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Temple Beth Sholom Member Esther Toporek Finder Immortalizes Las Vegas Holocaust Survivors In A Special Collection At The USHMM

Audrey Merkin Scholarship Fund Luncheon Raises Funds To Send Las Vegas Teens On March Of The Living



Rabbi Benjamin Katz, Founder & spokesperson Sandra Mallin, JFLV President Freddie Glusman, and Rabbi Felipe Goodman

The ninth annual *March of the Living* Luncheon, honoring the memory of Temple Beth Sholom's beloved friend and board member, Audrey Merkin, was held on Tuesday, December 1. The luncheon was underwritten and hosted by Freddie Glusman at Franco's Italian Cuisine.

A special guest speaker was Rabbi Benjamin Katz, who shared his experiences with the Las Vegas Holocaust survivors.

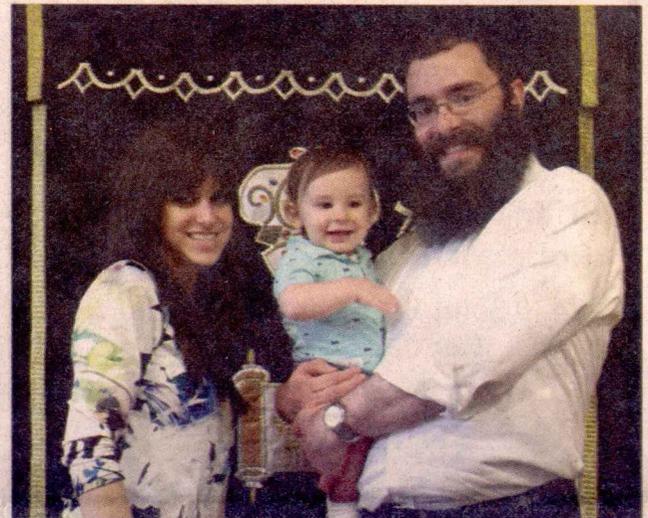


Esther Finder, TBS member and President of Generations of the Shoah

Esther Toporek Finder, Temple Beth Sholom member and President of Generations of the Shoah - Nevada, had an idea to create a special collection of eyewitness testimonies from Las Vegas residents who survived the horrors of World War II.

(Continued on page 22)

New Chabad Center To Open In Red Rock Area



Chabad of Southern Nevada is pleased to announce the establishment of a new Chabad center to serve the Red Rock Area. The center will offer a variety of services including prayer services, holiday programs, adult and child education classes, and hospital and senior visitation. Rabbi Yosef and Mrs. Binie Rivkin, previously of Brooklyn, NY, will co-direct the new center. This is the eighth full service Chabad center in the Las Vegas area.

Temple Beth Sholom Member Esther Toporek Finder Immortalizes Las Vegas Holocaust Survivors In A Special Collection At The USHMM



L-r: Esther Finder, Phil Fiol, Governor Brian Sandoval and Raymonde (Ray) Fiol

(Continued from front page)

Because of Finder, Las Vegas Holocaust survivors have their post-Holocaust histories immortalized at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, D.C.

In 2012, Finder presented her idea to the production team at Sun City Anthem TV. She volunteered to create a series for the TV station entitled, *Eyewitness to History*, with the condition that Holocaust survivors in Anthem be the first people interviewed because of their advanced years. With the assistance of Raymonde (Ray)

Fiol, president of the Holocaust Survivors Group of Southern Nevada, Finder began to interview Holocaust survivors covering the time from liberation up to their lives today. What began as a small project in Sun City Anthem grew and expanded to cover the entire Las Vegas area.

Each interview was prefaced by a brief summary of the survivor's wartime experiences to provide the proper historical context. Survivors tell, in their own words, their memories of learning the war was over. Then the testimonies start with an inquiry about the state of their health at liberation, the complicated issues of rebuilding their lives after such horrific devastation and continue with the challenges of immigrating to the United States.

The first interviews were conducted in the SCA-TV studio in Henderson with Anthem residents. It quickly became apparent that additional survivors wanted to participate. Ray Fiol had connected with Brett Levner, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) film professor who was also interested in working with Holocaust survivors. The next step was to find a location to do the filming and Temple Beth Sholom offered to house the additional productions. The bride's room was turned into a TV studio and filming continued.

In addition to this series, the raw interviews were given to the UNLV film students and they edited the pieces by taking the responses to individual questions, such as, "What is it like for you to be an American?," and weaving them together. The resulting tapestry includes both short segments on

specific topics and, when viewed together, a complete documentary was created that was appropriate for commemorations or classroom purposes.

Finder explains, "This was a wonderful community-building project. The residents in Sun City Anthem were the first to benefit by meeting the Holocaust survivors in their neighborhood and learning about this history. The UNLV film students learned practical editing skills while also learning about the Shoah." Finder adds, "Now this collection will be available to teachers and students throughout our city, state, country and even beyond the borders of the U.S."

This series can be accessed by going to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's website www.ushmm.org and searching for the names, Raymonde Fiol or the Esther Finder Collection. You can also access it by searching the USHMM website for Temple Beth Sholom, Brett Levner or UNLV.

Temple Beth Sholom has shown, and will continue to show, segments of the compilation at its commemorative and educational programs. For more information on Esther Finder's work for Las Vegas Holocaust survivors, go to the Temple's website: <http://www.bethsholomlv.org>.



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