

HMD

NORTHWOOD HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY EVENTS
14th Year from 3rd to 13th February

... and the bush was burned with fire but was not consumed

Exodus 3:2

27 JANUARY 2015 MARKS THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

the site of the largest mass murder in history. It is estimated that at least 1.1 million people were murdered at Auschwitz of which 200,000 were children. 1 million of the victims were Jews from all over Europe. Other victims included Poles, Roma, Soviet POWs, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals and others.

ARRIVAL

FRITZIE WEISS FRITZSHALL

CZECH SURVIVOR OF AUSCHWITZ AND ESCAPEE FROM THE DEATH MARCH

'The train arrived in the middle of the night, so we were greeted by very bright lights shining down on us. We were greeted by soldiers, SS men, as well as women. We were greeted by dogs and whips, by shouting and screaming, orders to try to empty the train, by confusion... There is no way to describe your first coming to Auschwitz.'

LILLY APPELBAUM

BELGIAN SURVIVOR OF AUSCHWITZ AND THE DEATH MARCH TO BERGEN BELSEN

'And they said, "From now on you do not answer by your name. Your name is your number." And the delusion, the disappointment, the discouragement that I felt, I felt like I was not a human person anymore.'

ELIE WIESEL, KBE

ROMANIAN SURVIVOR, WINNER OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE, AUTHOR OF NIGHT IN WHICH HE WROTE ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES AT AUSCHWITZ

'An SS officer came towards us wielding a club. He commanded: "Men to the left! Women to the right!" Eight words spoken quietly, indifferently, without emotion. Eight simple, short words...Mother was stroking my sister's blond hair, as if to protect her. And I walked on with my father, with the men. I didn't know that this was the moment in time and the place where I was leaving my mother and Tzipora forever.'

GENA TURGEL, MBE

POLISH SURVIVOR OF THE CRACOW GHETTO, PLASZOV CAMP, AUSCHWITZ, BUCHENWALD AND FINALLY BERGEN BELSEN, AUTHOR OF HER TESTIMONY I LIGHT A CANDLE AND REGULAR SPEAKER AT THE NORTHWOOD HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY EVENT:

'We knew that Auschwitz was the end of the road. Tens of thousands of people had been here before us, and most had ended up in the gas chamber. We used to hear transports coming and going day and night, and we saw people being loaded on to the trucks. In one incident I saw a truck full of children arriving. They had no chance at all and were dumped straight into the ovens.'

The Nazis created thousands of camps, including forced labour, transit, and extermination camps, throughout German-occupied territories. As Allied troops made progress across Nazi-occupied Europe, they began to uncover concentration and extermination camps containing crematoria and mass graves which had been burnt in an attempt to hide the crimes which had been committed there. The first camp to be liberated was Majdanek in Poland in the summer of 1944. The last was Theresienstadt in the (now) Czech Republic, liberated by Russian troops on 8th May 1945.

Prisoners were ill and dying when Allied troops found them. Tens of thousands of prisoners died after liberation from eating the wrong foods as well as the effects of starvation, disease and exhaustion.



LIBERATION

SIMON WIESENTHAL, KBE

AUSTRIAN SURVIVOR OF JANOWSKA, PLASZOW, AND MAUTHAUSEN, NAZI HUNTER AND AUTHOR OF *THE MURDERERS AMONG US*

'The tank with the white star was about a hundred yards in front of me. I wanted to touch the star, but I was too weak. I had survived to see this day, but I couldn't make the last hundred yards. I remember taking a few steps, and then my knees gave way and I fell on my face.'

SALEK ORENSTEIN

POLISH SURVIVOR OF SKARZYSKO, BUCHENWALD AND THERESIENSTADT, FROM HIS TESTIMONY *BEYOND BELIEF: A SURVIVOR'S STORY*, INCLUDED IN *THE BOYS* BY MARTIN GILBERT, HISTORIAN AND OFFICIAL BIOGRAPHER FOR WINSTON CHURCHILL

'They lifted me off the wagon but they could not put me down anywhere because I had no flesh. ...I was put into a blanket and carried gently inside the camp...they found some string and tied up my blanket to make a type of improvised hammock... All I wanted was to be left alone. I wasn't hungry. I wasn't thirsty. I wasn't sleepy. I was just a mass of emotions....{The nurse} poured some liquid into my mouth. My lips were so fragile that if she had used a metal spoon she might easily have cut me. The spoon felt big and bulky against my lips, and as the liquid flowed into my mouth, I realised that I was a human being after all.'

EDITH BANETH

CZECH SURVIVOR, THERESIENSTADT GHETTO, AUSCHITZ-BIRKENAU, FROM HER TESTIMONY IN *FORGOTTEN VOICES OF THE HOLOCAUST* BY LYN SMITH, ARCHIVIST AND INTERVIEWER FOR THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

'I remember the first time I went out with my mother after liberation. There is a beautiful forest in Belsen-it is still there today-and we walked on the main road and crossed into the forest. It was the first time I felt a little bit better from the typhoid I'd had for three weeks. I was sitting down with mother in a meadow, and...suddenly, at this moment, we both realised that we were free; sitting in a meadow on our own, seeing flowers and doing what pleased us. It was then that it hit us and we hugged each other and said, 'We made it, we are here, we have survived, we are alive, and soon we'll go home.' I had survived the typhoid, my mother didn't get it, and we were so hopeful that it's all over. The next day my mother did suddenly get a temperature and she was one of the last cases of typhoid and she was taken to hospital. She died on 15 June 1945, two months after being freed. Going through all that had happened, it was the worst thing. She was forty then, she still had another thirty years of normal life to live.'

JOHN ROGER DIXEY

BRITISH CIVILIAN MEDICAL STUDENT, BERGEN BELSEN

'I well remember talking to a girl who was a walking skeleton. I said 'How old are you?' And with tears in her eyes she said she was twenty six. And I was-what was I? Twenty four. She was my age and looked eighty.'

NORMAN TURGEL

SERGENAT 53 FIELD SECURITY BRITISH INTELLIGENCE CORPS, LIBERATOR OF BELSEN, LATER MARRIED TO GENA TURKEL

'I remember one morning seeing a man sitting by the gate. He was just bones, and I could see from his features that he was a man, though I couldn't tell his age. He was wearing the yellow striped uniform. He held his hand up, and as I passed he said the Jewish words of a prayer, and then he died.'

GENA TURGEL

LIBERATED FROM BELSEN (HAVING BEEN MOVED FROM AUSCHWITZ)

'It is difficult to describe the meaning of freedom; to be able to walk where you want to walk, do what you want to do, say what you want to say...it is a wonderful, wonderful feeling.'



Children liberated from Auschwitz camp January 1945



Photos from concentration camp train liberated in Germany, April 13th, 1945



Liberation of Mauthausen May 1945



Gena and Norman Turgel on their wedding day, 7th October 1945

EPILOGUE

RUDOLF HÖSS

COMMANDANT OF AUSCHWITZ, SPEAKING TO US ARMY PSYCHIATRIST MAJOR LEON GOLDENSOHN AFTER HIS CAPTURE.

I don't know what you mean by being upset about these things because I didn't personally murder anybody. I was just the director of the extermination programme at Auschwitz.'

JUDGE ROBERT JACKSON

CHIEF PROSECUTOR FOR THE AMERICANS AT THE NUREMBURG TRIALS

'The wrongs which we seek to condemn and punish have been so calculated, so malignant, and so devastating, that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored because it cannot survive their being repeated.'

MAX HASTINGS

HISTORIAN, EDITOR AND AUTHOR, ALL HELL LET LOOSE

'...in one of the most highly educated societies in Europe, it was easy to find men willing to murder those whom their rulers defined as state enemies, without employing duress.'

ANNE KARPf

BRITISH JEWISH JOURNALIST/WRITER, DAUGHTER OF SURVIVORS, FROM FORGOTTEN VOICES OF THE HOLOCAUST BY LYN SMITH

My mother told me that she was at a cocktail party and a woman came up and said to her, 'What's that on your arm? Is it your telephone number?' And my mother said, 'Yes, the telephone number of Auschwitz.'

LAURENCE REES,

HISTORIAN AND DOCUMENTARY FILM MAKER, 'AUSCHWITZ: THE NAZIS AND THE FINAL SOLUTION

'Out of the 6500 or so members of the SS who worked at Auschwitz between 1940 and 1945 and who are thought to have survived the war, only around 750 ever received punishment of any kind.'

BILL ESSEX

BRITISH SOLDIER, ROYAL ENGINEERS, BERGEN BELSEN

'I never saw a bird flying there.'

PIOTR M. A. CYWINSKI

DIRECTOR OF THE AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU STATE MUSEUM

'We have set it as our goal to find those points in the landscape that feature in the photographs in the Album. We wanted to show, on the one hand, their present-day emptiness and, on the other hand, their nature as a deep vestige that cannot be allowed to be effaced. That is the essence of the Memorial.'



In a special archival project, Dutch Photographer Jo Hedwig has combined historical photos superimposed over photos of the same location today. Here 'Russian soldiers liberating Auschwitz January 1945 find survivors in the quarantine building' is superimposed over a photo of the quarantine block today.



Photos taken from "Auschwitz-Birkenau. The Place Where You Are Standing..." published by the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. The album presents 31 historical photographs taken by SS men in 1944 depicting the extermination of Jews in the Auschwitz II-Birkenau camp. They were set in contrast with present-day photographs of the same locations. The original photos came to be known as The Auschwitz Album depicting the arrival of 200 Hungarian Jews in 1944; departure from the train, formation of columns, selection, march to the gas chambers, waiting to enter the undressing room, looting of property as well as the very first moments of those who were selected as fit to work during the selection and registered in the camp. The only stage the German author failed to record is the killing of people.



'WAR AND GENOCIDE IS THE WORST PART OF OUR BEAUTIFUL WORLD'

YR 9 HOCKERILL STUDENT WHO ATTENDED NHMDE 2013.

Holocaust Memorial Day is a national commemoration. It is a day to remember the millions killed in the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. 2015 is also the 20th anniversary of the Genocide in Srebrenica, Bosnia.

Thank you so much for sharing your story with us, this is something I know I will never forget. You and your family went through things no one should ever have to deal with and I am so grateful that people like you are telling the youth of today what happened in order to make sure it never happens again. It was such a great experience. Thank you ever so much.
Kings Langley School - Yr 9

Thank you for sharing your experiences. It has made me a lot more aware. In school we don't learn about single peoples experiences. It has opened my eyes to the terror of what people have been through and how lucky I am not to have gone through that. I now know in a lot more details about how Jewish people were treated and how some people survived the Holocaust. It was truly touching about your parents. It has made me think about how to treat my family, because I wouldn't know what I'd do if I lost them.
The Emmbrook School - Yr 9

My granddad had been in a concentration camp in Indonesia where he got separated from his mum and dad and siblings. He did survive the concentration camp and came back to Holland. I never knew him as he unfortunately died later on. So I never got to know about his 'adventure'. My grandma's dad was a German as well and spent most of his life fleeing from the Nazis. You are the first person I've heard of who's been through a similar story. And now I can imagine what part of my family had been through. Thank you for letting me appreciate where I am now. And thank you for being as brave as you've been. Not everyone has [your] strength.
Northwood College Yr 10

You are an inspiration for when you stood up for yourself. Listening to your speech I can see you have a pure heart and a amazing story to tell. I wish you all the luck for the future. You inspire people to not give in to inequality and bullies. I am very glad to have had the chance to listen to your moving speech.
Swakeleys School - Yr 12

So people look up to football players, singers, or other sports players and they're the ones being called 'heroes' But then there is Heroes, people like you. Real heroes. Thank you. You're an inspiration.
Hitchin Boys - Yr 8

What an inspirational speech, it truly has made us think of all the suffering and pain you had to go through. As the next generation, we have to understand and learn from history to know what to do in the future.
John Lyon School - Yr 10

I wanted to express my gratitude. Your words moved me greatly and I agree wholeheartedly with your message on prejudice and its poisonous role in society. I do endeavour, when I can, to advise people against discrimination and its effects, even when intended in a 'joking' fashion and find myself shocked by its prevalence in the 21st century. Thanks again.
Goffs - Yr 12

I think before I heard your story, I couldn't bring myself to believe it was all real. I have always found it hard to learn about the Holocaust. It always makes me want to start crying. I think you are ever so brave to have gone through all that and to carry on after. I'll share your story too. Thank you so much for sharing it. I'll remember it always.
Thomas Alleyne Academy - Yr 9/10

My experience here was definitely an eye-opener. You have gone through a difficult time yet never gave up and stayed courageous. You are truly an inspiration. One main thing I have learnt from this is that I have a voice and I will use that voice to help others and stand up for myself and what's right. Thank you for your time and sharing your experience with us.
Guru Nanak Sikh Academy - Yr 9

BOSNIA'S GRAND MUFTI MUSTAFA CERIC AT A RECENT INTER-DOMINATIONAL VISIT TO AUSCHWITZ.

'We must teach our young people in mosques, churches and synagogues about what happened here. This awful place should stand as a reminder to all people that intolerance and lack of understanding between people can result in...such places as Auschwitz.'

OUR SINCERE THANKS TO OUR GUEST SPEAKERS WHO SO GENEROUSLY SHARE THEIR MEMORIES

Book your places for the 14th Northwood Holocaust Memorial Day Events - 3rd to 13th February

Morning and afternoon sessions lasting 2.5 hours including a talk from a Holocaust Survivor will be held at Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue, Northwood United Synagogue, Belmont United Synagogue, Bushey United Synagogue, Watford and District Synagogue, Borehamwood & Elstree Synagogue. Full details can be found on www.northwoodhmd.org.uk
NHMDE is funded solely by grants and donations and whilst no charge is made to attend we welcome and are grateful for any donations which may be sent to NHMDE, PO Box 288, Northwood HA6 9BT or by contacting the details below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL: 0845 644 8006 (this is a local call rate number)
or Email: bookings@northwoodhmd.org.uk OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.northwoodhmd.org.uk
These events are jointly organised by Northwood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue and Northwood United Synagogue