

Sandy Lichterman is seen here holding a poster promoting an upcoming Holocaust exhibit that he has been instrumental in bringing to The Villages. Photo by Diane Pattie.

Concentration Camp Auschwitz

Just as in Germany and Austria previously, Nazi rule required concentration camps in Poland. Nazi leaders chose the peaceful agrarian village of Oświęcim, located along an important railroad line, as the location for the Auschwitz concentration camp. Auschwitz became synonymous with mass murder, the place where an estimated 1.6 million people were put to death in the Holocaust from 1941 to 1945. Its infamous commandant, Rudolf Höss, arrived to establish the facility on April 29, 1940, and the first transport of prisoners, consisting of 708 Poles and 20 Jews from Tarnów, arrived May 30. Auschwitz opened officially on June 14, 1940, and was liberated by the Red Army on January 27, 1945.

A February 28, 1941, formular envelope mailed by prisoner number 205 (first transport) to Tarnów. Boxed red censor mark on the back.



An unmailed post card published by the Auschwitz Museum after World War II shows the camp crematorium in 1943, location of an unsuccessful prisoners' revolt in 1943.

One Villager's Effort To Help Heal The World

Story by Pat Jocelyn

Margot Joseph was a dark-haired beauty with soulful eyes and a tentative smile. The 33 year old had a young girl child who quite obviously had inherited her mother's beauty. On April 3, 1939 in Cologne, Germany, Margot was forced by law to add the name Sarah to her postal identity card. The name Sarah would easily identify the young mother as a Jew. Margot Joseph was now Margot Sarah Joseph. It is assumed that this change was implemented so Margot could continue to mail letters and cards to foreign countries. Margot was also forced to add Sarah to her daughter's name.

Johann Golla was a family man who took his role as husband and father quite seriously. He thought it important to project a sense of calm and positivity to his family even though he was a prisoner at Dachau, the first Nazi concentration camp ever opened in Germany. On April 18, 1941 Johann drew a colorful Easter design on a letter he sent to his family in the hopes it would brighten their lives a bit and help them persevere until the Nazis were defeated and he could return home.

Dachau Concentration Camp became a model of sorts for other camps that would be built. It is estimated that during the Third Reich years, more than 200,000 prisoners representing at least

30 countries were housed there. Thousands of those prisoners never survived.

Remarkably enough, Margot Joseph's postal identity card along with her daughter's identification papers (both with their pictures intact) and Johann Golla's letter with its Easter drawing, still exist today and are part of a sobering "hands-on" Holocaust exhibit coming soon to The Savannah Center.

The exhibit's tour through the Central Florida area is primarily due to the efforts of Village of Duval resident Sandy Lichterman. It seems Sandy has always been a philanthropist. He was just 29 years old when he first volunteered to lead Jewish services in people's homes in honor of loved ones who had passed. Later, when he and his wife Rae Jean moved from Detroit to Memphis, Sandy remained very active in Temple activities including serving a stint on the national board of the Temple Brotherhood.

Then something quite unusual happened. "I knew the director of the Memphis International Airport and he asked me to attend a luncheon for the Salvation Army," Sandy explained. "I went and got interested and the next

thing you know I'm on the Memphis Salvation Army board of directors."

Even though The Salvation Army is a Christian-based organization and Sandy was Jewish, he is so well liked he was later asked to become the chairman of the board.

At first Sandy declined. "I said I couldn't do that because I was Jewish," he explained. Later Sandy talked to several rabbis and after both men gave him their blessings, Sandy accepted the chairmanship.

Throughout the years, Sandy continued to accept numerous volunteer positions including Leadership Memphis, an organization that promoted improving inter-racial community communications and Family Services of the Mid-South.

"It was giving back," Sandy replied when asked why he remained so involved in his community. "I was always involved in something – it was always hard for me to say no because I'm committed to help people – that's just my nature."

Fast forward to 2007.

It was just before Sandy and Rae Jean moved to The Villages that Sandy first saw the Holocaust exhibit entitled "The Nazi Scourge: Postal & Monetary Evidence of the Holocaust – A Breakdown in Humanity". That exhibit was sponsored by the Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation and is the same exhibit Sandy has been instrumental in bringing to The Villages.

"I sobbed," Sandy said as he recalled that emotional experience. "It's the kind of exhibit where you can pick up the articles and hold them; and when you hold these pieces in your hand, you begin to shake because you realize where they came from and what that item's (owner) went through.

"That's the beauty of the exhibit," Sandy continued in a sober voice. "Everything is laminated and you can touch the articles."

Sandy recalled a trip the couple made to Israel that included a visit to another Holocaust exhibit. "We took our camera and took pictures all over Israel except one place," Sandy explained. "It was called the chamber of destruction which is a museum not too far from the big holocaust museum in Israel. I didn't have to take any pictures – I'll never forget (what I saw there) as long as I live."

"That's when you begin to realize the horrors of what these people went through," he added. "I've done a lot of charitable things in my life and God willing, I hope I'll be able to do more, but I believe there's nothing more important than what I'm doing now – bringing this exhibit here."

Sandy explained the foundation of the Jewish religion is like a three-legged stool: it consists of the Torah, prayer and repair of the world.

Concentration Camp Dachau

Even from the dismal confines of Dachau, prisoners did what they could to brighten the lives of their loved ones, fortifying their resolve to persevere until the eventual defeat of Nazism. Johann Golla drew a colorful Easter design on this April 18, 1941, letter to his wife and family.



Jewish Slave Labor in Poland

HASAG (Hugo Schneider Aktiengesellschaft-Metalwarenfabrik), a privately owned armaments manufacturing firm headquartered at Leipzig, became the third largest enterprise employing concentration camp laborers after I.G. Farben and Hermann Göring Werke. From August 1942 to August 1944, the HASAG ammunition factory at Skarzysko-Kamienne, Poland, employed between 25,000 and 30,000 Jewish slave laborers, the largest number of any single enterprise. For each prisoner, HASAG paid four to five zlotys per day, less maintenance costs, to SS- and Polizeiführer Hermann Botcher of the Radom district, while furthering the Nazi policy directed against Jews of "Vernichtung durch Arbeit" (extermination through work).

"Through German Official Post East," from the HASAG Works at Skarzysko-Kamienne, Poland. Postage due 19 pfennigs.



In 1943 the Anti Nazi League headquarters in Palestine published the Black Album, a book of ten post cards that reproduced photographs of Nazi atrocities that had been smuggled out of Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe. These were among the first visual proofs of the events that became known as the Holocaust. Very few of these prints survived the war.

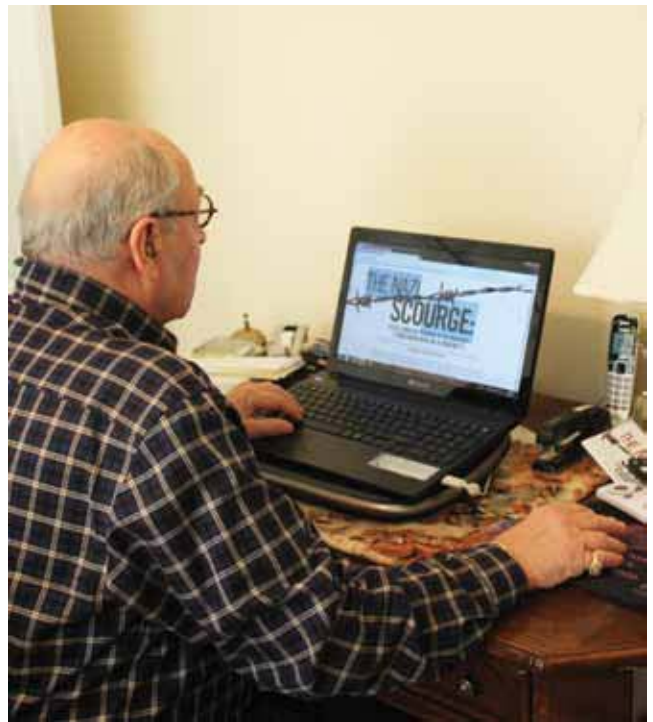
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"I'd like to think what I'm doing is helping to repair the world," he said. "To be able to come from a place of love and fellowship and help another human being regardless of whether they are black, white, yellow, Christian or Jew – we can all respect each other and each other's beliefs."

An old friend of Sandy's, a man named Simon Waksberg who survived the Holocaust, and who until his death, travelled with the very exhibit Sandy is responsible for bringing to The Villages, often shared an important message with his audiences.

"His message was this," Sandy said. "'Do not hate, I know what hate is, I don't hate anybody.'"

It's Sandy's intent that this Holocaust exhibit will help people remember how destructive hate can be and how, coming from a place of love rather than a place of hate can help repair the world. ❖



Sandy Lichterman is reviewing some of the promotional material that is being used to help advertise the upcoming Holocaust exhibit that will be held at The Savannah Center. Photo by Diane Pattie.

Name of exhibit: *The Nazi Scourge: Postal Evidence of the Holocaust and Devastation of Europe*

Date/Time: Wednesday, February 13, 2013, 11:00 am – 8:00 pm

Location within The Villages: The Savannah Center

You can contact Sandy Lichterman by emailing him at: sandylichterman@comcast.net

For more information about the Holocaust exhibit, visit the Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation website at: <http://spungenfoundation.org/collection.html>

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