

Holocaust Survivor Biography: Ralph Franklin



Ralph Franklin was born in 1928 in Schlochau, Germany. His father was an office manager in the family's business. Ralph attended both private and public schools up until 5th grade.

During Kristallnacht, November 9-10, 1938, Ralph's teacher told him to return home because he was prohibited from attending a public school. When he arrived home the Gestapo was arresting his father and uncle. They were sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

His father was released in February 1939 after the US Consulate in Berlin sent a letter requesting an interview for emigration. His great uncle in the United States offered to sign an affidavit, agreeing to financially support the family.

In April 1939, the German government forced his parents to sell the family business. His grandmother sewed the proceeds into her clothes and the family moved to Berlin.

Shortly before the war began in September 1939, Ralph's uncle was able to flee to England but was quickly arrested and interned on the Isle of Man as an enemy alien.

In late January 1941, the US Consulate informed them that their quota number had been reached and to appear in order to be given passports and Visa's to enter the United States.

The train left Berlin on March 11th and traveled through occupied France, then Spain to Lisbon, Portugal. Ralph was limited to two suitcases.

The ship arrived in New York Harbor on April 3, 1941 and his family moved to Philadelphia soon afterwards. He was 13 years old. He attended Clymer Elementary School, Cooke Junior High School and graduated from Central High School in 1946.

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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.

Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center

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