Holocaust Liberator Biography: Anthony Morrone

Anthony Morrone was born in South Philadelphia in 1924 to Italian American parents.

Anthony was drafted into the United States Army in 1943 into the 1st Army 518th Military Police battalion. On April 11th, 1945, at twenty years old, Anthony helped liberate Buchenwald, a Nazi slave labor camp. As Anthony describes the scene, “The smell was horrendous. It was an unbelievable sight. There were hundreds of bodies stacked up like lumber. This was a murder factory.”

The Nazis imprisoned more than 250,000 people in the Buchenwald camp system. They murdered at least 56,000 male prisoners, some 11,000 of them Jews. Only 21,000 survived. Exact mortality figures for Buchenwald can only be estimated, as camp authorities never registered a significant number of the prisoners. At the time of its liberation, it held prisoners from 51 different countries.

Anthony was discharged from military service on Christmas Eve, 1945. After his return home, he learned that one of the prisoners in Buchenwald that he helped rescue was the author and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Elie Wiesel. In 2005, Widener University invited Mr. Wiesel to speak at the Kimmel Center and extended an invitation to Anthony to come meet him. “He and I met after his talk. It was one of the greatest moments of my life.”

Today, Anthony and his wife, Mary, live in Mt. Laurel, NJ. He is retired from a very successful Insurance and Real Estate business. They have a daughter and a son.

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The Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center

The Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center, America’s First Holocaust Museum, is fifty years young. Yaakov Riz, the museum’s founder, was a Holocaust survivor who lost eighty-three members of his family in Hitler’s death camps. Riz vowed that if he survived he would dedicate his life to establishing a museum that would memorialize the six million Jews and millions of non-Jews who perished at the hands of Nazi barbarism. The museum’s genesis, growth, and struggle against intolerance are the realization of his dream, courage, and commitment.

Why Teach Holocaust History?

The Holocaust was a watershed event, not only in the 20th century, but also in the entire history of humanity. The study of the Holocaust provides us with one of the most effective ways to work with students to examine the basic moral issues and value systems. We have an opportunity to teach students through the use of the primary sources in the museum to explore the fate of the Jewish people and other innocents in Nazi Germany and throughout Europe between the years 1933-1945.

Witness to History Project:

The Witness To History Project is designed to further the message and lessons of the Holocaust by direct interaction between students or interested adults and Holocaust survivors. Participants "adopt" a survivor by learning his or her unique account of via listening to the survivor tell his/her story, asking questions, writing a biography, reviewing a videotape, and memorizing and re-telling the story to others. Ultimately, the participant will have the lifelong job of educating others about the Holocaust by sharing this personal narrative. Contact the Holocaust Awareness Museum to participate.