove them to do obey orders. They thought of ways to survive and built hiding places to go when there was the threat of mass murder.

AARON ELSTER

- The Sokolow Ghetto was constructed in 1940.
- Mrs. Gorski, a gentile Polish woman, took in his older sister. The rest of the family stayed in the ghetto.
- September 1942, SS and Ukrainian soldiers invaded the ghetto. As they were rounded up, Aaron crawled through an open sewer, ran to his uncle's house, and hid with his aunt and cousin. A Polish woman outside the ghetto pulled up thorny wires to help him escape the next morning.
- Aaron returned to the ghetto for his mother, and they fled moving from farm to farm and negotiating with farmers for food and hiding. Most people feared helping them. Some threatened to report them.

SAMUEL HARRIS

- Almost immediately the Nazis built a ghetto surrounded by barbed wire. Jews were confined to the ghetto and required to wear a Star of David to identify themselves as such.
- Sam's sister Rosa, who lived in Warsaw, came back home and became the leader of the family. She was fluent in Polish and therefore able to leave the ghetto without being recognized as Jewish.

BORIS KACEL

- Boris's family shared a home with another family in the Riga ghetto.
- November 28, 1941, Boris, and his father were separated from the family when their work group was moved to "The Little Ghetto."
- Early 1943, Boris, his father, and his cousin sent to live and work at a cement factory with dismal conditions.

CIPORA KATZ

- Cipora's first memories are from life in the ghetto where she lived with twelve family members.
- November 22, 1942, her uncle learned the ghetto was to be liquidated.
- Before the family left, Cipora's mother wrapped her in a blanket and handed her to her father.
- Cipora kept the blanket throughout the war, and it always reminded her of her mother and family. She viewed the blanket as a protective shield.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Cipora's blanket



Cipora (right) with a friend shortly after liberation

- Cipora's mother, sister, grandfather, and two aunts remained in the ghetto. None survived.
- The Luchinski family hid Cipora, her father, uncle, aunt, and 4 cousins in a potato silo for 22 months. There was little food, poor sanitary conditions, and only Cipora could stand in the tiny space.
- Cipora's father died in the silo. She slept next to him for a week, thinking he was asleep.
- When her uncle regained his strength, he buried her father deep in the woods and vowed to return for the body if he survived the war.

MAURICE RAICHEL

- The Reichel family lived in the Kovno-Sobotka Ghetto for the next three years, where Moses suffered through inhumane conditions.

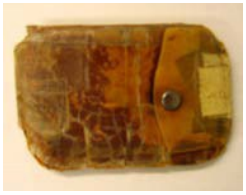
WALTER ROSENBUSH

- In Katowice, Jews under the age of forty were told they would be sent to work camps. Walter was put on a train supposedly heading to one of these camps, but found himself kicked off the train in the middle of Poland.
- After a week-long journey by foot, Walter made it to Lviv, then the center of Soviet Ukraine.
- Walter received a letter that his father was in the Lublin ghetto and immediately decided to go find him. In January 1940, he and another Jew boarded a train for Lublin.
- Walter got a job in a leather factory; being a "desirable worker" made his circumstances relatively easier. When an open ghetto was established in Lublin, Walter chose to move into it to try to protect his friends.

- In spring 1942, 32,000 Jews from Lublin were deported and gassed at Belzec. Walter was one of 5,000 who remained.
- A visiting Gestapo officer warned Walter about the "final solution" planned at the Wannsee Conference and urged him to go into hiding. Walter spoke with friends in the Underground and was given a cyanide capsule in case he was captured.
- Soon after, Walter and the others were sent to Majdanek, and Walter was selected for work.

ADAM AND PELA STARKOPF

EXHIBITION OBJECT

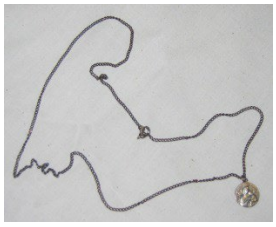


Adam's wallet in which he stored a lock of Johanna's hair

- October 16, 1940, the Warsaw ghetto was established. Their home was already in the ghetto, so they could keep their belongings but had to put up extra people.
- January 1941, Janka (Johanna) was born. Her survival was paramount. Pela's father sold his gold teeth for milk. Adam "looked Polish" (blonde, blue-eyes) and could sneak out of the ghetto for milk.
- Pela was allowed to leave the ghetto for a pretend funeral for Johanna. They drugged Johanna to sleep and placed her in a coffin. Pela carried the coffin and told a German guard that she died of typhus, so he did not open the coffin. They met Adam in a cemetery outside the ghetto and escaped.
- Adam returned for the rest of the family, but it was too late; they were already taken to Treblinka.
- He got a job in a lumberyard by tracks that led to Treblinka, claiming to work for the Polish underground.
- One night, Jews escaped from boxcars. Neighbors wanted Adam to help catch them, but he lied and said Pela was having a gallbladder attack and he needed to be with her.
- A co-worker confronted Adam about rumors of him being Jewish, but Pela insisted that Adam worked for the underground and that it was unfair that they suspect him of being a Jew. The co-worker believed the act.
- Johanna grew up unaware she was Jewish and even played games like "hunting for Jews."

ALINE WINTERGREEN

- At one point, Aline was arrested for not wearing the armband required of all Jews. Her father paid off a Ukrainian soldier, and within three weeks, she was home again.
- On August 14, 1942, Aline's mother was deported. She never saw her again, nor did she learn what happened to her.
- Her family decided to join their father in hiding and bought forged documents to change their identities.
- With life in Poland becoming more dangerous, Aline boarded a train for Vienna, but she was arrested when it stopped in Czestochowa.



Madonna and child necklace worn by Aline's sister while posing as a Catholic. Aline wore a similar necklace.

THE HOLOCAUST IN THE SOVIET UNION – 11

ARON AND LISA DERMAN

- After Lisa and her sister escaped from the ghetto, they sought refuge in the forest. They came across a massacre of 10,000 Jews. They witnessed people being shot and thrown into a mass grave.
- Running from the scene, a ranger found Lisa and her sister. They were forced to walk with a group of Jews being led to their death. They ran and escaped.
- Aron's father and Lisa's mother and aunt were among the hundreds of people taken and killed by the *Einsatzgruppen* (mobile killing units).
- Lisa's sister was shot was while she was running to hide during an *Aktion.*
- Aron got life certificates for everyone in his and Lisa's family. Soon, only Jews with life certificates remained.
- Both families found ways to escape Slonim. Lisa left first, the Aron left later. Outside the ghetto, Aron left his family to find Lisa. He never saw his family again.

BORIS KACEL

- Boris's mother and three siblings were shot in the woods of Rumbula during the liquidation of the Riga ghetto on November 30, 1941.
- Late 1942, Boris learned of his family's fate after there were orders to burn corpses of the Rumbuli Massacre.

WALTER ROSENBUSH

- Walter is one of only about two hundred and thirty known survivors from Lublin.

DECEPTION – 13

JOHN FINK

- On March 12, 1943, John was taken to the railroad station and loaded onto a cattle car. All this took place in daylight and in full view of other citizens.
- The train ride was a horrifying experience for John. The uncertainty of his destination and the conditions in the car were unbearable.

GISELA HESSE

- Gisela's sister Ursula and father Max were interned at Terezín. Both survived and upon returning to Bremen, brought with them artwork done both openly and clandestinely in the camp.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Ticket for use in the Terzín coffeehouse



Ticket for use in the Terezín coffeehouse



Watercolor by Georg Wolff, courtyard of Terezín, 1943

HANNAH MESSINGER

- Hannah and her family knew about the concentration camps and tried to obtain visas, but the world's countries had closed their doors to Jewish emigres, and they could not leave.

IRENE K POLL

- By the end of the summer of 1942, Irene received information that the Gestapo were searching for her. Trying to find her, they had already threatened her aunt, so Irene decided to leave immediately.
- The same night she learned she was being hunted, Irene took a train to Lille, where a woman picked her up and brought her to the house of Father Vancourt and his cousin Raymond. For the rest of the war, Irene lived in hiding at this apartment.

RALPH AND RUTH REHBOCK

- While Hans went into hiding in Berlin, Ruth took care of the exit visas by herself.
- While Hans stayed hidden in Berlin, Ruth and Ralph went back to Gotha. Ruth began filling containers with the family's possessions to be shipped to Chicago.

HILDA STERN

- January 1944, the Panders and Wolffs were sent to Terezin (Theresienstadt) in Czecholslovakia
- Hilda and Adolf married on June 25, 1944.
- Adolf's 12-year-old brother traded his bread rations for weeks to give them a paper bag full of sugar as a wedding present. Hilda considers it the most valuable gift she has ever received.
- Three months later, Adolf, his brothers, and Hilda's father were sent east.
- Hilda did her best to recreate a sense of their old life, even using tattered clothes as place mats.
- Hilda held an important job splitting mica, making her less likely to be transported. At Hilda's request, an officer agreed to add her mother to her work group, improving her mother's chances of survival.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Identification card for Hilda's husband, Adlf Wolff



Jewish Theresienstadt Health and Welfare document



Document ordering Hilda's husband to report for "resettlement" in the East

THE "FINAL SOLUTION": DEPORTATION TO KILLING CENTERS – 14

ARON AND LISA DERMAN

- In a ghetto in Grodno, Aron was arrested and put on a boxcar for deportation. Aron pulled the bars off the window and jumped out.
- Aron and Lisa escaped the Grodno ghetto with the help of a man named Tadek.

ALICE FINK

- In October 1942, Alice's father was deported.
- Her mother was required to work for Siemens until she too was deported in March 1943.
- Her brother was deported a month later.
- All three died in Auschwitz.

JOHN FINK

- John and many other men were loaded onto trucks and taken to a sub-camp, Monowitz, or Auschwitz III.

BETTY ZWANG FLEISCHMAN

- On October 22, 1940. Betty's mother and sister were deported to Camp de Gurs in southwestern France.
- Betty wrote them as often as she could, and she inquired about sending them food as well as money.
- On August 8, 1942, Selma and Flora were taken to Drancy, and from there they were deported to Auschwitz.
- They were killed on August 30, 1942.

SAMUEL HARRIS

- In 1942, the Nazis rounded up the Jews of Deblin, lining them up in long rows and packing them in boxcars, to be sent to concentration camps.
- Rosa was sent to a concentration camp for work, so she entrusted Sam and Sara to a friend, who then had them split up and given to two different families. Sam ended up in a potato cellar with several other Jews.
- Sam and Sara were later smuggled back into the concentration camp, where Rosa and other prisoners hid and fed the children to the best of their ability.
- Rosa, her husband Walter (she had gotten married in the camp), Sam, and Sara were deported to Czestochowa in the Spring of 1944. Sam was separated from his family upon arrival.

HANNAH MESSINGER

- In 1941, Hannah's husband was deported to Terezín. Shortly thereafter, she was forced to report to the train station. For several weeks, Hannah, in shock, did not speak.

MAURICE RAICHEL

- In July 1944, the Germans evacuated the Ghetto, and the entire Reichel family was sent to concentration camps in Eastern Europe.

KLAUS SCHAAP

- In 1942 the Nazis ordered the Dutch police to round up every adult, Jewish male, and Klaus's father was deported to Mauthausen. It was the last time Klaus ever saw his father.
- After Klaus's father was deported, he and his mother left their home under the cover of darkness with nothing but the clothes on their backs.
- They biked 149 miles to Boekelo in the Netherlands, where they went into hiding with the Shukking family.
- Soon, Nazi soldiers began scouring towns for hidden Jews, and the Schukkings, concerned that Klaus and Erna would be discovered, told them that they needed to leave.

KILIING CENTERS – 16

JOHN FINK

- After his first night in Barrack no. 2 at Auschwitz III (Monowitz), John received his number, 107821, which was tattooed into his forearm.
- As a new arrival, he always had the hardest tasks, such as carrying heavy bags of cement, and he got as little as a piece of bread, some margarine, and a watery soup each day.
- After six weeks, all tradesmen were ordered to report themselves. John reported himself as an electrician and was moved to another block, where conditions were slightly better.
- After a few months, John became accustomed to life in camp: "You became an old-timer. You had to. Either you lose your head, and you die or you went along the best you could with the climate."
- On the night of January 17, John and all other prisoners were marched out of the camp, the SS shooting anyone who collapsed along the way.

- They ended up in a satellite camp near the German border, where they were once again packed into boxcars and eventually taken to Bergen-Belsen.
- Older soldiers ran Bergen-Belsen at that point and often gave prisoners more food. John began realizing that the Nazis were not innately evil; rather, they had become capable of committing these atrocities after a long process of dehumanization.

FRANKENSTEIN AND FLEISCHER

- Leopold's family chose not to leave Germany. His parents and sister were murdered in Auschwitz in 1942.

SAMUEL HARRIS

- After a time, Sam was taken back to the main camp, where he was reunited was his siblings. However, he remained at constant risk of being shot because he was too young to work.
- Sam began stealing potatoes from a railroad car near the camp to help feed his family and other prisoners, who would then cook the potatoes in a rusty, water-filled can.
- One day, Sam was caught stealing potatoes. However, the soldier who held a gun up to the little boy's face never fired, and Sam escaped with his life.

BORIS KACEL

- September 1943, Boris, his father, and his cousin were transferred to the first of 5 concentration camps.
- Their focus was to stay together and get extra food by doing extra work or trading supplies.
- In Buchenwald #1, Boris and his father were so desperate, they fought over a single cup of food.
- As Allies drew near, Boris gathered food in a backpack. Others thought the backpack was unlucky, but he escaped with it and hid in a barn.

HANNAH MESSINGER

- In Terezín, Hannah worked as a haircutter because of her previous experience in a beauty shop.
- While in the camp, Hannah was allowed to communicate with her family, and they sent her care packages with food as often as they could.
- In May 1942, a transport including Hannah's parents arrived in Terezín before being taken to Poland.
- Unaware that the transports almost certainly led to their deaths, Hannah and her husband tried to join them, but they were unsuccessful.
- In June 1942, Hannah's husband was sent to work in a nearby town. When he returned, he told her that thousands of the town's people had been murdered, and he had been forced to clean up the aftermath of the mass execution.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Bra made by Hannah to keep warm and maintain dignity

- In 1943, Hannah became pregnant. As children were not allowed in the camp, she and Karl hoped the war would come to an end. When it did not and she could no longer hide the pregnancy, she had an abortion.
- When the Red Cross came to investigate Terezín, the prisoners were forced to paint houses and create signs for synagogues, restaurants, cafes, and schools. They were forced to perpetuate the image the Nazis wanted the world to see.
- In September 1944, Hannah's husband was deported to Poland, and Hannah lost the last person dear to her. A few weeks later, she too was stuffed into a cattle car and deported to Auschwitz.
- Upon arrival at the largest extermination camp, the people were divided into two groups, and an SS officer began selecting who would live, and who would die. Since they needed a haircutter, Hannah was led into the camp.
- Hannah's head was shaven, and she was forced to take off her clothes. Everybody looked so similar, she said, that she would not have been able to recognize her own sister if she had been there. The prisoners were given the same set of clothes, no underwear, and wooden clogs.
- In January 1945, Hannah was selected to work at a textile factory where she operated heavy machinery. She used stolen material from this factory to make a bra, which both kept her warm and helped her to feel human.

MAURICE RAICHEL

- Moses was sent to Dachau, where he continued to live as a slave laborer for the Germans.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Uniform worn by Maurice Raichel in Dachau.

WALTER ROSENBUSH

- On March 19, 1943, a Jewish engineer at another factory called, informing Walter and his coworkers that the Gestapo were coming.
- Walter immediately left for a friend's house, where he remained for three days until his friend's brother, who worked for the railroad company, could get him a train ticket to Warsaw.
- Previously, Walter had become friends with a couple who had also escaped to Warsaw.
- Luckily for Walter, the couple took a liking to him and asked their connections to help save him as well.
- Upon his arrival in Warsaw, Walter called the wife's brother, who helped him go into hiding. He placed Walter with one of his girlfriends and her sister.
- Walter decided to leave, knowing the area wasn't safe, and asked the women to go with him. They refused and were ultimately killed by German planes.

JEWISH ARMED RESISTENCE – 17

ARON AND LISA DERMAN

- Aron and Lisa joined the United Partisan Organization (FPO) in the forests of Belarus.
- The underground was made up of many groups. Aron belonged to the Jewish unit.
- Activities of the underground Jewish unit: hiding Jews; destroying telephone wires, roads, and trains; anything preventing the German Army from advancing. Aron and Lisa were active in all these activities.
- Life with the underground was comparatively good; it was well fed, comfortable, and liberating.
- Antisemitism existed within the underground. Jewish unit was dissolved and integrated into other groups. Guns were taken away from the Jewish partisans.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS





Aron while fighting with Jewish Partisans in the forest

ALICE FINK

- Although she had begun learning English three months prior to her arrival in England, adapting to the new environment, language, and people was incredibly difficult for Alice.
- Toward the end of the war, Jewish organizations such as the Jewish Committee for Relief Abroad were formed. They began to think about post-war problems and were in search of volunteers. Alice joined the group and participated in the preparation program.

LEAH GUTMAN

- After the German occupation of eastern Poland in 1941, Leah's father's money transfers stopped, forcing Leah to leave university, move back to her brother's house, and become a construction worker in the suburbs of Haifa.
- Shortly thereafter, Leah met Ernie Gutman, a German Jew from Dresden who immigrated to Palestine in 1932.
- After only three months together, Leah and Ernie got married. In 1942, Leah became a member of the Palmach and the Haganah, both predecessors of the Israel Defense Force.

RESCUERS – 18

AARON ELSTER

- Aaron's mother told him to leave by himself and find Mrs. Gorski. He arrived at the Gorskis' in December 1942. She reluctantly agreed to let him stay for a few days. In the end he stayed for 2 years in the attic that was brutally hot or freezing cold. He could not interact with anyone and habitually snuck out to eat from the pig trough because of constant hunger.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Righteous among the Nations medal presented to Mrs. Gorski



Righteous among the Nations certificate awarded to Mrs. Gorski

KATE LIPNER

- In 1940, at age 15, Kate became involved with the black market.
- Extended her activities to the resistance movement by hanging anti-Nazi posters.
- By 1942, Kate was providing false identification papers to Jewish families and helping lead Jewish children across the border to Switzerland.
- As Nice became more dangerous for Jewish families, Kate hid 3 children in the 1-bedroom apartment she shared with her sister. All 5 shared a bed and lived without hot water or central heat.
- Kate was interrogated by the Gestapo twice. She was forced to watch a Nazi officer shoot a Jewish baby.
- One night in 1943, Kate heard a Gestapo officer outside their apartment door. She used a gun she kept in a drawer and shot him at close range. Kate was only 17.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Kate at her first communion

IRENE K POLL

- By the end of the summer of 1942, Irene received information that the Gestapo were searching for her. Trying to find her, they had already threatened her aunt, so Irene decided to leave immediately.
- The same night she learned she was being hunted, Irene took a train to Lille, where a woman picked her up and brought her to the house of Father Vancourt and his cousin Raymond. For the rest of the war, Irene lived in hiding at this apartment.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Fr. Vancourt, who hid Irene in his apartment

KLAUS SCHAAP

- Erna and Klaus went to the Schukkings' neighbors, the Burgmullers, for help. They agreed to hide them in their barn's hayloft, and once a day, the family brought Klaus and his mother their leftover potatoes and bread.
- Eventually, Klaus' uncle (Walter), his aunt (Gerda), his cousin (Inge), and his grandmother (Emma) found Klaus and his mother at the Burgmullers, and Mr. Burgmuller built an underground bunker for them to stay in.
- While in the bunker, the Schaaps used carbite as a cooking and lighting source, and they dug a well, which they had access to inside of the bunker. Mr. Burgmuller continued to bring them food daily, but only when it was safe.
- One night when Klaus and his cousin were out looking for food, they heard voices coming from an area near their bunker. When they went to inspect the noise, they discovered another family's bunker right next to their own.
- One morning, Klaus' family was woken up by Johann Schukker's yells. A hunter had betrayed them and given up their location, and the Schaaps had to flee the soldiers on their way to arrest them.
- When they fled the Burgmuller's farm, Klaus' family split up into different groups. Klaus went with his mother and grandmother, but he does not know where the others went.
- The three of them did their best to find shelter and hide in barns, but it was winter and very cold. They eventually revealed themselves to a family, who agreed to help the Schaaps get to Becken, where a family friend would be able to help them.
- The trip to Becken took several weeks, but Klaus, his mother, and his grandmother arrived safely and were taken in by the Hurker family, who hid them under a false step in the basement.
- Several weeks before liberation, Klaus' Uncle Walter and Aunt Gerda found Klaus, his mother, and grandmother at the Hurkers. The Hurkers kindly took the three of them in despite the increased threat.

AVA KADISHSON SCHIEBER

- Ava alone could not obtain falsified documents, so she went into hiding.
- The farm on which Ava would stay the next four years was a three-hour walk away from the city.
- Because life was reduced to a bare-bones routine of food and work, “time stopped being meaningful” while she lived on the farm.
- Although grateful to the family who took her in, Ava felt homeless; it was as if she had no place, no name, and no existence.
- After some time, Lepa, the young woman in the family with whom Ava stayed, obtained a license to sell tobacco on her farm.
- Ava’s job was to smuggle cigarettes out of the shop so they could sell them on the black market.
- She remembers that a German soldier was in the shop, and Ava had nightmares after every day she had to steal the cigarettes.
- Ava recalls that she was not growing during the time she spent in hiding and could wear the same clothes the entire time. Her hair started to fall out, and she had boils as well as swellings; ultimately, she stopped looking in the mirror.
- Occasionally, Ava managed to see her mother and sister during her time in hiding.
- Once, she was going to get some food for her mother when a German soldier hit Ava with the rifle in the face, breaking all her front teeth.

ALINE WINTERGREEN

- Eventually, Aline was able to befriend a German guard and told him he would be well paid if he could help her escape to Warsaw. She was escorted out of the camp by a member of the Wehrmacht, who sexually abused her while she stayed with him.
- Once in Warsaw, Aline reunited with her father. He was working in a German facility as a bookkeeper and lived in a modern apartment with a beautiful prostitute and another couple.
- Aline bleached her hair, and with the help of their Polish friends’ connections, she and her father moved to another apartment, where they lived with the wife of a Polish officer who had been killed.
- Her family stayed until the Warsaw uprising in 1944 when tanks came and destroyed their building. They were arrested after living in their cellar for a month. When the Germans captured Aline, “The young and the old were separated and we were placed on a cattle train. No one knew we were Jews.”
- The Poles were separated from the others; their papers and pictures were examined, and they had to take a medical exam.
- Aline and her sister volunteered for a new camp, Wobbelin. Although they were paid, they could not use the money. They sent the currency to their father and Maria in Krakow, who sent them care packages in return.

LIBERATION – 21

ARON AND LISA DERMAN

- Liberated June 1944 by the Red Army
- With the help of Aron's underground connections, Aron, Lisa, and Lisa's father left Poland.

AARON ELSTER

- In 1944, the town was bombed. After the bombings, Aaron and Irene in chicken coop for a few days, fearing neighbors would attack them for being Jewish.
- Aaron learned that his mother had been in hiding but was betrayed and shot by Gestapo 3 months before liberation.
- He assumes his father and younger sister were killed in Treblinka.

JOHN FINK

- On April 15 at Bergen-Belsen, the Second British Army announced through loudspeakers that all prisoners were free.
- Over the next few days, they sent British medics and medical students to the camp to take care of survivors.

JERRY GLASS

- Enlisted in US Army in 1943 at age 17 because his Russian grandparents were murdered by the Nazis.
- Landed on Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944, with the 3rd Division, 259th Infantry and fought in Battle of Aachen and Battle of the Bulge
- Liberated Mauthausen concentration camp in May 1945. What he saw overwhelmed and shocked him

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Jerry Glass in Mauthausen



Nazi armband donated by Jerry and Ruth Glass



Nazi armband donated by Jerry and Ruth Glass

SAMUEL HARRIS

- Sam and his sisters were liberated by the Russians on January 17, 1945. Unsure what to do with their freedom, the former prisoners ran into Nazi quarters to get food. Sam ate too much butter and got sick.

BORIS KACEL

- Boris hid in a barn with the food he had hidden in his backpack until he saw the victorious US Army

CIPORA KATZ

- October 1944, Cipora and her family were liberated by the Red Army.
- They looked like living skeletons and vomited up the food the Soviets provided.
- In Semiatych, the family learned that the rest of the family had been taken to Treblinka and murdered.
- Cipora's uncle fulfilled his vow of returning for her father's body and burying him in the Jewish cemetery in Semiatych.

SIMONE LIEBSTER

- After Simone's mother was liberated from a transport to Ravensbruck in early 1945, she returned to Konstanz Penitentiary House for her daughter.
- Because the government had fled, her mother had difficulty getting permission to take Simone from the home. She eventually succeeded.

KATE LIPNER

- When France was liberated in 1944, Kate was forced to part with the 3 children she had protected for 2 years. For Kate, it was the worst part of the war; she felt unneeded and abandoned.

HANNAH MESSINGER

- Hannah was liberated in May 1945 by Russian soldiers.

IRENE K POLL

- In September 1944, the Germans fled Lille before the British army arrived.
- After an unusually cold winter in 1944 and many battles in the nearby fields of Belgium, Irene joined the Red Cross in Maastricht as a translator.
- As she worked for the Red Cross, she met many American soldiers, and learned English as well as basic American culture.
- She also began learning about big American cities such as San Francisco and Chicago, and about racism against African and Native Americans.

MAURICE RAICHEL

- In April 1945, Moses was liberated by the American army and was sent to the DP camp Neu Freimann near Munich, where he resided for an additional twelve months.
- The Nazis murdered Moses' parents, two sisters, and three brothers in various concentration camps.

WALTER ROSENBUSH

- On the evening of February 12, 1945, Walter saw lights late in the evening, and felt the earth shake for hours. He realized that nearby Dresden was being bombed, first by the British and then by the Americans.

KLAUS SCHAAP

- Klaus recalls that his liberation day came on Easter Sunday. American soldiers came to the house with chocolates and turned the oven on for heat, much to Klaus's joy.

AVA KADISHSON SCHIEBER

- With the Russian army advancing on Belgrade, Ava decided to leave the farm after four years in hiding. Her mother was living with a neighbor. Her sister had been arrested.
- Ava traveled to Novi Sad with a Russian convey of the Red Cross to find out about her father and grandmother. Her old neighbor told her that her father and grandmother had been taken to Auschwitz, and she gave Ava some old family pictures and clothes she had saved.

FRED SINAY

- Fred was drafted into the U.S. Army after reuniting with his family in Chicago.
- Joined the Prisoner of War Processing Unit which interrogated prisoners for military information.
- Fred hated all German prisoners and considered them guilty. However, most prisoners saw him as any other American soldier, not as a Jew.
- After landing in Normandy, Fred learned that Jews were taken away on trains and buses and never seen again
- In Belgium while working at a POW camp, Fred heard stories of liberation at Dachau and other camps

ADAM AND PELA STARKOPF

- In August 1944, Adam and Pela were liberated by the Russians after hiding in a potato cellar for 5 days to avoid the fighting that had broken out around them.

HILDA STERN

- On May 5, 1945, the Red Army liberated Theresienstadt.
- Hilda and her mother had nowhere to go and were sent back to Amsterdam. Again, they rode in a boxcar without any food.

ALINE WINTERGREEN

- When the Allies liberated Wobbelin, a small group of American officers asked for Aline's papers, looked them over, took all the money Aline had, and drove away.

REBUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY – 22

ARON AND LISA DERMAN

- Antisemitism and pogroms continued in Poland after liberation, so Aron and Lisa decided to leave.
- After leaving Poland, the couple spent two years (1945-47) in Italy.
- Aron and Lisa were married in Rome in 1945.

AARON ELSTER

- To protect themselves, Aaron and Irene testified that the man who murdered their mother helped the family.
- Aaron's uncle, a Polish sergeant, found and took care of the siblings.
- After escaping into the American zone, Aaron was sent to a DP camp and ended up in Neu Freimann where he stayed with his uncle, played soccer, went to school, and learned to read and write Hebrew.
- His uncle discovered that a brother of his grandfather was in the US.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Aaron (2nd from the right) at Neu Freimann



Children of Neu Freimann; Aaron is in the back row, 3rd from the right



Aaron posing in his soccer uniform

ALICE FINK

- In August 1946, Alice arrived at DP Camp Bergen-Belsen. Her job was to take care of the children in the camp by teaching them good hygienic practices and basic life skills.
- Soon after Alice arrived in Germany, she met John Fink, who worked in the camp and joined the British staff for meals.
- They connected immediately upon discovering they both spoke German. They married in the camp on June 20, 1948.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Alice & John Fink's wedding photo, Belsen, Germany, 1948

JOHN FINK

- After the war, John began working for the Red Cross, UN, American Jewish Distribution Committee at Bergen-Belsen.
- While working at Bergen-Belsen, he met his future wife, Alice, a nurse who had immigrated to England before the war.

SAMUEL HARRIS

- After liberation, Sam and his family left camp to go home. However, they discovered that many Poles had moved into the Jews' homes, threatening and attacking those Jews who tried to come back.
- With Deblin unsafe, Rosa and Walter went to Vienna; Sara and Sam stayed temporarily in a Lublin orphanage.
- Almost a year later, Rosa paid off a Russian soldier to smuggle her siblings out of Poland.

BORIS KACEL

- Difficulty adjusting to liberation like eating normal portions and finding a job
- Could not locate his father until summer of 1946. They were separated when Boris escaped the camp.
- Could not reunite with his father because the Soviet Union would not let him leave Latvia.
- Escaped a transport to the USSR with nothing but the "unlucky" backpack then spent a year in DP camps.

SIMONE LIEBSTER

- Simone and her mother went to a DP camp in Switzerland as they waited to return home.
- Simone and her mother found their home un-plundered and unoccupied.
- Soon after, Simone's father returned almost completely deaf and barely able to walk. It would take months before he recovered from life in the camps.
- Readjusting to normal life was difficult, but the family took comfort in their shared bible studies.

KATE LIPNER

- Following the war, Kate married an American soldier named Lawrence Benashiak.

HANNAH MESSINGER

- Hannah eventually returned to Czechoslovakia and discovered that she was the only member of her family that had survived.

WALTER ROSENBUSH

- After liberation, Walter went back to Lublin and found that the factories were still operating. A friend in charge of a factory convinced Walter to stay with him, which he did for a few weeks.
- He went back to his hometown of Katowice and was able to get radio contact with someone in Israel. He then discovered that his sister in Gleiwitz had perished in Terezin, along with his parents and all other relatives.
- Walter made his way to Stuttgart, where he recognized a woman, Rena Eibel, from his time in Majdanek. They reconnected and married a few months later.
- At the time, the government was looking for German Jews to work in factories, so Walter took a job in a chemical factory. He was happy to get a company car and be able to drive once again, but he quit after a few months to prepare for immigration to the United States.

KLAUS SCHAAP

- After the war, Klaus and his mom returned to Angerlo to find their home completely empty. Klaus went to work in a bookstore and Erna remarried to a man who was a cattle dealer.

AVA KADISHSON SCHIEBER

- From 1945 to 1949, Ava attended the Art Academy in Belgrade, found a job, and took care of her mother.

ADAM AND PELA STARKOPF

- Adam worked in the Polish government in Lublin, but when his superior officer found out that Adam was also working as a Zionist, he called the military to arrest him.
- They escaped and lived in Lodz with the Rokaczs, a Jewish couple they befriended before the war.
- When Johanna called Mrs. Rokacz a "dirty old Jewish woman," they decided to tell her that she was in fact Jewish. Johanna had trouble accepting being Jewish because of the prejudice she was exposed to.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Johanna (3rd from right) performing at a DP camp



Marriage in a DP camp donated by the Starkopfs

HILDA STERN

- Registered herself and her mother with the US Consulate.
- Contacted relatives in New York who agreed to sponsor them.
- Spent two years in Amsterdam waiting for her turn to immigrate.

ALINE WINTERGREEN

- After the war, the girls ended up in the English sector. Aline commented that kind people gave them a bed and food. They joined the first convey and went to Brussels, where they were placed in an organized DP camp.

DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL – 24

JOHN FINK

- After John and Alice got married, they immigrated to the United States and settled in Chicago, where one of Alice's cousins lived.

BETTY ZWANG FLEISCHMAN

- On December 28, 1945, Betty began her journey to the United States by taking a Pan-Am flight to New York.
- Though a stateless immigrant in a new country, 33-year-old Betty Zwang already spoke English and had several contacts in the States. The day after her arrival, she received a money order from her future husband, Julius Fleischman.

LEAH GUTMAN

- Leah and Ernie moved to Chicago in 1947 to take care of Ernie's parents.

LUDWIG HAAS

- In 1940 the family received visas to Italy from the U.S. Embassy. First taking a train to Genoa, they later boarded an Italian ship in Naples destined for New York.
- With the help of the Jewish Aid Society, the Haases moved to Wisconsin to live with relatives after arriving in New York.

SAMUEL HARRIS

- After a short time in Vienna, Sam and Sara were sent to the United States, where Rosa believed they would have a better life.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Jewish refugees, including Sam, aboard the SS Ernie Pyle, 1947.

GISELA HESSE

- Gisela and her family obtained visas to the United States, and after staying briefly in England, they boarded a ship destined for New York.

WALTER HESSE

- From Holland, the Hesses traveled to London, stayed in a hotel for three days, and boarded the *S.S. Washington*.
- Shortly before their departure, Gisela discovered that she was pregnant, complicating matters a bit as she often fell seasick during the trip.

- Still, the couple arrived in New York, and from there they took a Greyhound bus first to Pittsburgh and then to Cincinnati.

HANNAH MESSINGER

- She decided to write to her aunt in Chicago who began the process of bringing her to the U.S.
- In 1946, a stranger named Imre Messinger wrote to Hannah seeking information about his cousin, Karl. He too was planning to immigrate to the United States.

IRENE K POLL

- In January 1946, Irene's parents prepared her papers so Irene could immigrate to the United States. She got on a priority transport with 7,000 G.I.s and arrived in Chicago.

WALTER ROSENBUSH

- In January 1947, Walter and his wife immigrated to New York, where his wife had relatives.

ADAM AND PELA STARKOPF

- Family left for a DP camp in Germany where Adam worked with the UNRRA (United Nation Relief and Rehabilitation Administration)
- Adam's boss offered to provide an affidavit for his family to immigrate to the US, and even though they preferred to go to Palestine, they took advantage of the opportunity.

PAUL STIEFEL

- Paul departed from Germany with his parents and sister as soon as they got their papers, leaving all their possessions behind. He snuck only a few pages from his beloved stamp collection with him, keeping it hidden on his body.

ALINE WINTERGREEN

- Soon, Aline's father got in touch with some cousins from Chicago, who began helping the family so they could immigrate to the U.S.

LUCILLE WOLF

- On December 2, 1938, the Kindertransport arrived in England and the children were taken to Dover Court, a summer camp of sorts where Lucille stayed before being moved to an orphanage in Yorkshire.
- Lucille enjoyed her time at the orphanage, and she made many friends with other girls there. She also began improving her English-speaking skills and attending school there.
- A few months after being in the orphanage, an English woman came to find a nanny for her children. She chose Lucille. After getting permission from Lucille's parents, or perhaps her grandparents, the woman brought Lucille home with her to York.
- Lucille worked almost constantly, sharing a room with the children whilst only receiving about ten shillings a month. She remembers the huge house the family lived in, the disapproving older nanny, and the couple's heavy drinking.

- Most of Lucille's small wages, she remembers, went to postage for letters to her sister in America and her family, who had found sanctuary in South America.
- When war broke out in 1939, Lucille remained in England. However, early in 1940, her American affidavit came up. Lucille booked passage on a Dutch American ship that was to leave England in May.

NEW HOME: ISRAEL – 25

CIPORA KATZ

- Cipora's uncle saw no future for Jews in Poland and decided to move the family to Israel in 1945.
- They settled in Petah Tikva (Gate of Hope), where Cipora attended grammar and high school.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Cipora with her Aunt and Uncle in Israel.

NEW HOME: THE UNITED STATES – 26

AARON ELSTER

- Arrived in Chicago in July 1947.
- Jewish Children's Bureau took charge of Aaron, and he was passed along several foster homes.
- He often had nightmares of being chased and almost killed by Nazis and stole food from his foster families for no reason.

ALICE FINK

- Alice and John came to the United States in August 1949; the moved to Chicago, where they raised their four children together.

BETTY ZWANG FLEISCHMAN

- Betty moved to Chicago, where she married Julius Simon Fleischman, a German Jewish immigrant and World War II veteran.

GISELA HESSE

- The Hesse family traveled by bus to Pittsburgh, and from there, they traveled to Cincinnati. Struggling to make a living, they decided to move to Chicago, where Walter began a company.

WALTER HESSE

- Struggling to make ends meet in Cincinnati, the family moved to Chicago, where they stayed with Walter's friends, the Rosenbergs.
- Eventually, the family was able to find an apartment in Chicago, and Walter began a business.

HANNAH MESSINGER

- Hannah arrived in the U.S. in 1946.
- A year later, she married Imre in New York. They had two children together.

RALPH AND RUTH REHBOCK

- The Rehbocks arrived in New York on Christmas Eve of 1938. Welcomed by the Statue of Liberty, they knew that they were free. They did not spend much time in New York but took a train to Chicago almost immediately.
- The Rehbocks spent a couple of days with Ruth's relatives before they moved to their own apartment on Chicago's South Side.

AVA KADISHSON SCHIEBER

- In 1949, she and her mother left Yugoslavia for Israel, where she married the manager of a comedy theater. After her first husband died, Ava married a man who had been collecting her art and moved to Chicago.

PAUL STIEFEL

- The Stiefels arrived in New York on November 23, 1938, and they moved to Green Bay, Wisconsin two days later to stay with their uncle.

ALINE WINTERGREEN

- Soon, Aline's father got in touch with some cousins from Chicago, who began helping the family so they could immigrate to the U.S.

LUCILLE WOLF

- Upon arriving in the United States, Lucille visited her sister, Ilsa, in Rochester, New York before continuing to Chicago, where she became a nanny for the children of an uncle's friend, Dr. Norman Levy.

BECOMING AMERICANS – 26

ARON AND LISA DERMAN

- Palestine's borders were closed, so Lisa's uncle sponsored them to come to the US.
- The Dermans brought Tadek to the US. He was honored by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.
- They had 3 sons and raised them to know that there are good and bad people, but to stay positive.
- Lisa became and activist for Holocaust education and especially active with the Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois until her death in 2002.

AARON ELSTER

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Aaron in Chicago



Aaron serving in the army in Korea



Aaron's US naturalization certificate



Selective Service registration certificate



Dog tag and military ribbon Aaron received for serving in Korean War

- Worked to assimilate by learning English well, playing on a soccer team, and wearing American clothes
- Formal education started at age 15, but placed in 6th grade, which motivated him to work hard to improve
- Enlisted in the Army and was sent to Korea for 2 years, which gave him a feeling of empowerment.
- After the Korean War, he married, had 2 sons, and built a successful career in the insurance industry.

ALICE FINK

- Alice now lives in the Self Help Home in Chicago.
- Alice considers herself lucky, saying her greatest fortune was receiving the opportunity to go to England. She says, "it is very important to have faith and to keep it. You can't foresee the future, but you have to try to make the best out of your possibilities."

JOHN FINK

- Once in the states, the young family never discussed the Holocaust. John did not share his story with his children, nor did he speak German.

BETTY ZWANG FLEISCHMAN

- Julius was drafted into the U.S. Armed Forces the same year his parents came to Chicago. He served as a private for one year before being honorably discharged with two medals. During this time, he corresponded with Betty via letter-writing.
- Once married, Betty and Julius lived together in the suburbs of Chicago for the remainder of their lives. On October 19, 1988, Julius passed away in Skokie, Illinois at the age of 81. Nine years later, on March 2, 1997, Betty passed away. She was 84. They had no children.

FRANKENSTEIN AND FLEISCHER FAMILY

- January 8, 1948, the family immigrated to US, arriving in San Francisco, and in August 1955, everyone except Heinz and his wife moved to Chicago
- Leopold passed away in 1995

EXHIBITION OBJECTS

On North America: Becoming Americans exhibit (see diagram on page 57)



Leopold's US Naturalization Certificate in position 23



Martha's US Naturalization Certificate in position 20

LEAH GUTMAN

- In the U.S., Ernie worked as a driver and Leah as a Hebrew teacher, although she was not very religious.
- In 1951, Leah became pregnant with her first child, Elana. Her second child, Joseph, was born in 1958.
- On June 1, 1995, Ernie Gutman died at the age of 79, after more than 50 years of marriage to Leah.
- In January of 2012, Leah Gutman died in Glenview, Illinois.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Ludwig's Naturalization Certificate, 1944

LUDWIG HAAS

- In May 1943, just before the end of his freshman year of college, Ludwig was drafted into the U.S. Army. While undergoing basic training, he became a naturalized citizen.
- In August of that year, Ludwig and his unit were shipped to Liverpool. From there they took a train to Bournemouth, a port just across the channel from France. In September, they landed on Omaha Beach.
- About 10% of Ludwig's unit was Jewish, but he does not recall any antisemitism in the army during the war.
- In early 1946, Ludwig returned to the U.S. and was discharged from the army. He returned to school, and in 1950, he graduated from Marquette Engineering University. He got a job with as a Milwaukee civil engineer, where he worked his way up to district manager.
- In February 1960, one of Ludwig's cousins set him up on a blind date with one of her college friends, a girl named Silvia. They fell in love, and on October 23, 1960, they got married at Temple Shalom in Milwaukee.

- In February 2002, Ludwig took his family back to Ruelzheim, where they visited some old friends still living there. It was for them, his family's younger generations, that Ludwig eventually recorded his life story.
- Ludwig Adolf Haas passed away on January 12, 2005 in Northbrook, Illinois. He was 80 years old.

SAMUEL HARRIS

- Sara was adopted by a family on the South Side of Chicago, and Sam was adopted by a family from Northbrook in April 1948.
- In 1954, Sam graduated from high school; four years later, he finished college and started a family with his wife, Dede.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Sam's belt, which he credits with helping him stay warm in the camp



Sam with his adoptive parents



Sam's school essay on what it means to be an American, 1951



Sam signing commerative book in Israel

GISELA HESSE

- After the war, Gisela contacted her former housekeeper, who informed her that Gisela's sister and father were the only relatives who had survived in Europe. They remained in Bremen for the rest of their lives.
- Gisela and Walter and three children together in the U.S., a country they are grateful to call their home.

WALTER HESSE

- Walter soon saved enough money to buy a car, which allowed him to expand his business's reach. Shortly thereafter, he purchased a storefront.
- When the US entered WWII, business became more difficult as Walter struggled to acquire merchandise. However, the company survived; after the war, it thrived. The family celebrated the business's 50th anniversary during the 1990s.
- Walter says that he was extremely lucky to be able to escape Germany and arrive in the United States, where he had the opportunity to begin a successful business and raise a family. He is thankful that he has lived such a long life, married a wonderful wife, and watched his beautiful children and grandchildren grow up.

BORIS KACEL

- In 1947, he moved to the US with sponsorship of his aunt.
- Married Tamara Abramson, who met in a DP camp, had 2 children, and worked as an electrician.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



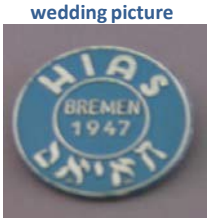
Boris and his wife's wedding picture



Boris and his wife with their first child



Boris's HIAS certificate



HIAS badge



Boris's electrical school diploma

CIPORA KATZ

- Cipora's great-uncle offered visas for the family. They arrived in Chicago in 1955 when Cipora was 15.
- Met American Mordechai Katz as she finished high school and married him in 1960. The couple has one daughter.
- Cipora worked as a registered nurse. She mainly worked with older people because she didn't get to know her own parents.
- Cipora began telling her story after a massive heart attack in 1990

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Cipora at her graduation party



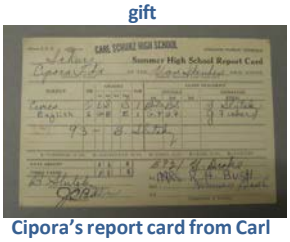
Cipora with her daughter in Chicago



Prayer book given to Cipora as a gift



Cipora's plane ticket from Israel to the US



Cipora's report card from Carl Shurz High School

SIMONE LIEBSTER

- Became involved in missionary work and the international society of Jehovah's Witnesses, where she met her husband, Max Liebster.
- Together, Max and Simone moved to the US.

KATE LIPNER

- Moved with her American husband to his hometown of Chicago in 1946.
- Following Lawrence's death in 1969, Kate married family friend, Philip Lipner.
- In 1995, one of the children Kate hid made sure Yad Vashem honored her as Righteous Among the Nations. She is also honored on IHMEC's Ferro Fountain of the Righteous and at the Avenue of the Righteous at the Civic Center in Evanston.
- Kate died in 2010 at the age of 85.

HANNAH MESSINGER

- Hannah studied art at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Evanston Art Center, and Northeastern University.
- Hannah was able to work as a painter and an artist. She has written her story down and continues to carry the guilt of being the only person to have survived out of a wonderful family.

IRENE K POLL

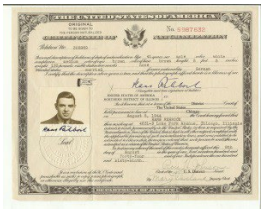
- To make a living, Irene worked for *Time Magazine* and the University of Chicago. For her, working was never about establishing a career but about earning money.
- One year after she arrived in Chicago Irene married Nathan Diamond, a Polish-born émigré. They had two children together, Mark and Fay, but in 1956, tragedy struck when Nathan died in a car accident. After a failed second marriage, Irene married a man named Albert Poll in 1983.

MAURICE RAICHEL

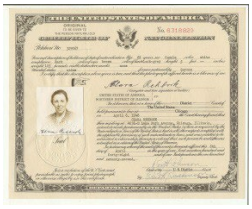
- In 1946-47, Moses Reichel changed his name to Maurice Raichel and immigrated to the United States.
- After arriving in New York City, he travelled to Paterson, New Jersey where he started his new life.

RALPH AND RUTH REHBOCK

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Naturalization Certificate of Hans Rehbock, 1944



Naturalization Certificate of Clara Rehbock, 1948



Naturalization Certificate of Ralph Rehbock, 1944

- In 1943, the Rehbocks became naturalized citizens, officially cutting their ties to Germany.
- Ruth did not speak about her escape from Nazi Germany until Hans Rehbock died in 1983. On that night, Ralph finally learned the details of his family's escape from Germany when the rabbi's wife asked his mother to tell them their story.
- Ralph was struck by that story and the difference one person could make in another's life. As a consequence, he got involved in Holocaust education.

WALTER ROSENBUSH

- Ultimately, the Rosenbushes ended up in Chicago, where Walter got a job with a distribution company traveling around the Midwest. They had three children and built a happy life for themselves in the US.
- Walter passed away on November 15, 2004. He is survived by his three children and three grandchildren.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Walter Rosenbush's suitcase



Naturalization Certificate of Walter Rosenbush, 1952

KLAUS SCHAAP

- In 1954, at the age of 21, Klaus moved to Freeport, Illinois with only $80 in his pocket.
- His uncle employed him at his cattle business, and while working there, he met a man from Dickson, IL who introduced Klaus to his niece, Evelyn. They married two years later.

FRED SINAY

- December 1945, Fred returned from war to his parents in Chicago.
- Most of his extended family did not survive. All on his father's side and most on his mother's side perished.
- Fred married Lillian Lekowitch, and they had 3 children.
- Fred died in 2008 at the age of 87.

ADAM AND PELA STARKOPF

- In May, 1945, the Starkopfs immigrated to Chicago, where they lived with Adam's uncle for a short time while Adam looked for work.
- Adam secured a bank loan to start a business manufacturing footballs with a fellow survivor.
- Adam, Pela, and Johanna have all played active roles in the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center. Joanna continues to speak to student groups to keep her family history alive and to educate young people about the evils of genocide.

EXHIBITION OBJECT



Adam and Pela becoming US citizens

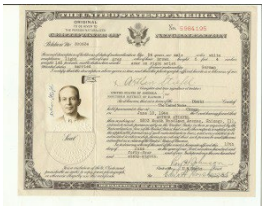
HILDA STERN

- After 2 years in Amsterdam, Hilda immigrated to New York on August 27, 1947. She was joined by her mother 4 months later
- Hilde Pander changed her name to Hilda Pender and established herself working as a manicurist.
- On December 25, 1948, Hilda met Chicagoan, Harry Stern. They married two months later and the couple, with Hilda's mother, moved to Chicago.
- Hilda and Harry ran a successful medical supply business and had 2 children and 5 grandchildren.

PAUL STIEFEL

- Paul's family arrived in Green Bay on a Monday; he and his sister started high school on Tuesday. Paul considered himself very lucky: his teacher took special care to teach him and his sister English, which they learned quickly thanks to his uncle, who forced them to speak only English with him.
- Though Paul enjoyed living in Green Bay, his family, hoping to find better jobs, relocated to Chicago after he graduated high school in 1941.
- Not wanting to go to college, Paul did a variety of odd jobs in Chicago. Shortly after the U.S. declared war on Germany and Japan, he was drafted and sent to basic training in Wyoming.
- After the war, Paul returned to Chicago. Having served as a radio operator during the war, he decided to go to the Illinois Institute of Technology to become an electrical engineer.
- Paul met his wife, Senta, another Holocaust survivor, while living in Hyde Park. He took her to the opera on their first date, and they were married on July 11, 1948.
- Paul and Senta had three children together. Proud of their Jewish heritage, the family honored their religious traditions; however, the couple never told their children about their wartime experiences.
- When asked to reflect on his experiences in the Holocaust and his perspective on it today, Paul said that he believed in forgiveness, but he would never forget.

EXHIBITION OBJECTS



Naturalization Certificate of Arthur Stiefel, 1944



Naturalization Certificate of Mathilde Stiefel, 1944

ALINE WINTERGREEN

- After a flight to New York, the Aline traveled to Chicago. Her sister moved to Toronto shortly thereafter. Aline got married in 1967. She had two children.

LUCILLE WOLF

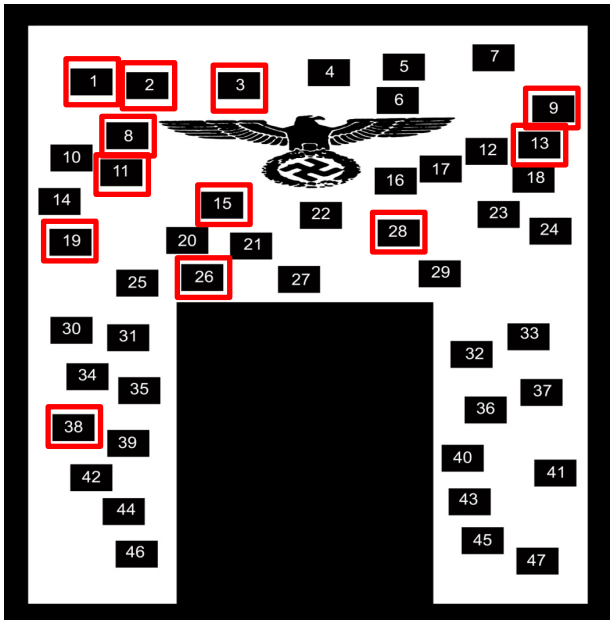
- During the day, Lucille attended high school, and at night she cared for the children. Lucille remembers feeling as though she were a member of the Levy family.
- When the United States entered the war, Dr. Levy joined the army, and Lucille moved back in with her family, who had recently arrived in America.
- Lucille's family first immigrated to New York, searching for jobs near their eldest daughter in Rochester. When none were to be found, they moved to Chicago, where a family friend found positions for both Walter and Lili in his hotels.
- Lucille went on to marry her rabbi's son Henry and complete nurse's training in 1946. She began working at Levy's old hospital and had two children.

AMERICAN AWAKENING/FREEDOM OF SPEECH- 28

JOHN FINK

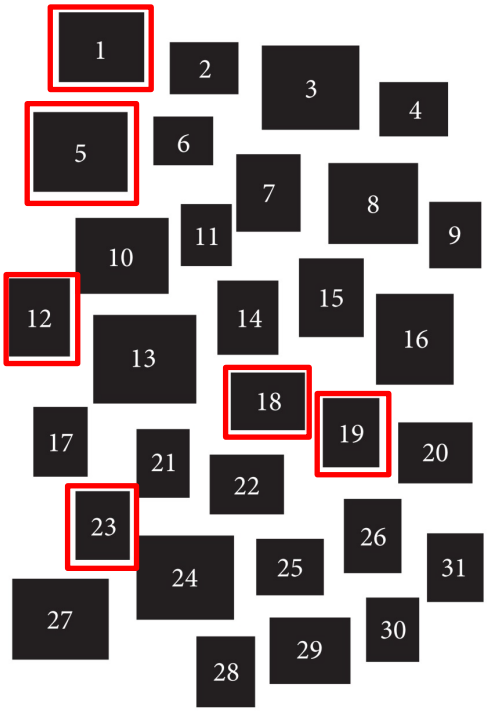
- After retiring, John began reflecting on his wartime experiences. He never knew where God was during the Holocaust, but he continued cherishing his Jewish heritage throughout his life.
- Because he felt connected to all survivors, he became involved with the Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois.

4.3 Nazis in Power: Kennkartes and Reisepasses: Exhibit layout



1. Rehbock, Ralph- donor; Hans Rehbock, featured.
2. Price, Donna- donor; Betty Zwang, featured.
3. Stiefel, Paul- donor; Mathilde Stiefel, featured.
4. Gallagher, Bridget- donor; Brigitte Wechselmann, featured.
5. Friedlieb, Walter and Irene- donor; Saloman Friedlieb, featured.
6. Barbara, Richard, Ilene and William Heinrich- donor; Ludwig Heinrich, featured.
7. Albersheim Uhlmann, Anna- donor; Gerson (Gershon) Uhlmann, featured.
8. Hesse, Marianne- lender; Max Meyer, featured.
9. Fleischer Kolb, Judith- donor; Leopold Fleischer, featured.
10. Nisenshal, Ruth G- donor; Hilda Samuel, featured.
11. Fleischer Kolb, Judith- donor; Martha Frankenstein, featured.
12. Nisenshal, Ruth- donor; Adolf Samuel, featured.
13. Stiefel, Paul- donor; Paul Stiefel, featured.
14. Brandis, Marlene- donor; Adolph Brandis, featured.
15. Stern, Hilda- donor; Berta Pander, featured.
16. Pittel, Judith- donor; Freidrick (Karl) Bassel, featured.
17. Unger, Tom- donor; Hedwig Liwer, featured.
18. Gideon, Vern- donor; Robert Rafael Gideon, featured.
19. Haas, Karen- donor; Adolf (Haas) Hirsch, featured.
20. Gideon, Vern- donor; Elsa Gideon, featured.
21. Heiman, Jack- donor; Jacob Heimann, featured.
22. Heiman, Jack- donor; Sara Heimann, featured.
23. Unger, Tom- donor; Hugo Feigel, featured.
24. Nisenshal, Ruth- donor; Hilda Samuel, featured.
25. Nisenshal, Ruth- donor; Adolf Aron Samuel, featured.
26. Fleischer Kolb, Judith- donor; Julius Frankenstein, featured.
27. Griminger, Kurt- donor; Frieda Griminger, featured.
28. Haas, Karen- donor; Anna Mayer Haas, featured.
29. Gideon, Vern- donor; Else Gideon, featured.
30. Pittel Bassell, Judith- donor; Karl Bassell, featured.
31. Stux, Lydia- donor; Rudolf Stux, featured.
32. Silver, Al- donor; Amely Wolf, featured.
33. Schrimmer, Helga- donor; Helga Mannheim, featured.
34. Marcus, Karen- donor; Ida Marcus, featured.
35. Kahn, Gary- donor; Rosemarie Lederman, featured.
36. Rosenfeld, Herbert- donor; Hannelore Silbermann , featured.
37. Wolf, Ellen- donor; Harry Salomon, featured.
38. Fleischer Kolb, Judith- donor; Martha Frankenstein, featured.
39. Smetko, John- donor; Betty Freund, featured.
40. Schaap, Evalyn- donor; Ilse Vohs, featured.
41. Smetko, John- donor; Emanuel Freund, featured.
42. Marcus, Karen- donor; Walter Marcus, featured.
43. Haas, Karen- donor; Elisabeth Heinrich, featured.
44. Heiman, Jack- donor; Adolf and Hermine Allmayer, featured.
45. Winston Koppel, Alisa - donor; Leo Bernstein, featured.
46. Winston Koppel, Alisa- donor; Hertha Bernstein, featured.
47. White, Wildman, Mullin- donor; Leo Wildman, featured.

2.5 World Before: Social Welfare/Jewish Autonomy :Exhibit Layout



1—Rehbock, Ralph; donor. Rehbock family farm.
2— Figa, Leon; donor. Mandelkorn family.
3—Abrams, Rose; donor. 3rd grade Zydowskie Gymnasium.
4— Tsybulskiy, Yefim; donor. Tsybulskiy family.
5—Gutman, Leah; donor. Leah Gutman's going away party.
6—Letofsky, Carol; donor. Leo Stern.
7—Har-El, Rosalie; donor. Sternhell family.
8—Gutman, Leah; donor. Grotchowsky family.
9—Koenig, Joe; donor. Joe Koenig.
10—Har-El, Rosalie; donor. Ungvar Betar Club.
11—Rontal, Ruth; donor. Cantor Moishe Rontal.
12—Brainin, Johanna; donor. Adam & Pela Starkopf.
13—Weisman, Helen; donor. Unidentified group.
14— Shteinberg, Klara; donor. Sisters Fanya and Golda.
15—Shechtman, Matty; donor. Faratzi family and friends.
16—Ferri, Isreal; donor. Sara, Sophie, and Moshe Katz.
17—Shechtman, Matty; donor. Martha, Leon, and Yola Faratzi.
18—Gutman, Leah; donor. Leah Gutman and friends.
19—Brainin, Johanna; donor. Adam & Pela Starkopf.
20—Weisman, Helen; donor. Reva, Nunik, and Ronia Fierer.
21—Rubinstein, Meyer; donor. Karola Majtek.
22— Mishell, Pola; donor. Family and friends on vacation.
23—Rehbock, Ralph; donor. Hans and Ruth Rehbock.
24— Kuzninskaya, Zelda; donor. Manuyk family.
25— Gusarev, Iosif; donor. Iosif and his mother.
26— Letofsky, Carol; donor. Leo Stern.
27—Gold, Phil; donor. Dadiom family.
28— Gordy, Gregory; donor. Benzion Gorodyansky with grandchildren.
29—Baum, Dr. Bernard; donor. Baum family.
30— Kosko, Leonid; donor. Sonya Koske.
31— Figa, Leon; donor. Yankel Sokolower.

On North America: Becoming Americans

