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New Collection of Testimonies Opens in Texas

A new collection of Shoah Foundation testimonies is open to the public at the Holocaust Memorial of San Antonio, Texas. This is the Shoah Foundation’s second public collection in the United States (the other is at the Charleston County Public Library in Charleston, South Carolina). The collection consists of 20 testimonies videotaped in San Antonio and a copy of the Foundation’s educational video, One Human Spirit. This collection of English-language testimonies is accompanied by Testimony Catalogue binders that summarize biographical data about each interviewee. The Dalkowitz Foundation generously provided funding for this special collection. The formal launch of the collection will be in autumn 2003, but visitors may view testimonies now. The Memorial will also be creating a short video of testimony excerpts for an educational exhibition. For more information, call the Holocaust Memorial at 210-302-6807.

Rescuer Honored Thanks to Staff Member

Dan Danieli, a researcher in the Shoah Foundation’s Cataloguing Department, and his family are among the more than 2,000 Hungarian Jews who are alive today thanks to the actions of Captain Laszlo Ocskay, a former officer in the Hungarian Army.

Ocskay commanded a Budapest Labor Service Battalion during the war. Working against government policies, he issued official identification papers to his unit members, most of whom were victims of Nazi persecution. Ocskay and his loyal staff obtained food and medicine for their unit of approximately 2,300 men, women, and children.

Dan Danieli made a promise to his father that he would see Ocskay honored for his actions. Thanks to Dan’s efforts, Yad Vashem named Ocskay a Righteous Gentile on April 27, 2003. The Shoah Foundation’s archive contains several interviews with people saved by Ocskay.
The Shoah Foundation is having a new partnership to introduce British students to visual history testimonies. A new product, which will incorporate testimonies from the Foundation's archive, will be paired with the renowned educational program of the Holocaust Educational Trust (HET). Since 1988, the HET has been promoting awareness and understanding of Holocaust history and its universal implications by providing teacher training and educational resources to schools, universities, and communities throughout the U.K.

"One of the repeated requests we get is to have survivors speak at schools. This project with the Shoah Foundation will give many more people the opportunity to hear survivor stories," remarked HET’s Head of Education Rachel Burns. "For us, survivors’ stories are a central teaching tool – to humanize the individuals involved makes a potentially distant event of the past into something more immediate and compelling." The project, scheduled to begin in 2004, pending funding, will fit into several required curriculum areas, including history and citizenship.

The Shoah Foundation and the HET will create teacher training materials, programmatic outreach, and classroom videos of survivor testimony for British high schools. The project will integrate testimonies into lessons that address four central themes. The first theme is Choice, which includes topics like rescue, resistance, flight, and collaboration. The second theme, Belief, will look at subjects such as propaganda, faith, trust, and tradition through survivor testimonies. Loss will be portrayed through survivors’ memories of loss of identity, family, friends, even pride, through the experiences of deportation, displacement, social exile. The final theme of Remembrance will examine testimonies that address ideas of forgiveness and rebuilding a future.

The Shoah Foundation is honored to partner with the HET and encourages its supporters to help make this joint project a reality. To contribute, please visit www.vhf.org, or go to www.shoah.org for more information on the HET.

Bringing Testimonies into the Classroom: The Shoah Foundation Forges Strong Educational Partnerships in the U.S. and U.K.

Foundation and ADL Join Educational Forces

The Shoah Foundation and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) are partnering to develop a unique teaching tool that combines the Shoah Foundation’s videotaped testimonies with the ADL’s printed Holocaust curriculum to create a uniquely effective learning experience for students in classrooms across the U.S. Distributed directly to teachers for classroom use, this comprehensive educational package will consist of a full written curriculum and an audio-visual component of testimonies segments that relate to each curriculum unit.

The treatment of the Holocaust in most history textbooks is cursory. In order to meet the need expressed by an increasing number of educators, the ADL's Braun Holocaust Institute developed a class-read curriculum that utilizes modern research and primary source materials such as diaries, photographs, art, and letters to teach about the Holocaust and link this historical event to contemporary issues. According to Ed S. Alpert, Ed.D., former teacher and principal and ADL's Education Director, "The Shoah Foundation's visual testimonies and our curriculum guide are the perfect complement. We know that the Foundation's archive has testimonies that will enrich everything we're communicating with this curriculum."

The ADL’s guide is a ten-unit high school curriculum that teaches about the Holocaust in the context of diversity and anti-bias issues. The accompanying audio-visual component will supplement the written element while representing a new use of video in the classroom, allowing students to go directly to first-person testimony as part of the lesson. The testimonies segments will be co-produced by the Shoah Foundation and the ADL, with both organizations searching the Foundation’s archive and its visual collection for the best material fit into each curriculum unit.

In the initial steps of drafting and testing the written curriculum are underway. Currently, the Shoah Foundation and ADL are beginning to see the visual testimony clips. Once the entire product is ready, the organizations will conduct a joint training session with staff members from the ADL's 30 U.S. regional offices, introducing them to this product and comprehensive approach so that they can promote its use in their classrooms nationwide. Both organizations are currently raising funds in hopes of launching the project by autumn 2003. To contribute, please visit www.adl.org or call 888-860-2004.

For more information on the ADL, go to www.adl.org

In pursuit of its educational mission—to overcome prejudice, intolerance, and bigotry through the educational use of its visual history testimonies—the Shoah Foundation is building partnerships with innovative educational organizations in the U.S. and abroad. These partnerships pool the unique resources of each institution, enabling both organizations to accomplish together what neither could do alone.

In Their Own Words: From the Testimonies of ‘Schindler's List’

This spring, the Shoah Foundation collaborated with the national education organization Facing History and Ourselves to implement a new educational program in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). This cooperative program brought together LAUSD teachers and students, education experts, the Academy Award-winning film Schindler’s List, and testimonies from the Foundation’s archive.

Expressly for this project, the Shoah Foundation created In Their Own Words: From the Testimonies of ‘Schindler’s Jew’ – a 25-minute video program of testimony excerpts from Jews who survived thanks to the actions of Oskar Schindler. The video uses eyewitness testimony to address four themes: Issues of Identity, Neighbors against Neighbors; Building a Racial State, Citizenship and Resistance; and Can One Person Make a Difference?

Schindler’s List was followed by discussions and an in-class viewing of In Their Own Words. The program concluded with a Town Hall Forum, where a panel (including Founding Chairman Steven Spielberg and Foundation President and CEO Douglas Greenblatt) addressed the topic: ‘The History Matters’—giving students and teachers the opportunity to interact with Holocaust survivors, ask questions, and begin to examine how the study of history affects contemporary society.

The Shoah Foundation hopes to duplicate this program in other large cities in the U.S., relying on a network of Facing History’s regional offices.

In Their Own Words—A 25-minute video program of testimony excerpts from Jews who survived thanks to the actions of Oskar Schindler

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Student Contest Opens in Germany

Survivors of the Shoah Visual History gGmbH in Berlin and the publisher Cornelsen Verlag invited the student contest “Remembering for the Present and the Future – Tolerance wins!” in Germany this January.

The nationwide student contest grew out of the Shoah gGmbH’s German-language CD-ROM, Remembering for the Present and the Future, which is used in several thousand German schools. Winning student projects 2001 included a theatre workshop by German, Israeli, and Palestinian students and a history of Jewish life in Halle constructed from letters between students and Holocaust survivors from this German town. Contest judges include Edelgard Bulmahn, Germany’s Federal Minister of Education, who stated, “It is our duty to ensure that young people and future generations deal with this contest. I support against foreigners and right-wing extremism must never again have a chance in our country.”

Marks Portfolio Covers of Pilot Education Initiative

Creating journals, mapping identity charts, researching what the Nazis considered “degenerate” art and music, and exploring personal artistic experiences... these are just a few of the creative activities implemented in the Sarasota (Florida) County School District as part of the Shoah Foundation’s Pilot Education Initiative. Teachers from five U.S. school districts created classroom activities that use visual history to engage students, heighten curiosity, instill a passion for social justice, and stimulate a dialogue about why history matters.

Now completing its third and final year, the Shoah Foundation’s Pilot Education Initiative will conclude with a “Portfolio of Best Practices” – a compilation of the lessons and insights that the teachers have gained through utilizing visual history in their classrooms, and samples of students’ responses that demonstrate the impact of these lessons on young minds. The Portfolio will serve as an assessment piece for the pilot program and will provide other teachers with strategies and suggestions for classroom approaches to Holocaust and tolerance education.

The context is also supported by the Shoah Foundation’s Partners in Tolerance: Axel Springer Verlag, Bertelsmann AG, and Burma Medien. Students in Germany may submit their projects for the 2003 contest through April 2003.

Shoah Foundation and United Learning Bring One Human Spirit to Students

In pursuit of its goal to bring visual history into schools, the Shoah Foundation has created a new educational product – One Human Spirit, a 23-minute classroom video consisting of segments from 25 Holocaust survivors. This video is now available through United Learning in both VHS and DVD formats, as well as via unitedstreaming™, a web-based digital take-away delivery system which can serve by 25,000 machines to more than 7 million students in more than 22,000 subscribing schools across the United States. The people in One Human Spirit describe their experiences before, during, and after World War II, and explain how every life was subjected by prejudice and hate. They share their memories of state sanctioned discrimination, the ghetto, and concentration camps. They also add reflections on survival, humanity, and their hopes for the future.

The video covers a broad range of themes that link with curriculum standards in language arts, world history, and social studies. Also included is a Teacher’s Booklet which presents practical lesson ideas that help the student study the past present in the classroom of the present. Joel Althai, United Learning’s chairman, stated, “In the year 2000, it was dangerous to press the button ever to reinforce the lessons of tolerance and understanding.”

Now completing its third and final year, the Shoah Foundation’s One Human Spirit Initiative focuses on bringing a humanist perspective to the classroom. The video features幸存者 who have shared their stories with students, and the lessons learned from these stories have been shared with teachers from around the world.

A Hungarian Student Responds

The Shoah Foundation’s regional consultant in Hungary, Lucia Bolyi, recently spoke with Melanie Orosi, a social work student at Bemczai College. Melanie took a course about prejudice and diversity called Racism-Antiracism, which uses Hungarian-language materials from the Shoah Foundation.

Q: How did watching Eyes of the Holocaust and Shoah Foundation testimonies affect you?

A: I have always been interested in WW II and have read many books about it, so I knew about the Holocaust... but what was new for me... is that survivors spoke about it and could make us, the viewers, feel how they felt when these things happened to them. When I speak with my friends... the way they recount their experiences... is that survivors spoke about it in their eyes and they make a deep impression on me.

When I speak about the Holocaust... to my friends, we have different views. They think that the Holocaust is exhausted... it is “graven words”... they are tired of it and [want to] forget about it... [Through this course], I realized that survivors did not really have the opportunity to speak either because they were not really or because nobody wanted to hear them.

Q: How do you feel about the Racism-Antiracism course?

A: For me, what I feel when I leave the classroom is important. Each time I leave the racism course, my heart is throbbing. I definitely feel I have learned something... I do not have to take notes to remember every word; the entire lesson just stays in me... There is a special atmosphere during the lessons: I feel very important; I feel that what I say really counts.

Q: How do you feel about the Racism-Antiracism course?

A: It is an experience that I will always remember... I have always been interested in World War II, and I have read many books about it, so I knew about the Holocaust... but what was new for me... is that survivors spoke about it and could make us, the viewers, feel how they felt when these things happened to them. When I speak with my friends... the way they recount their experiences... is that survivors spoke about it in their eyes and they make a deep impression on me.

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F O U N D A T I O N  N E W S

A Letter from Douglas Greenberg...

Dear Friends,

The first half of 2003 has been tumultuous. In times of conflict, it is even more important to reach across boundaries of culture, religion, and ideology, to communicate and share our humanity. The visual history interviews in the Shoah Foundation’s archive speak eloquently to the universality of loss and the resilience of the human spirit.

In the past six months, we have worked diligently to bring these testimonies to parts of the world where tolerance education efforts need our support. We have placed educational materials in a school in Turkey, the first Muslim country to use our products, and shipped hundreds of copies of our Russian-language document, Children from the Abyss, to Russia for use in educational programs. Much closer to home, the Los Angeles Unified School District has incorporated testimonies into local high school curricula (see page 2).

Last November, I traveled to Australia to speak with community leaders and potential donors to begin forming partnerships and raising funds to disseminate our archive in that country. With the aid of our Australian liaisons, I met with the Sydney Jewish Museum, the Jewish Museum of Australia, the Melbourne Holocaust Centre, the Australian Centre of the Moving Image, the National Library of Australia, the Museum of Victoria, and the State Libraries of New South Wales and Victoria, as well as with a leading Aboriginal organization, the Koorie Heritage Trust, which is interested in collaborating on a tolerance education program that includes video testimonies.

Douglas Greenberg
President and Chief Executive Officer

Douglas Greenberg

Foundation Receives Peacemakers Award

The Catholic Theological Union (CTU) in Chicago awarded the Shoah Foundation the 20th Peacemakers award this April. “We are pleased to recognize Spokane’s vision and to give this award to the Shoah Foundation for the tremendous contribution it has made to eloquing intolerance and creating a more peaceful world,” said CTU’s President, Rev. Donald Senior, adding that the ceremony chose to honor Steven Spielberg and the Foundation for “uplifting the values of reconciliation, human understanding, and human justice.”

Douglas Greenberg accepted the award on behalf of the Foundation and Steven Spielberg delivered the keynote address at Peacemakers Dinner, co-hosted by Renée S. Crown and Andrew J. McNair. Past honorees include Queen Noor of Jordan and Lea Rabin of Israel. The largest Catholic graduate school of theology in the U.S., CTU is highly regarded for its inter-religious discussion among Jews, Muslims, and Christians.

Douglas Greenberg

Recent Visitors

Vistors from the First Nations of North America present a presentation to Steven Spielberg and Director of Education, William Bowers.

L to R: Sydney, award Museum C&O Northeast Region, and觌 Dr. M. Neen-Moss, President of the Foundation.

Last November, 18 European government and community leaders visited the Shoah Foundation as part of “Promoting Tolerance in Central and Eastern Europe and the CEE,” a program sponsored by the American Jewish Committee and Germany’s Friedrich Naumann Foundation. The program introduces leaders to new democracies in America projects that foster directly and indirectly the act of tolerance. Here, the guests participate in a panel discussion with Jewish and Partnership staff.

Recent Visitors

L to R: Foundation National Newspaper Wills Foundation’s National Presendent, and Mrs. M. Gershel, President of the Foundation.

L to R: Douglas Greenberg, founder, Pacific Coast Region, of the Shoah Foundation and the the Peacemakers Award.

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Foundation Honors Founding Board Members as 2002 Ambassadors for Humanity

The President’s Ball, benefiting the Shoah Foundation

When the internationally acclaimed film The Pianist premiered in New York last December, a portion of the evening’s proceeds went to the Shoah Foundation. The film, directed by Steven Spielberg, has generated more than $2 million in media coverage. It depicts the life of a pianist in Warsaw during World War II, and its theme of courage and survival is especially important in the world we live in today.

The atmosphere was magical; no one wanted to leave. It was a memorable and successful evening for a worthwhile cause,” host Andrea Greenberg commented. “I truly believe in the Foundation’s mission—teaching children tolerance using these testimonies is especially important in the world we live in today.”

On February 15, 2003, board member Andrea Greenberg and her husband Joe, board chair Susan Crown, executive director Steven Spielberg, and Joe Gordin, at the event, which the guest of honor was the film’s lead actor, Adrien Brody.

New Major Gifts since November 2002

Mimi & Paul Adelman $.00

Robert & Jane Katz

Lois Borick

Donald Branner

Dr. Leon & Charlene Charitable Trust

Trust Foundation

James Brooks

William & June Burns

Creative Artists Agency

Foundation for Internet Connectivity with USC

Navajo Tribal Utility Authority

National Science Foundation

Sander O’Neill & Partners, LP

Philippine Rotary Foundation

Debbie & Naty Saidoff

Sunny & Deborah Sasso

Foundation CEO Douglas Greenberg and Executive Director June Baule at the event, where the guest of honor was the film’s lead actor, Adrien Brody.

Honororrs Michelle Ryan, Sony Broadcasting, and Bruce Ratner as
High school students from Long Beach, CA

The Pianist benefits Shoah Foundation

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Hirsch Family Includes Foundation in Estate Plans

Nita and Bob Hirsch’s first association with the Shoah Foundation was when Nita recorded her testimony in 1995. Born Emilna Clara Schorr in Krakow, Poland, she was among the many women and children逛 way of the gas chambers and spent the rest of the war hidden in a convent. Orphaned after the war, Nita came to live with her aunt, uncle, and cousins in Los Angeles. She attended University High School and her future husband Bob Hirsch at Los Angeles State College.

Now married 49 years, the Hirschs raised their own family with strong emphasis on ethics and education. “I think education is the most important thing,” says Nita. “I missed my primary education because of the war, but I learned through my family. I learned that we must give to the less fortunate by watching my birth mother feed the Jews who were feeding the Nazis.” Bob adds. “We try to set an example for our children and grandchildren, and we do that in part by being involved and giving to charity.”

Bob and Nita have been donors to the Shoah Foundation for years, in the form of bequests, as well as through the Foundation’s educational program and In-Kind Gifts.

The Legacy Society Honors Donors

In acknowledgment of the importance of planned gifts to the Shoah Foundation’s continued vitality, the Foundation has established the Legacy Society to recognize donors who have included the Foundation in their estate plans. The Legacy Society’s Development Committee, explains, “Planned gifts are a key way in which donors can have a meaningful impact on securing the long-term financial well-being of the Foundation.” Planned gifts include testamentary gifts, gifts of real estate, stocks, and charitable remainder trusts. Please contact the Development Department at 818-866-2004 for more information.

Legacy Society Members:

Dr. Janie Brown, Stephan Brown, Helen Kutsher, Fran Rice, and Donald Rotenberg, president of the Trust Company of New Jersey. “Since my father’s education ended at 14, when he began doing labor for the Nazis, he had a lifelong obsession with education,” remembers Alan. “The Shoah Foundation is the most worthy beneficiary of our support because they insured that my father will live on in our hearts and minds, and in the finest traditions of learning, through his testimony.”

As an international company that works with diverse groups of individuals, General Motors understands that mutual respect is an essential ingredient in today’s world. GM backs up that understanding with action: in addition to their recent gift to the Shoah Foundation, GM partners with the Foundation to provide its digital video archive via the World Wide Web and is available only at select universities. (Internet2 is a more secure, higher-speed digital network than the World Wide Web and is available only at select universities.)

The Shoah Foundation’s educational program and In-Kind Gifts

How You Can Make an Impact

One person really can make a difference. The Shoah Foundation counts on your support to continue its important work to overcome indifference, prejudice, and bigotry.

Cash Gifts - Gifts can be made by check, cash, or credit card.

Endowed Funds - Donated gifts to date exceed $250 million. Reports show that endowed gifts continue to make a difference for many students.

How Can I Help?

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Mellon Foundation Bestows $1 Million Grant

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a $1 million grant to support the scholarship of the Shoah Foundation’s archive at University of Southern California, YULA and Rice University. The grant will enable the Foundation to provide its digital video archive via the World Wide Web and is available only at select universities. (Internet2 is a more secure, higher-speed digital network than the World Wide Web and is available only at select universities.)

Survivor’s Family Establishes Siggi Wilzig Education Fund

When Holocaust survivor Siggi Wilzig passed away in January 2003, his family – wife Naemi, and children Sherry, Alan, and Loo – said that friends and family would contribute to the Shoah Foundation in lieu of flowers. They also decided to match all donations made in Siggi’s honor. The “Shoah Foundation allowed us to have our father’s memories preserved forever, so providing for others who knew him, and matching those donations, was something we all could do,” said Loo.

In Brooklyn, Greece, and Austria, in 1926, Siggi Wilzig survived Auschwitz-Birkenau, Mauthausen, and gas chamber concentration camps. After arriving in America, he worked his way from rags to riches, eventually becoming president of the Trust Company of New Jersey. “Since my father’s education ended at 14, when he began doing labor for the Nazis, he had a lifelong obsession with education,” remembers Alan. “The Shoah Foundation is the most worthy beneficiary of our support because they insured that my father will live on in our hearts and minds, and in the finest traditions of learning, through his testimony.”

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NEW YORK: Dr. Egon Mayer, Professor of Sociology at Brooklyn College and Director of the Center for Jewish Studies of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, viewed more than 30 Shoah Foundation testimonies as research for a book on the Kahtor family. Mayer’s family was among the more than 1600 Hungarian Jews saved by Reszö Kasztner’s efforts. The exhibit, opened in honor of Memory Day, January 27, 2003, also contains written summaries of the interviews and some still photos taken from the testimonies. To view this permanent exhibit, go to http://www.vhf.org/photography/new/photography/survivor_gallery.html

UNITED KINGDOM: The BBC put portions of four Shoah Foundation testimonies on their website as part of an online exhibit about child survivors of the Holocaust. The exhibit, open in honor of Memory Day, January 27, 2003, also contains written summaries of the interviews and some still photos taken from the testimonies. To view this permanent exhibit, go to http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/eyes_of_the_soul/survivor_gallery.html

CHICAGO: An exhibit called “Exploring the Holocaust” at the Spertus Museum features the Shoah Foundation testimonies of survivor Helene Taugher. This exhibit, which runs through March 2006, is geared toward middle and high school students who may use the museum as part of their study of the Holocaust.

BRASIL: As part of a grassroots education initiative also taking place in Eastern Europe, the Foundation’s regional consultant in Sao Paulo is starting up a small lending library for local schools. This organization will give educators and community leaders access to subtitled Foundation documentaries and testimonies in Portuguese.


AUSTRIA: The Vienna Film Club (VVC) put portions of four Shoah Foundation testimonies online for more information.

ITALY: Fijik dailoff Shkolnik, a Second Generation group in Milan, organized an exhibit entitled “Ovchinnikov, the Soviet Jewish Hero” in honor of Memory Day (January 2003). More than 50,000 people visited the exhibit, which featured four Shoah Foundation testimonies, two from survivors and two from Jewish survivors who were rescued.

ISRAEL: Eight films from the Shoah Foundation’s Broken Silence documentary series are being integrated into coursework in Jerusalem. Ephrat Balberg, who is both the Head of History Studies and Holocaust Projects at the Hebrew University Secondary School and a teacher at the Kamien Institute for Teacher Training for Humanistic Jewish Education, is integrating the films into classes for students and teacher-teachers as part of their progressive work in Holocaust education and teacher training.

AUSTRALIA: The Sydney Jewish Museum holds a collection of 100 Shoah Foundation testimonies from Holocaust survivors interviewed in Australia.

NEW ZEALAND: The Auckland War Memorial Museum recently opened a collection of the 50 testimonies proudly contributed to New Zealand by the Shoah Foundation.

SWeden: While visiting the Shoah Foundation with the AOC (see page 7), Pawel Kryzkowski, of Warsaw’s Foundation (Jewish) Ohabai Sholom, realized the Foundation’s Broken Silence documentaire could help the Foundation reach Polish students while also aiding the Klub’s educational work promoting democracy and tolerance in Poland. About 600 students at Warsaw high schools will see the film this year. Later, the Klub hopes to raise funds to subduce all the Broken Silence films into Polish to reach polisher audiences. They also plan to include the film in the list 2004 “Promoting Tolerance” event for young adults throughout central Europe.


RUSIA: The Russian Holocaust Foundation in Moscow trains teachers to integrate Holocaust education into their classes. In addition, in order to reach a broader audience, the Foundation testimony of Louis Mitelberg as part of an online exhibit about child survivors of the Holocaust. The exhibit, open in honor of Memory Day, January 27, 2003, also contains written summaries of the interviews and some still photos taken from the testimonies. To view this permanent exhibit, go to http://www.vhf.org/photography/eyes_of_the_soul/survivor_gallery.html

The film will be shown at the Auckland War Memorial Museum this summer.

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHOAH FOUNDATION
A Los Angeles native, Linda Eider has worked as a Historical Content Analyst at the Shoah Foundation for six years. “This testimony struck me because of what Aron said at the end of his testimony: that Jews from Botosani walking around in Tel Aviv, New York, and Los Angeles, should know how they... It is so often that we just hear anecdotes, but this did... It’s an amazing story.”

There is a town in northeast Romania where, despite German orders to do so, no Jews were deported to concentration camps. Even today, most survivors from Botosani do not know how they were saved. Aron Leibovitz was nearly 60 years old when he found out that his father’s apprentice, Peter Fetcu, was responsible for saving his town. Aron Leibovitz was born Aron Bubin in Botosani, a city that was “a door to things with Jewish.” His father, Itzchak Arshan, was a busy tailor who made custom suits and also distributed Singer sewing machines. Searching for an apprentice, Itzchak approached a non-Jewish farmer in the marketplace who suggested his son Peter. Peter Fetcu lived with the Bubins for 20 years. Peter “raised” me,” remembers Aron, and “was speaking Yiddish a lot better than I do.” Aron says, “He was unique. Fire. Like hot pepper. He noticed everything.” Itzchak recognized Peter’s intelligence; he was sent to high school. Because Peter was educated, when he was drafted during the war, he was made chief of the city’s fire department and reported directly to the German authorities. This stroke of fate saved thousands of lives.

The German invasion changed Botosani. Jews were only allowed into markets “when nothing was left.” Aron, nine, disappeared during curfew to retrieve the food his younger brother Adi after loading large cans of milk on a wagon...without thinking, I loaded them in the back of the truck. I envied them. I knew they went marching to work. I saw them...”

After the war, Peter confessed his actions to Helen Jonas Rosenzweig for her all through the tape. Initially I was concerned...I felt nervous...[I wished] I could grow up faster so that I...”

“We stayed there for a day or two...[it was] very frustrating…. [I wished] I could grow up faster so that I could do something.” Once they were even loaded onto train,...”

“Thinking back about those times, it’s incredible how happy they were… I do have this hope in life and it must be my upbringing.” Born Helena Sternlicht in 1925, she remembers her childhood in Krakow: “Krakow is...with some of Helen Jonas Rosenzweig’s story. Helen and another Jewish prisoner, Helen Hirsch, spent almost two years as wards to Aron Goeth, the Nazi Commandant of the Plaszow concentration camp. “The movie is very true,” says Helen, “but it is just part of it.”

In 1941, the Germans forced the family into the Krakow Ghetto. “It was hard for him [Oskar Schindler] to come to being decent men, [they made different choices].”

Ray Wilson has two history degrees and three years’ experience indexing testimonies at the Shoah Foundation. “Listening to these testimonies with heartbreaking stories of heroism. ‘No matter how fast I came to his calling, it was never fast enough and there was always a slap, and his hands were not always there to protect me. But it was... it was not just my cheek, it was my ear, too, or half my face...’”

“Another especially memorable testimony for all members of the Cataloguing Department is that of Peter Hersch, a Czechoslovakian survivor now living in Australia. Historian and interviewer Sonja Singer-Frankes explains why Peter’s testimony is so special: ‘For years we’ve used Peter Hersch’s testimony as a tool for training and development. I am confident than we have seen it 50 times or more. Viewed with that frequency we would have committed any other piece of media to memory and, surely, dismissed it. He is different; Peter’s hit and almost muscle-deforming scream seem to fly off the screen, taking the viewer to a place where friendship and spirit reign.’ This past February, Peter and his wife Rosa visited the Shoah Foundation and received a royal welcome. While group photos were taken for every other, the Foundation encourages survivors and others to take a trip when in the Los Angeles area. Tours for individuals and small groups alike. Helen by reservation only. For more information, please call 818-777-4359.

Peter and Rosa Hersch during the Shoah Foundation interview.

Betty Lida, Sybil, and Helen during the Shoah Foundation interview at Wave Crest in Krakow.

FROM THE … SURVIVORS OF THE SHOAH VISUAL HISTORY ARCHIVE