

World War II

The War That Changed The World

GALLERY GUIDE

United States Remains Neutral

WAR IN EUROPE



A crowd saluting Nazi flags in Oberwart, Austria, during the *Anschluss* of Austria, March 11, 1938. Courtesy Library of Congress

After invading Ethiopia in 1935, Italy formed an aggressive "axis" with Germany in 1936. In blatant violation of the Treaty of Versailles, the Third Reich began to expand its territory in 1938 with the March *Anschluss* of Austria and the October annexation of the Sudetenland, setting the stage for war.

While outwardly negotiating with Britain and France, the Soviet Union secretly signed a nonaggression pact with Germany in August 1939. Thus, the *Blitzkrieg* German invasion of Poland in September resulted in a temporary partition of that country. Germany attacked France and Britain in 1940, but its betrayal of the Soviet Union with June 1941's Operation Barbarossa caused Russia to join the war on the side of the Allies.

United States Remains Neutral

WAR IN THE PACIFIC



Mongolian soldiers fighting Japanese soldiers on the banks of the river Khalkhin Gol, 1939. Courtesy Russian Government

When Japan joined the Axis in 1936, it had already occupied Manchuria for five years. By 1937, war raged in the Pacific. Faced with Chinese resistance in Shanghai later that year, Japanese soldiers perpetrated the notorious “Rape of Nanking,” in which 300,000 people were murdered during the last weeks of 1937 and first weeks of 1938.

In 1939, the USSR along with Mongolian allies resisted a Japanese incursion into their territory at Khalkhin Gol. Yet, when Germany turned on the USSR in 1941, the Soviets pulled aid from China as the Japanese avoided Russian territory, planning a surprise invasion of Thailand, British Malaya, Singapore, Hong Kong, and U.S. bases in Hawaii, Wake Island, Guam, and the Philippines.

United States Remains Neutral

AMERICAN RESPONSE



Liberty Ship *Patrick Henry*, built in just 60 days in 1941 as part of the Lend-Lease program. Courtesy Library of Congress

Wary of Allied propaganda in the aftermath of its engagement in World War I, the United States favored a neutral stance as tensions intensified in Europe and Asia. Even after Japanese soldiers sank the U.S. patrol boat *Panay* in the Yangtze River in 1937, the American ambassador to Japan, Joseph Grew, worked hard to keep the attack from propelling the U.S. into war with Japan.

Although largely disapproving of German aggression in Europe (and Nazism and Fascism in general), most Americans supported any stance on the part of their government that would keep them out of war. In 1938, U.S. citizens responded with public outrage to reports about the *Kristallnacht* pogrom, but aside from the withdrawal of the U.S. ambassador to Germany, no decisive action on the part of the U.S. government resulted.

Neutrality Acts in the 1930s made it illegal for Americans to sell or transport arms. This policy did not change until Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939 and the introduction of a new "cash and carry" policy that favored the sale of arms to Britain and France. The most decisive shift in U.S. policy prior to Pearl Harbor came with the Lend-Lease Act passed in 1941 on the heels of President Roosevelt's famous "Arsenal of Democracy" speech in which he warned the American people against complacency in the face of Nazism, Fascism, and territorial expansion.

Daughter of Missionaries Lori Lee's World War II Story



LEGACY SERIES ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM PARTICIPANT, LORI LEE, MARCH 2017

Born in Kentucky in 1936, Lori Lee grew up in a family of missionaries. Her parents, William and Viola Decker, met at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and took a brief pastorate in Kentucky before joining the South China Boat Mission. With two-year-old Lori and a son on the way, they journeyed to Hong Kong before settling in a houseboat on the Pearl River among the boat people, who lived on Sampan boats year round. "You could live on the river very well," Lee said. "The shops came to you... the boat people sold wares and lots of food."

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Lee and her family were forced into confinement

by the Japanese. They had enjoyed a peaceful relationship with Japanese soldiers occupying southern China in previous years – they considered blonde Lori an oddity – but the new state of war made their situation as ex-patriots precarious. "Everything changed," Lee said. Her family spent four months confined by Japanese forces, until the United States government required Americans living overseas to return home.

At two years of age, Lee had completed a trip across the Pacific Ocean, and by five, she would complete a journey around the world. From Shanghai to Singapore, Mozambique to Brazil, and finally New York, Lee's family traveled by ship.

PANEL 2: VOICES ON THE VERGE OF WAR

Daughter of Missionaries Lori Lee's World War II Story



Sampan boat similar to ones seen by Lee, when her parents were serving as missionaries in China. Photograph by Leonard G.



At the Captain's command, the children aboard ship tried to spot mines bobbing under the water's surface – their reward, a candy bar. Back in the United States, Lee's family

waited out the war. They returned to China in the postwar years as the Communists under Mao Zedong rose to power. Lee then moved back to the United States to attend boarding school in 1950.

Lori Lee's wartime journey from Canton, China, to New York



Wartime Conferences of "The Big Three"



Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill at the Tehran Conference, 1943. Courtesy Library of Congress

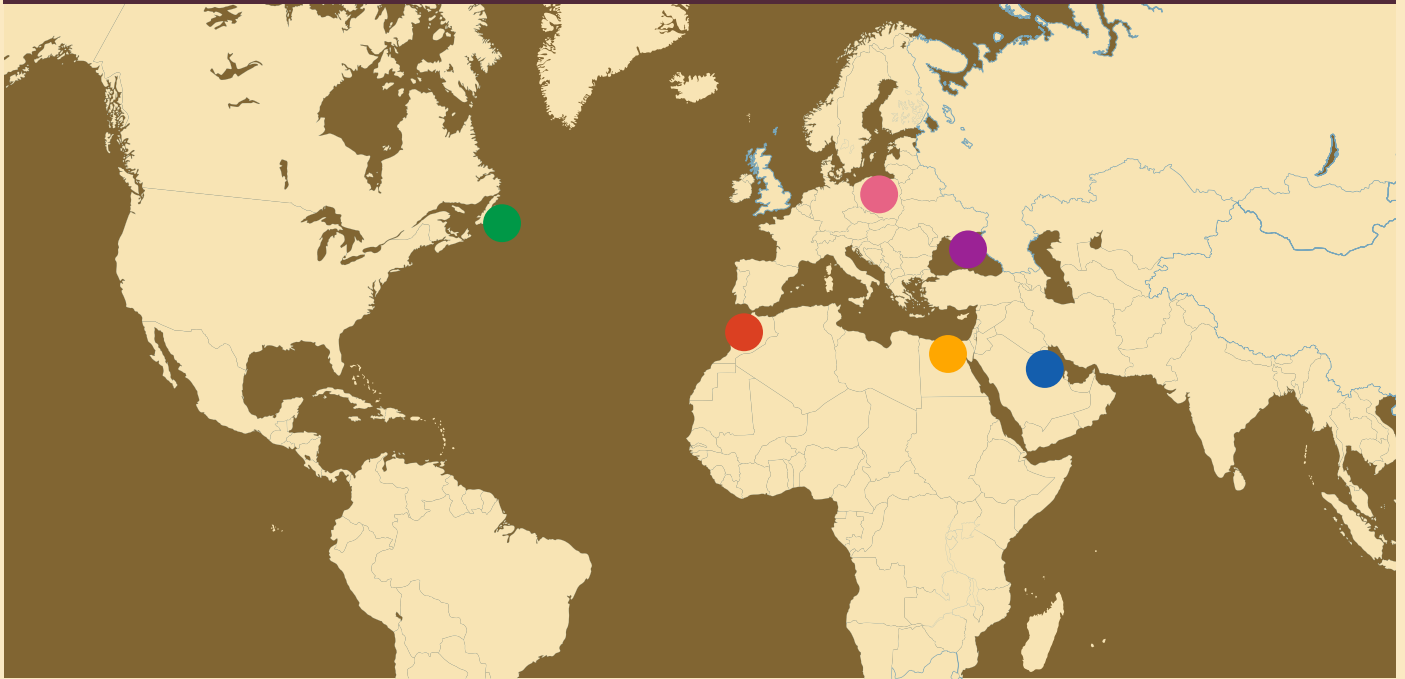
During World War II, leaders of the Allied countries, known as "The Big Three," included American President Franklin Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin. At various intervals between 1941 and 1945, the leaders (and eventually their successors) met to discuss wartime strategy and plan for the postwar order.

Sharp differences in policy and ideology complicated the "Grand Alliance" of the leading Allied countries. Churchill consistently lobbied for American support because of Britain's precarious position in Europe, and he advocated for more resistance to Stalin's maneuvers in Eastern Europe. Leading the United

States on two fronts after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt balanced a supreme belief in Allied interests with the practical concerns of war. Facing the German war machine in the east and enormous loss of life, Stalin hoped for an early Allied invasion from the west.

As the war progressed, early agreements shifted to meet new challenges. Churchill and Roosevelt hoped to curb Stalin's power, but the massive Soviet troop presence in Eastern Europe and the need for Soviet support against Japan, gave Stalin more cards to play. Some historians consider Roosevelt's death in April 1945, only two months after the final meeting of "The Big Three," pivotal to postwar tensions.

Wartime Conferences of "The Big Three"



- **NEWFOUNDLAND** | **August 1941** | Roosevelt and Churchill agree on "the Atlantic Charter," rejecting any potential territorial changes in Europe after the war and laying groundwork for United Nations.
- **CASABLANCA** | **January 1943** | Roosevelt and Churchill agree to fight until Axis powers surrender unconditionally.
- **CAIRO** | **November 1943** | Roosevelt, Churchill, and Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek agree to influential role for China in postwar Asia.
- **TEHRAN** | **November-December 1943** | Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin confirm the Allied invasion of Germany and the Soviet Union's intention to declare war on Japan.
- **YALTA** | **February 1945** | Roosevelt and Churchill accept Stalin's demands for influence in Eastern Europe, laying groundwork for Cold War.
- **POTSDAM** | **July 1945** | Roosevelt's successor, Harry Truman, Churchill and his successor, Clement Atlee, and Stalin demand Japanese surrender but leave the conference divided on postwar order.

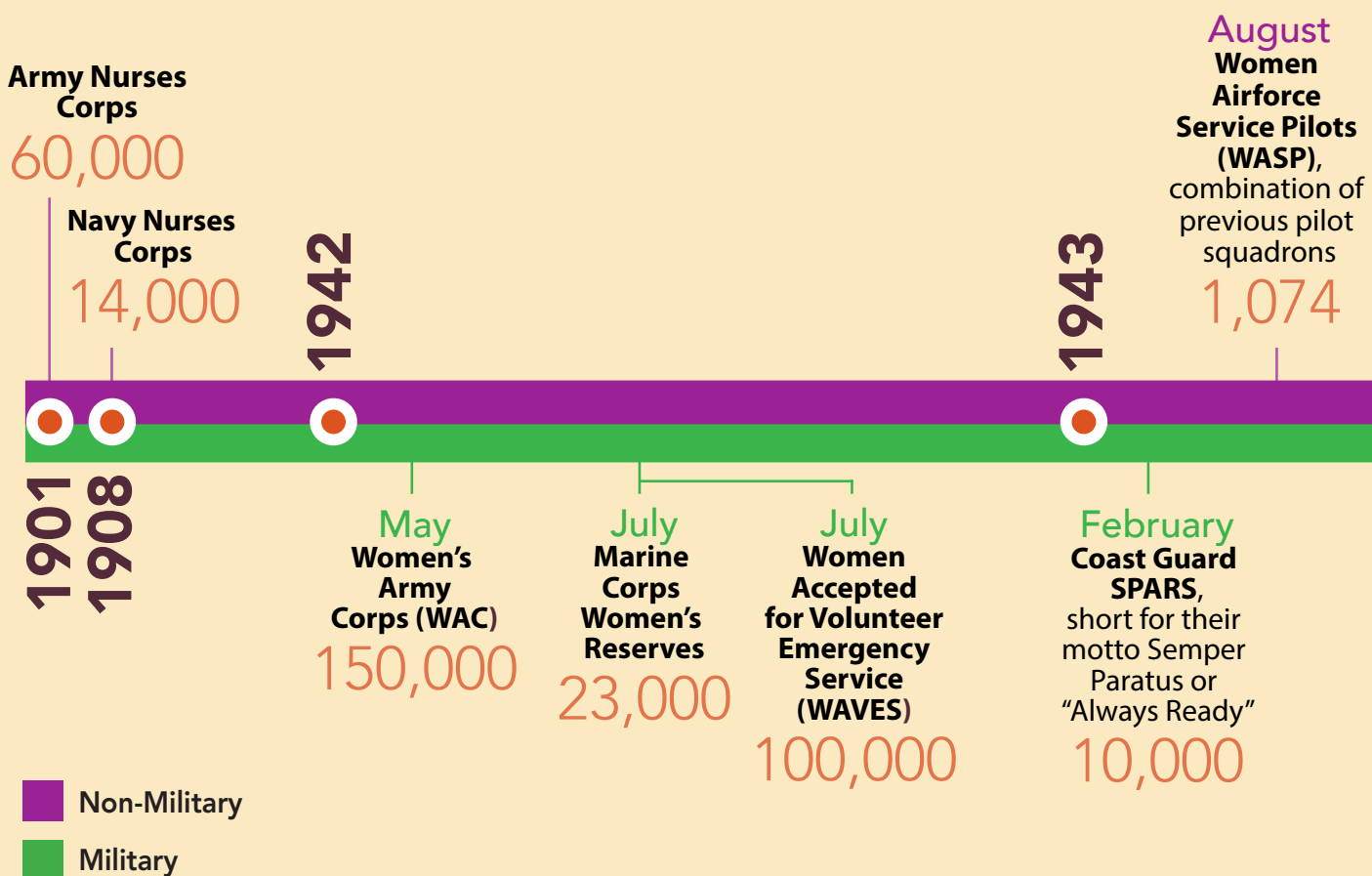
Women's Military Auxiliary Branches

While American women served in wars extending back to the Revolution, they were not officially admitted into the United States military until World War II. Women signed up in droves, and by the end of the war over 350,000 would serve including 6,520 African American women and 200 Asian American women. Unlike men, women could not be drafted nor serve in combat roles,

but their work on and off military bases in the United States, and around the world, made victory possible.

Many women accepted into the military served in secretarial roles, facilitating the vast bureaucracy of war and freeing up men to serve in combat zones. Those women who came closest to the dangers of battle were nurses who formed the Army Nurses Corps, a non-military unit dating to 1901.

TIMELINE OF CREATION



Numbers Refer to American Women who Served During World War II.

Women's Military Auxiliary Branches

MYRTLE FAYE EDWARDS | 1923-2018



LEGACY SERIES ORAL HISTORY PROJECT PARTICIPANT, MAY 2016



Myrtle Faye Edwards, second from left, processing incoming soldiers at headquarters in Europe (Le Havre, France or Bremerhaven, Germany). Courtesy Edwards Family

Born in West Virginia, Myrtle Faye Edwards served in two capacities during World War II. She started as a home front worker, crafting piston rings at the American Hammered Piston Ring Company in Baltimore. After working her way up to Line Supervisor, a position typically held by men, she left the dirty, and often dangerous, job for the Women's Army Corps (WAC) in 1944.

Edwards completed basic training at Fort Oglethorpe in Georgia. She shipped out to postwar Europe in 1945 and processed incoming troops in France and Germany. The next year, Edwards requested a transfer to Japan. En route, she met her future husband, Army Master Sergeant Charlie Edwards. They married and had their first child in Yokohama.

Axis Home Fronts

ITALY: FASCISM AND THE BATTLE FOR GRAIN



Cover of the Italian newspaper *Domenica del Corriere* August 20, 1933. Courtesy Marelibri

Benito Mussolini's fascist government in Italy strived for "autarky," complete economic independence. Mussolini launched a series of propagandistic "battles" in the 1920s aimed at inspiring nationalist feeling and eliminating international trade. These campaigns included the "battle for grain," "the battle for lira," "the battle for land," and "the battle for births."

Despite its populist appeal, autarky was destined to fail due to Italy's lack of natural resources and the demands of administering conquered territory in Africa.

JAPAN: REGARDING THE ENEMY

Japan attempted to sell its imperial expansion in Asia as a "co-prosperity" campaign, predicated on a shared Asian culture and a need to free Asia from Western influence.



Cover of *Shinmin no Michi* (*Way of Subjects*), Japan, 1941. Public Domain in Japan

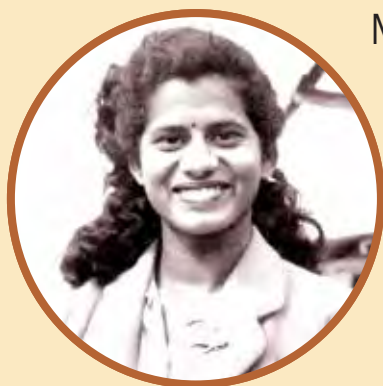
Japanese culture was codified in documents such as the Ministry of Education's 1941 *Shinmin no Michi* or "Way of Subjects."

Propaganda criticized the greed of Western powers and the corruption of Communist China. Intelligence about Japanese internment in 1942 further fueled anti-American propaganda campaigns focused on "Manifest Destiny," and discrimination against African Americans and immigrants. Despite a pan-Asian cultural campaign, belief in racial hierarchy also led to an extrinsic valuation of enemy civilians. In occupied China and Korea female civilians were made to serve as "comfort women," sexual slaves for Japanese soldiers.

Featured Individuals

Each of the stories featured here come from an interview recorded through the *Legacy Series* oral history program at the Museum of History and Holocaust Education. To learn more, visit historymuseum.kennesaw.edu.

**Mary
D'Souza
Sequeira**
Born 1933
in India



Mary D'Souza Sequeira, a prodigious track and field athlete from childhood, competed in the First and Second Asian Games and the 1952 Olympics. She later represented India's National Railways system before immigrating to the United States in 1991.

**Eugene
Kimling**
Born 1929
in New York



Eugene Kimling spent the war years in Germany, trapped there after visiting his grandmother in 1939. Forced into the Hitler Youth, Kimling survived Allied bombings and joined the U.S. Army after the war. He later settled in Marietta, Georgia, and worked for Lockheed.

**Paula
Fidler**
Born 1926
in Ohio



Paula Fidler worked as a secretary at Air Materiel Command during the war. One of her assignments included recording the experiences of military officials who developed the atomic bomb. After the war Fidler married a paratrooper and lived in Europe and Asia before retiring to Georgia.

Featured Individuals

Lee Foringer
Born 1919
in Texas



Lee Foringer married at the start of World War II and moved to Long Beach, California. When her husband joined the Army Air Corps, she took a job at Douglas Aircraft as a riveter building B-17s and B-19s. Foringer continued to work after she became pregnant with her first child. After the war she worked as a buyer for women's dress shops.

Jane Tucker
Born 1927
in Alabama



Jane Tucker moved to Savannah, Georgia, to get a job at Southeastern Shipbuilding Corporation during World War II. She became a rod welder and made \$1.20 an hour. After the war she attended Northwestern University and became a dental hygienist. In 2010 she started the Rome, Georgia, chapter of the American Rosie the Riveter Association.

Lou Jordan
Born 1922
in North Carolina



During the Second World War, Lou Jordan became a cryptographic clerk or "codebreaker" in the Signal Corps and deciphered top secret Japanese codes. After the war she married a veteran of the Pacific War and worked as a bookkeeper for a newspaper.

Nazi Exhibitions and Archives Spectacle and Propaganda

DEGENERATE ART

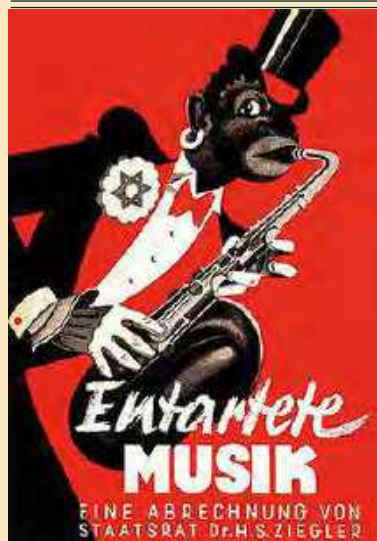


Postcard depicting the interior of the Degenerate Art Exhibition, ca. summer 1937. Photograph by H. Karsten. Collection, Museum of Modern Art, Berlin

Joseph Goebbels became head of the Nazi Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda in 1933. In 1937, he created a commission to confiscate artwork deemed modern, degenerate, or subversive. Over 5,000 works were seized and 650 were presented in an exhibit in Munich intended to foment revulsion against the “perverse Jewish spirit” penetrating German culture. The exhibit displayed the art in a chaotic manner meant to disparage the artists. After the exhibit, Nazi art dealers tried to sell their cache of artworks. Unsold art was burned in the courtyard of the Berlin Fire Department.

Hitler visiting the *Entartete Kunst* exhibition in Munich in 1937.
Courtesy Wiener Library Collections

DEGENERATE MUSIC



Poster for “Degenerate Music” exhibition held in Dusseldorf in 1938. The subtitle reads “A reckoning by state council H.S. Ziegler, PhD.” The poster was designed by Ludwig Tersch. Note the racist portrayal of a black jazz musician wearing a Star of David on his lapel. Jazz, for the Nazis, represented the kind of racial and cultural mixing that horrified their obsession with purity. Courtesy *The Guardian*

The popularity of the *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate Art) exhibit prompted the presentation of *Entartete Musik*, an exhibition about degenerate music, the following year. Goebbels endeavored to purge the influence of jazz, atonality, and Jewish composers from German music. Only music celebrating “blood and soil” could remain.



Nazi Exhibitions and Archives
Spectacle and Propaganda

LOOTING AND PLUNDER



Photograph of the "crochery department" assembled at Levitan's (a formerly Jewish-owned department store in Paris) and documented by Jewish internees forced to catalogue the pillage of their people. Source: Federal Archives of Koblenz

In addition to confiscating artwork from museum collections, the Nazis were notorious for looting the private collections of Jewish people stripped of their property along with their rights. In her book, *Witnessing the Robbing of the Jews*, sociologist Sarah Gensberger describes how even mundane household objects were collected, catalogued, and displayed for the potential acquisition of Nazi officials by

Jewish internees in a Paris department store designated for this purpose.

Organized looting occurred in every territory controlled by agents of the Third Reich between 1933 and the end of World War II. There were even special military units called *Kunstschutz* assigned to this peculiar task. In addition to precious metals, gems, and currency, items of cultural significance including paintings, ceramics, books, and religious treasures were plundered. After the war, many of these items were recovered by agents of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives program (also known as the Monuments Men) on behalf of the Allies.



In *Witnessing the Robbing of the Jews*, Sarah Gensberger notes that store-window-like displays, like this one of clocks, were intended to "market" plunder to potential Nazi buyers. Source: Federal Archives of Koblenz

Featured Individuals

Each of the stories featured here come from an interview recorded through the *Legacy Series* oral history program at the Museum of History and Holocaust Education. To learn more, visit historymuseum.kennesaw.edu.

Herbert Kohn
Born 1926
in Germany



Herbert Kohn was forced to leave public school after Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933.

During *Kristallnacht* the Nazis imprisoned Kohn's father but released him a few weeks later because of his service in World War I. Kohn's family fled first to England and then immigrated to the United States in 1940.

Edward Francell
Born 1934
in France



After *Kristallnacht*, Francell and his family immigrated to the United States and settled in Los Angeles. At school Francell participated in fundraisers for refugees fleeing Europe. Francell graduated from Columbia University in 1956 and now lives in Roswell, Georgia.

Tosia Schneider
Born 1928
in Poland



During the war Tosia Schneider's family was forced into the Tluste ghetto, where her mother held a secret school for Jewish children in defiance of the Nazis. Liberated from a labor camp in 1944, Schneider was the only survivor in her family. She immigrated to the United States in 1950.

Featured Individuals

Sheva Vapne
Born 1928
in Latvia



Sheva Vapne grew up speaking Latvian, Russian, and Yiddish. Fleeing the 1941 German invasion, Vapne journeyed through the Soviet Union to Uzbekistan. After the war she worked as a hat maker in Soviet Latvia before immigrating to the United States in the 1970s.

Murray Lynn
Born 1930
in Hungary



Murray Lynn was deported to Auschwitz in 1944. Forced into slave labor, Lynn carried bags of cement for miles each day. After liberation, he found few survivors of the Holocaust in his hometown. Lynn immigrated to the United States in 1948 and settled in Georgia.

William A. Scott, III
Born 1923 in
Tennessee



W.A. Scott's family owned the *Atlanta Daily World*. During the war Scott served as a reconnaissance sergeant, historian, and photographer in the 183rd Engineer Combat Battalion. During the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp, Scott documented Nazi atrocities.

Gitte Toben
Born 1952
in Denmark



Gitte Toben immigrated to the United States in 1979. She volunteers at the Museum of History and Holocaust Education because her father, Kjeld Johansen, served in the Danish resistance during the war. Injured during an attack on the Nazis, he went underground to avoid capture.

The United Nations

Origins and Mandate

The term “United Nations” was coined by President Roosevelt when representatives of 26 nations pledged to continue fighting the Axis Powers in a Declaration by United Nations on January 1, 1942. The organization as we know it came together on October 24, 1945, when 50 countries met in San Francisco to draw up the United Nations Charter. Based on the Constitution of the United States of America, the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations reads as follows:

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

- to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and
- to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and
- to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and

- to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

AND FOR THESE ENDS

- to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and
- to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and
- to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and
- to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

HAVE RESOLVED TO COMBINE OUR EFFORTS TO ACCOMPLISH THESE AIMS

Accordingly, our respective Governments, through representatives assembled in the city of San Francisco, who have exhibited their full powers found to be in good and due form, have agreed to the present Charter of the United Nations and do hereby establish an international organization to be known as the United Nations.

The United Nations



Eleanor Roosevelt holding a Declaration of Human Rights poster in English, November 1949. Courtesy United Nations

Significant votes

The first resolution adopted by the General Assembly established a commission to deal with the problems raised by the discovery of atomic energy. Its goal was to encourage peaceful uses of atomic energy and to eliminate atomic and other weapons of mass destruction.

Appointed by President Harry Truman to the first American delegation to the United Nations, Eleanor Roosevelt played a pivotal role in

the establishment of a permanent Commission on Human Rights. She also chaired the sub-committee which drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the General Assembly on December 10, 1948.

Over the next 70 years, the U.N. would adopt resolutions dealing with a variety of international concerns and aspirations, from disarmament to world heritage, and from climate change to principles of sustainable development.

U-boats, Gulags, and Immigrant Aid

The Jacobi Family Story



JACOBI FAMILY IN BERLIN, 1946. IMAGE COURTESY DAVID JACOBI

Maria Jacobi met her husband, Alexander, in Berlin in 1921. They had two children, Helmuth and Ruth. When Hitler came to power in 1933, the Jacobis underestimated the Nazi threat. Alexander had fought for the Kaiser in World War I and identified as strongly with his German heritage as he did with his Jewish religion.

By 1941, when even German Jews were forced to wear yellow stars in public, it was too late for the Jacobi

family to flee. Instead they pocketed their stars, separated from each other, and stayed in Berlin, hiding just beneath the surface. Such hiding in plain sight has been called “becoming a U-boat” or “living submerged” by members of the German Holocaust survivor community. The Jacobi family survived the Holocaust and became bakers, making matzah for Jewish refugees.

PANEL 10: POSTWAR VOICES

U-boats, Gulags, and Immigrant Aid The Jacobi Family Story



Maria and Helmuth Jacobi, reunited in New York, 1954. Courtesy David Jacobi



Star of David badge belonging to Alexander Jacobi. Courtesy David Jacobi

In 1947, Maria Jacobi was out shopping when two KGB agents lifted her off her feet and took her to Russia. Without a trial, the Soviets sentenced her to ten years of hard labor on suspicion of being a spy for the United States. Interrogated repeatedly in Moscow, Maria ended up working in twelve different slave labor camps, all part of the "GULAG archipelago." After six years, she was released from Spassk labor camp in 1953, shortly after the death of Josef Stalin.

Jacobi was reunited with her family in 1954 through the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, HIAS, which had helped Alexander, Helmuth, and Ruth immigrate to the United States during Maria's imprisonment. The Jacobis settled in Atlanta where Maria never worked outside the home again, saying, "I've done all the work I'm going to do."



David Jacobi, four years old, 1966



Maria's grandson, David Jacobi, became interested in his family's story after Alexander and Maria's deaths, when he inherited a satchel containing the few belongings Maria brought out of Soviet custody. In addition to documenting his family's story of survival, David meticulously cared for the clothes and other objects that his grandmother had saved from her Russian ordeal. These simple but evocative artifacts have been on display in the *Georgia Journeys* exhibition at the Museum of History and Holocaust Education. Images courtesy David Jacobi.

Museum of History and Holocaust Education Oral History Program



Started in 2013, the Museum of History and Holocaust Education's Oral History Program preserves first-hand accounts of past events through video recordings. The oral history interviews contribute valuable content to museum programming, exhibitions, and K-12 curriculum. All interviews are permanently archived at Kennesaw State University, accessible through the KSU Archives Scholarly Online Access Repository (SOAR).

The MHHE Oral History Program includes two ongoing projects, the *Legacy Series* and *Immigrant Stories*. Through the *Legacy Series*, we preserve the experiences of Holocaust survivors, World War II veterans, home front workers, and others who lived during the Second World War. Through the *Immigrant Stories* oral history project, we interview individuals who have first or second-hand experiences of immigration. For more information on how you can contribute to the *Legacy Series* or *Immigrant Stories*, please contact Education Manager James Newberry by email at jnewber5@kennesaw.edu or phone at 470-578-2085.



**KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY**

MUSEUMS, ARCHIVES AND RARE BOOKS
Museum of History and Holocaust Education