



Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program

Program Guardians

The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation
Robert I. Schattner Foundation, Inc.

“Because of what they went through then,
helping now isn’t a matter of choice -
it’s a matter of conscience.”

AO-HSC PROGRAM NEWS

My patient and Kindertransport

By: Kal Klass, DDS, AO Seattle Dental Ambassador

One of my recent patients being treated under the Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program, Edith K. told me that she didn’t really consider herself a Holocaust survivor because she “never had to survive the concentration camps.” She experienced Nazi persecution, lost her parents at an early age and was forced to watch the shul’s Torahs being burned during Kristallnacht. She was one of the fortunate children being part of the Kindertransport, escaping to the UK. I enjoyed talking with her so much and asked her to relay her wartime experiences.

Edith K., 94 years old may have been on one of the first clandestine evacuations of children to escape the Nazis and she told me her story of Kindertransport, of which I knew very little. Almost all those (about 10,000 children) involved in this famous rescue mission that took place over 8-9 months, had all witnessed the horrors of Kristallnacht. Most had the terrible experience of having to watch their parents or other close family members being taken away to concentration camps, then being put on trains to unknown destinations, never to see their parents again. Between December 1938 and August 1939, some fortunate (mostly) Jewish children were connected with child rescue operations, arranged by London’s “Movement for the Care of Children from Germany”, known as Kindertransport (“KT”). As war between England and Germany began in earnest, the last transport from Germany left on September 1, 1939.

In 1937, Edith was 11 years old when her mother died at the age of 47 of pleurisy. She did not have access to any remedy such as simple anti-inflammatories. Edith had one older sister who immigrated to New York at around the same time, so Edith was then an only sibling who was living with her widowed father in a small town in Germany, called Gerolzhofen, in Bavaria, not far from Frankfort, as the war was heating up. In Edith’s words, “A few months after that traumatic death, the Jews in Germany and Austria went through what is known as *Kristallnacht*, or the *Night of Broken Glass*. It was

November 9-10, 1938, and the synagogues were looted, some burned.

I distinctly remember the worst of it; we were studying in Hebrew school inside our synagogue when German police with heavy boots barged in through the front door. We could hear the banging of their boots on the stairs coming to look for us. They came in and told us all to get out immediately. We were

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Initiative ensures cost of dental care is one less worry for survivors

SOFIA, A HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR in the Chicago area, has faced countless challenges over the years. As with so many other Jews who were in Europe during World War II, she has sustained her share of loss and trauma. She is also, according to social service professionals working in the survivor community, among the approximately one-third of Holocaust survivors in this country living below the poverty line.

As if that's not difficult enough, Sofia has had significant dental problems, not uncommon among Holocaust survivors, who went without oral hygiene during the Shoah.

But thanks to an initiative that launched more than six years ago, Sofia and more than 200 other local survivors are getting the dental attention they need. That initiative, the Alpha Omega-Henry Schein Cares Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program, was established out of a federal push to create public-private partnerships that would ensure that survivors without means would receive long overdue care at no cost to them.

Aviva Sufian, an Obama Administration appointee who became in 2014 the Special Envoy to Holocaust Survivor Services, approached Henry Schein, one of the world's largest distributors of medical and dental office supplies, to participate in the initiative. Schein quickly signed on.

In turn, Schein approached the Alpha Omega International Dental Society, a historically Jewish professional organization and the oldest international dental society, to fulfill the mission of providing free dental care to Holocaust survivors in need. Alpha Omega's members, the vast majority of whom are Jewish dentists, responded enthusiastically—particularly those in metropolitan Chicago, which has a large and active Alpha Omega chapter.

Chicago became one of nine initial pilot sites to implement the program, relying on CJE SeniorLife, a JUF agency, and its Holocaust Community Services program to screen appropriate clients. The ARK, another JUF partner, also works with HCS to provide free dental services to the survivor community.

One of the first dentists to whom the HCS program turned for assistance was Dr. Laurie Gordon-Shaw.

Gordon-Shaw, a Chicago native and active, longtime Alpha Omega member, continues to provide pro bono services to Holocaust survivors to this day. During the height of the pandemic, clad in COVID-protective gear, she visited patients' homes to attend to urgent needs.

"In my experience," said Gordon-Shaw, who has practiced for 33 years, "survivors lost a tremendous number of teeth early on in their life" because figuring out how to stay alive in Nazi-torn Europe took precedence over every other need. Many years later, she noted, as so many survivors are scraping by, they have often had to "choose between food or care."

Gordon-Shaw said that it has been "meaningful to me to give



back" to the survivor community through the Alpha Omega-Schein program. She is hardly the only Chicago area dentist to feel so.

In Evanston, Alpha Omega member Dr. Adina Silberman—one of this year's 36 Under 36 honorees—is working to make sure that survivors' dental needs are satisfied. This work has particular resonance for her, she said: Both of her maternal grandparents were survivors.

"It's very personal," Silberman said, adding that it has been enriching to hear her patients' stories of love and survival. "We build these tremendous bonds."

Gordon-Shaw, Silberman, and the 40 or so Alpha Omega dentists in the Chicago area offering free care have been able to call upon the Prospect Heights-based Golden Ceramic Dental Lab to supply, gratis, the dental products their patients need.

Cydney Topaz, who owns the business with her husband, Ben Topaz, said giving back to survivors has special meaning for them both.

"He thought it would be a wonderful way to honor his grandparents," who were Holocaust survivors, she said of her husband. As for Cydney Topaz, who once worked in the Jewish community, the ability to connect with the survivors has brought her "back to Jewish communal life in a way I didn't expect," she added. ★

Those interested in contributing services to the Holocaust survivors' dental program can call Alpha Omega's Holocaust Survivors Program Manager, Bernice Edelstein, at bedelstein@ao.org.

For more information on Holocaust Community Services at CJE SeniorLife, call 773-508-1004. For more information on The ARK's dental clinic and additional services available to Jewish community members in need, call 773-973-1000.

Pictured: (Top) Dentist Dr. Adina Silberman at her wedding with her husband, Eric Silberman, and her grandparents, who survived the Holocaust. Her grandmother, Sabina Rosenbloom, was hidden in a barn by a Christian family during the war, and her late grandfather, Max Rosenbloom, survived several death camps. (Left) During the height of COVID, Dr. Laurie Gordon-Shaw made home visits to Holocaust survivors with urgent dental needs.

BY ROBERT NAGLER MILLER

Robert Nagler Miller is a journalist and editor who writes frequently about arts- and Jewish-related topics from his home in Chicago.



Shalom!

Dear Friends,

As we close another challenging year, I hope this finds you and your families in good health. Despite the Omicron variant raging across the United States and the world, I am so proud of our community as we have banded together to continue to treat Holocaust survivors through the dental program. Sadly, this past year saw an increase in antisemitism and hatred on the domestic and international fronts. To combat this, I cannot stress enough how vital your support is to the program. Treating survivors and telling their stories is crucial so that we can say, "Never Again!" It is our moral imperative to stand against hatred and make sure that the millions murdered because of hate will never be forgotten.

Huge thanks to my Executive Board, the volunteer dentists, dental labs, Henry Schein, and corporate partners and donors. Positively impacting the lives of this vulnerable population and significantly enhancing their quality of life is essential to their well-being. Your generosity is appreciated as evidenced by the smiles that you have restored.

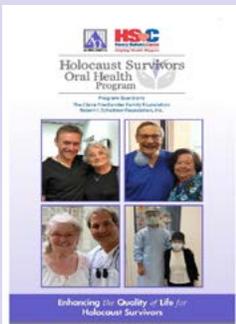


Bernice Edelstein

I am sharing the latest program report 2021 and program video.

Kol Hakavod to all participating in the program.

Bernice Edelstein
Program Manager



To see report click here

To watch video click here



Best wishes for a very happy and healthy 2022!

If you have any suggestions for the newsletter including items for submission (stories and/or photos) please contact me at bedelstein@ao.org

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MEET DR. LEE WEISBARD AND HER HUSBAND MR. DAVID ROSENTHAL



Dr. Lee Weisbard is a general practitioner and has been in practice in Greenwood Village, Colorado for 37 years. She earned her DDS degree in 1984 from the University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine. From 1984-1990 she started her career working in Public Health for the Westside Neighborhood Health Center. This was part of Denver Health and Hospitals caring for indigent folks.

Lee is the co-founder of the student chapter Beta Iota 1980, has held all positions in the local AO Denver Chapter, has been a Regent for many years and served on the AO Board of Directors. She has been involved with the Alpha Omega Dental Society for three decades!

Who/What inspires your philanthropy?

I have a strong belief in philanthropy. Giving back is part of my family practice. I have supported Denver Dress for Success for many years and have donated over \$100,000 in services. I won the Denver Dress for Success Impact Award in 2019. I also support the Denver Jewish Federation and Jewish Family Services.



As dentists, we are given “gifts” to be able to treat patients and improve their oral condition. It is our responsibility to help those who are suffering. The AO-HSC Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program was a perfect fit for my practice and my belief in helping this vulnerable population. I am honored and privileged to care for the patients I have treated through the program.

Lee is married to David Rosenthal, a child of a Holocaust survivor. He was born and raised in the Bay Area of California. He went to school at the University of California, Berkeley, and has enjoyed a career in finance. He has for many years been an active member of his synagogue, and enjoys reading Torah, leading services, and singing from the bimah. David has three sons and three stepdaughters, and Lee and David are blessed to have six grandchildren so far.

David is extremely proud to have been named an Honorary Member of Alpha Omega.

This is the story of my mother and her immediate family who were Shanghai Jews during World War II.

My mother was born Inge Pikarski in October 1927. Her parents were Erna and Max, and her grandmother was Selma. I share their names because they are all part of the story. They lived in a small town in Eastern Germany called Neurode that had a population of about 10,000 people. Erna and Max owned and operated a department store, they had a lovely home upstairs and led a wonderfully comfortable life. There were not many Jews in the city, and the Pikarskis were certainly assimilated Jews.

Life became difficult in 1933 when Hitler came to power. Over the next few years, my family experienced increased anti-Semitism, but my grandparents believed that they were going through troubled times and that the anti-Jewish sentiment would eventually fade away.

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Chapter News

AO PHILADELPHIA

MARC ROTHMAN has been volunteering to take care of Holocaust survivors by providing free dental surgical care. They have experienced unspeakable horrors in their lives and many of them are indigent and cannot afford dental implants or prosthetics, so the service has been a beautiful way for him to share compassion and love during their last few years. The program was established in partnership with the Alpha Omega Dental Society, Henry Schein Cares, the Claire Friedlander Foundation and a special governmental unit led by Joe Biden when he was Vice President.

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AO LOS ANGELES

NEVER AGAIN. I am privileged and honored to be a member of the AO Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program. Today I was lucky to meet this beautiful human. Hearing about her 97 year old life brought tears to my eyes, to be able to hear first- hand about what she has been through was humbling to me and my staff. She was the only survivor in her family and moved here alone and started her new life after the war. I will remember this day for the rest of my life. #neveragain #holocaustsurvivorstory

As a side note **DR. MICHAEL JACOBSON** was a former student of LA dental ambassador, Dr. Paul Selski at the Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC. L'dor v'dor!



AO MANITOBA

Welcome **DR. MATTHEW RYKISS** the new dental ambassador in Winnipeg. Dr. Rykiss takes over from Dr. Justin Diamond who left Winnipeg and relocated to British Columbia.

I'm quite honoured to have been asked to be the next ambassador for the Holocaust Survivors Oral Health Program in Winnipeg. It's an important cause with a strong focus on giving back to our Jewish community. I look forward to connecting with my dental colleagues to help support the program.



AO MILWAUKEE

DR. DAVID LUBAR with his happy patient. It was a pleasure treating this patient restoring his oral health. I am so glad to participate in this program.



MEET DR. LEE WEISBARD AND MR. DAVID ROSENTHAL continued

In those early years of the Hitler regime, they never had any thoughts of leaving Germany.

In school, my mother was bullied and verbally abused by the students and the teachers in those early years. She became increasingly a loner in her community, and she said that the loneliness was one of the worst things she had to endure as young child.

In April 1938, when Inge was 10 years old, she was expelled from school because she was Jewish. This was traumatic for my mother, as she was singled out, ostracized, and felt even more alone



Inge Pikarski in Germany age 10, with Max and Selma, 1938.

than before. As dark as these times were for her, future events would be even darker.

Right after Inge's 11th birthday, on November 9, 1938, a night we remember as Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass, my grandfather Max and two other male relatives were arrested by the Nazis and sent to the concentration camp at Buchenwald. Inge and Erna were of course distraught. There was no warning of the arrest, Max's departure was immediate, and no one knew where he was sent until about six weeks later.

Right after Max was taken from his home, the Nazis came back and ordered Inge, Erna, and Selma to remain in their house as prisoners. All of their valuable possessions were seized, and the store downstairs was locked so no one could enter or leave. Nazi guards were placed outside their door.

Max was released three months later from Buchenwald in February 1939 because he was a veteran of the German army in WWI. When he arrived home, my mother and grandmother did not recognize him because he had lost 100 pounds in the three months he was away. My grandfather never shared anything about his time in the camp with his family, and he never talked about his experience at Buchenwald for the rest of his life.

When Max was released, he was forced to sign an agreement saying that he would leave the country within two weeks. Failure to do so would have meant him going back to the concentration camp, along with his family.

The family quickly decided that they would need to find a way to escape to Shanghai. At that time, Shanghai was the

BACKGROUND

Shanghai during World War II

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, more European Jews had taken refuge in Shanghai than in any other city in the world.

Aside from the Dominican Republic, Shanghai was the only place that remained open and approximately 20,000 European Jews settled in Shanghai between 1938 and 1941. By 1943, Japan—under pressure from its German allies—had forced these stateless refugees into a one-square-mile ghetto known as the Hongkew District (now Hongkou).

Shanghai at the time was a political anomaly: Control was split between the beleaguered Republic of China, an increasingly aggressive Imperial Japan, and France, Britain, and the United States, countries that operated self-governing "concessions" exempt from Chinese law or influence.

While a Jewish community has existed in Shanghai since the late 19th century, the first large wave of immigrants came in the 1920s and 30s, as thousands of Russian Jews fled the Bolshevik Revolution for the more business-friendly foreign concessions in Shanghai. A decade later, the mainly Russian and Sephardic Jewish community was supplemented by tens of thousands of Ashkenazi Jews from Europe, who fled during the early stages of Nazi rule in Germany.

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MEET DR. LEE WEISBARD AND MR. DAVID ROSENTHAL continued

only place in the world that did not require an entry visa, and the family did not have the time to apply elsewhere. It was an incredibly frightening time for the Pikarskis. They had little money left and almost no possessions to sell. With what they had, they needed to bribe various officials and purchase travel tickets. They, along with Inge's two aunts and two uncles, managed to leave Germany in March 1939, travelled by train to Italy, and then boarded a ship bound for Shanghai. When they left Germany, my mother was 11, my grandparents were in their forties, and my great grandmother was in her late 60s. They were penniless and left with literally nothing but the clothes they were wearing. While the immediate family escaped, Inge's extended family all perished in the Holocaust.

Now I will share their experiences in China.

Shanghai was in those days an open city, wild and unruly, filled with crooks of all ages and types, criminal gangs, and small-time petty thieves. It has been written that there were more prostitutes per capita in Shanghai than in any other city in the world. Drugs were common, especially opium. My mother shared that once she had to go into an opium den to deliver a message to someone inside, which of course she found frightening. There was a huge disparity between the rich and the poor. Also, the Japanese were at war with the Chinese and had control of Shanghai. There was open hostility between the Japanese and Chinese.

When Inge and the family arrived in Shanghai, they immediately went to the Hongkew district of the city where the European Jews were placed. After a few months in temporary housing, Max and Erna borrowed a little money from a Chinese man and were able to move to other quarters and open a small grocery store. The place that they moved to consisted of two small rooms and a tiny kitchen, and this is where Inge, Erna, Max, and Selma lived for the next ten years.

The conditions in Shanghai were atrocious. Sanitation was non-existent. There were only primitive outhouses to use. During the rainy season, sewers over-flowed and raw sewage spilled on the streets. Disease was rampant, including dysentery, liver leeches, roundworms, scarlet fever, spinal meningitis, tuberculosis, and typhoid. Many refugees died from these diseases. My great grandmother, Selma, got typhoid when she was in her mid-70s. My mother suffered from dysentery for much of the time she was in China and had stomach problems for the rest of her life.

It was incredibly crowded in the area where they lived. The Jewish Ghetto was a space of less than one square mile. 20,000 refugees and 100,000 Chinese people lived within the space of the ghetto. The only time my mother did not feel completely closed in was when she was able to get outside the boundaries of the ghetto for short periods of time.

Poverty was extreme. Erna and Max opened their grocery store and worked seven days a week. Selma would cook foods in their kitchen to be sold in the store. The work was horrible for these aging people. And yet, they did not make enough to support the family. The only way that my family survived financially, particularly in those early years, was with the assistance of the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which provided food and clothing to the refugees. Also, there were well-to-do Iraqi and Russian Jews in Shanghai that offered support. Inge always expressed her deepest gratitude to the organizations and individuals that helped them.

Regarding the money my grandparents borrowed to open their grocery store, it was incredibly important to them that they repay the loan. Erna and Max were able to slowly save just enough over their years in Shanghai to do so, and Inge eventually delivered the funds to the Chinese gentleman who loaned them the money.

Rats, mice, lice, and other rodents had a constant presence. My family had cats to control the rats and mice in their small living space.

Food was scarce. Meals consisted of beans, potatoes, maybe a little meat, and a few fruits and vegetables, always boiled



Shanghai Memorial - Monument at entrance to park Inge used to visit.

to try to eliminate the germs in the local water. When they had rice, my mother said they would put the plate of rice on the windowsill so the sun would kill the bugs. My family ate only European style food – they did not acquire a taste for Chinese food (until, ironically, they came to the United States).

The weather was miserable. In the summer, it was unbearably hot and humid. It was hard to control the mold that grew on most everything in their home. Fans were not used much because electricity was rationed, so staying

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MEET DR. LEE WEISBARD AND MR. DAVID ROSENTHAL continued

indoors was almost impossible. In the winter, it was damp and cold, so people stayed indoors wrapped in blankets as there was no heat.

And then, of course, there were the bombings. The Japanese controlled Shanghai beginning in 1937, and then the war between Japan and the



Erna and Max in Shanghai circa 1942.

US broke out after Pearl Harbor. Until the Japanese surrender in 1945, American planes regularly dropped bombs on Shanghai in their conflict with the Japanese. My mother recalled that at one point, there was a bombing raid every day non-stop for six weeks. One story Inge told us was that one day, she was taking care of some preschool children, and was walking them back to their homes. The bombs started falling. My mother huddled the children together against a building and sang songs to them to keep them from being afraid.

As terrible as all this sounds, life for my mother had many positive aspects.

First, and what she told us was the most important to her, was she was able to go back to school. A wealthy Iraqi Jew named Kadoorie founded a new Jewish school called the Shanghai Jewish Youth Association, and Inge was so happy to be back with young people her own age and resume her education. She learned to speak English, which was particularly important to her. One disappointment Inge had was that she was never able to lose her German accent as much as she tried. She was thrilled when she was able to read her first English novel, which was "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and she remembered being overjoyed when she had her first dream in English.

Next, my mother got a job as nursery schoolteacher assistant, and she discovered how much she loved being with and caring for children. Inge developed a life-long passion for early year education while she was in Shanghai. Throughout her whole life, Inge devoted herself to young children, owning a nursery school with my father for 18 years and doing volunteer work at elementary schools well into her 70s.

There was a small neighborhood park in the ghetto, called Houshan Park, and Inge found comfort walking around it as

much as she could. It gave her a profound sense of peace. I was fortunate enough to see that same park when I visited Shanghai a few years ago.

Inge loved to go to the movies. It was cheap entertainment, and she would go regularly either with friends or by herself. Most of the movies were from the US, and she specifically mentioned once that she became a big fan of Shirley Temple during her time in China.

In Shanghai, my mother discovered she loved pets. I mentioned the cats that the family took in. They also had a dog. One day a young Chinese boy came to the store and told Inge and her parents, "You need a dog," and handed over a puppy. My mother named him Teddy, and the dog gave her a great deal of comfort. She spoke lovingly of Teddy many decades after she left China, and as a child, I always remember having a dog in the family. In Inge's later years, she created a small business in her retirement community where she would babysit dogs and cats when the owners traveled.

Inge made many friends in Shanghai. She was able to explore areas of the city as a teenager with people her own age. She was gratified to have friends which was so different than her time in Germany. I want to mention one friend in particular. At age 14, Inge met another 14-year-old German refugee named Eva. They became fast friends and spent most of their time together, strolling the streets and mostly



Shanghai Classroom Kadoorie Jewish School (Back row on right, Inge is in middle).

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MEET DR. LEE WEISBARD AND MR. DAVID ROSENTHAL continued

talking about boys, as my mother told us. This friendship continued when Inge and Eva came to the United States, and the friendship lasted for 75 years.

Because my grandparents were able to make a small income from the grocery store, and my mother made a little bit of money from her job in the nursery school, they were able to maintain a stable family. Not all the refugees were so fortunate. Inge was always remarkably close with her family.

And Inge acquired a new love of Judaism. Going to a Jewish school gave her the chance to learn about Torah, the holidays, and what it meant to be a Jew. Over the years in Shanghai, she went to synagogue every Shabbat, loving the songs and the community. In her later adult years, Inge described herself as a cultural Jew, but had difficulty with her faith because of what had happened in the Holocaust.

So, despite all the poverty, disease, rodents, and bombs, Inge was generally happy in China, much happier than when she was in Germany. As a teenager, she viewed her time in Shanghai as a great adventure. When she would talk about her time in China, it was the positive side of her life that she focused on, and she had good memories of those times.

Inge got her visa paperwork to come to the United States sometime in 1948. But she refused to leave Shanghai because the visas for Max, Erna, and Selma took longer to get, and she did not want to leave without them. She finally and very reluctantly left by herself in early 1949 when her visa was about to expire. She went by ship and landed in San Francisco. Max, Erna, and Selma left in October of 1949. Erna and Max came to San Francisco, but Selma was not able to come to the United States until six months later; she

traveled to Canada and stayed with some relatives until she was able to enter the States. They were all eventually reunited in Oakland, California and started their new lives again. My mother was 21, my grandparents were in their fifties, and my great grandmother was around 80.

My mother met my father in early 1950 in Berkeley, California and they married in September of that year. Interestingly, the rabbi who officiated at their wedding was also my mother's math teacher in Shanghai. My parents raised four children and were married for 66 years. Life in the United States was good for them and us.

In conclusion, Inge had terrible memories of her life in Germany, and she hated the Germans for what they did. But her memories of China were generally good. In her adult years, from time-to-time she would meet people and they would ask her, "Where are you from?" And my mother, a white, Jewish, German accented woman, would respond without batting an eye, "Oh, I'm from China."

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THIS VITALLY IMPORTANT PROGRAM TO TREAT THE ORAL HEALTH NEEDS OF THIS DESERVING POPULATION

The program received a challenge grant from the Robert I. Schattner Foundation Inc. Help us leverage the RIS grant by giving generously. Tikkun olam (repairing the world) epitomizes the essence of philanthropy. Join us and be a part of our team. We need your help so that we may serve those who desperately need us!

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forced outside only to watch them remove all the Torahs, pile them in the street, and burn them. The only reason they did not burn the synagogue right then and there was because it was too close to the Christian buildings on either side, and they didn't want those to catch fire as well.

Following that, we had to watch all the Jewish men of our town get arrested and sent off to the concentration camp, Dachau. As far as I can remember I ran after my father and held on to his legs. A Nazi officer who I knew slapped my face and my father pushed me away, saying, "You have to go, you have to go."

While in Dachau, my father learned of the KT which had never been "advertised" in small towns such as ours, only large cities like Berlin, Vienna, Munich, etc. All the men were released just before Christmas and sent home in the hope that they would just pack their suitcases and get out of Germany. My father and I had a very high quota number to come to the U.S. and he never made it. He was killed in one of the smaller camps associated with Auschwitz. But before that happened, he took me to a train station where I boarded the train carrying children from all over Germany. My father was not allowed to get anywhere near the train, and we said goodbye, never to meet again.

I have a vague memory of the train ride through Germany. At one point, the train had to stop, and SS officers came aboard to have all the passengers empty out their suitcases, checking for contraband. But once we crossed the border into Holland, we all felt safer. Germany had not quite invaded Holland yet. When we arrived in Amsterdam there were several women waiting to hand out fruit, candy and cookies, etc. The next stop was the Hook of Holland, a port on the North Sea,

"I distinctly remember the worst of it; we were studying in Hebrew school inside our synagogue when German police with heavy boots barged in through the front door..."

where we boarded a ferry to take us to Harwich, England. All this travelling took at least two days, but to this day, I have no recollection if we ever ate a meal.

From Harwich, a train took us to Liverpool Station in London, another long ride. Once there, we were herded into an exceptionally large room where many of the children were picked up by either relatives, friends of their family or English people willing to take in one of us. This was not easy for anyone as most kids did not speak English and the foster parents did not speak German. After a few hours in that room, again with nothing to eat or drink as far as I can remember, I was one of a few still left. I had no idea what to do so I started to cry! Finally, a lady from "The Committee" took me to a girl's hostel, located in Kilburn on Willesden Lane. I had to stay there for a few weeks because the Boarding School to which I was being sent, used uniforms and mine had to be made to measure. It was a nice uniform for the girls, but the boys had to wear woolen, scratchy, awful colors. I believe the department store in London which sold these was Derry & Toms in Kensington.

Once the uniform was fitted and purchased, I was picked up by someone and taken by another train to Haywards Heath in Sussex, which was a few miles from Cuckfield, where my first Boarding School was located. It was a Jewish School, and lucky for me, there were about 15 other Kindertransport children there, which made getting acquainted with the place a bit easier, as we all spoke German. That was in April or early May of 1939. Little did any of us imagine that in a few months there would be war between our new and old countries.

Memories of that first school are dim as we were located near Brighton on the coast, and the government thought the area might be bombed and shelled from France. All the children had to be evacuated to safer locations. Once again, in November of 1939, we were uprooted and sent all over the place. At least half of the other KT's were sent to another school, and I had to go to London to another hostel for a few weeks before a place could be found. At that time, I do not think that London was being bombed. Then one day another "someone" came to pick me up to take me to another Jewish boarding school which, at that time, had relocated from the Kent coast to the middle of the country. That is where I stayed for the next two years, not very happy, but at least safe. Once I reached age 14, I was sent back to London to another hostel and to find a job suitable for a teenager. "

Edith lived in England for 7 years before she finally immigrated to New York where her older sister was still living. After many more years, she eventually moved to Seattle, Washington and has remained there to this day.

On a personal note, I want to thank Edith very much for sharing her story, without which I would not have been educated about this important part of Holocaust history that can...

never be forgotten.

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