

Herta Adler



Moved to: Memphis, Tennessee

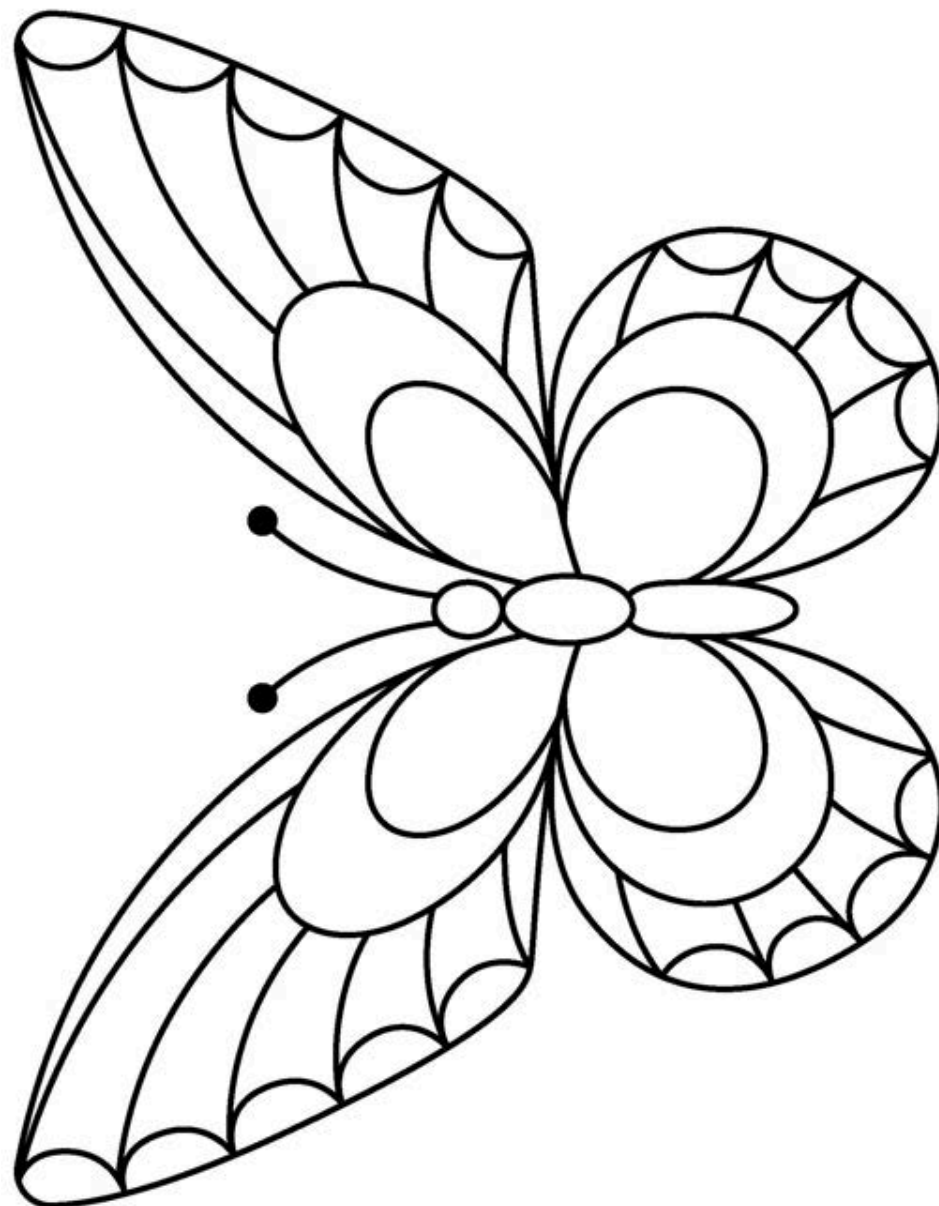
Born: 1915 Diez, Germany

Refugee: Diez, Germany

“There are some people who say that Jews are human beings. Wrong. A Jew is a human like a flea is an animal!” Herta Adler remembers words like this from Nazi radio propaganda. “All the Nazi speeches encouraged people to look down upon the Jew and dehumanize him. People any time can be manipulated to hate and kill out of fear—fear that makes them not stand up against it—fear for any reason. It has to stop.”

Because her father had served in the German military during World War I, Herta had permission to stay in public schools longer than other Jewish children. “It was lucky, I suppose, but just before I could graduate, I was asked to leave.” At the next school, she says, “No one would talk to me because I was Jewish and they forced me to attend on Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath.”

Herta was 24 on November 9, 1938, when Kristallnacht erupted. “One of my neighbors knocked frantically at our door yelling that the synagogue was burning. My heart began to bleed.” She remembers that the Nazis closed a large orphanage for Jewish boys and “transported them to places unknown.” The school's directors died in concentration camps. Because Herta's brother did business in Portugal, where the government granted residency to family members, Herta and her parents were able to go there from Germany. From Portugal she went to the United States: “Since Portugal was more lenient with refugees, it was easy to get documents to go to America.”



Clark Blatteis



Moved to: Memphis, Tennessee

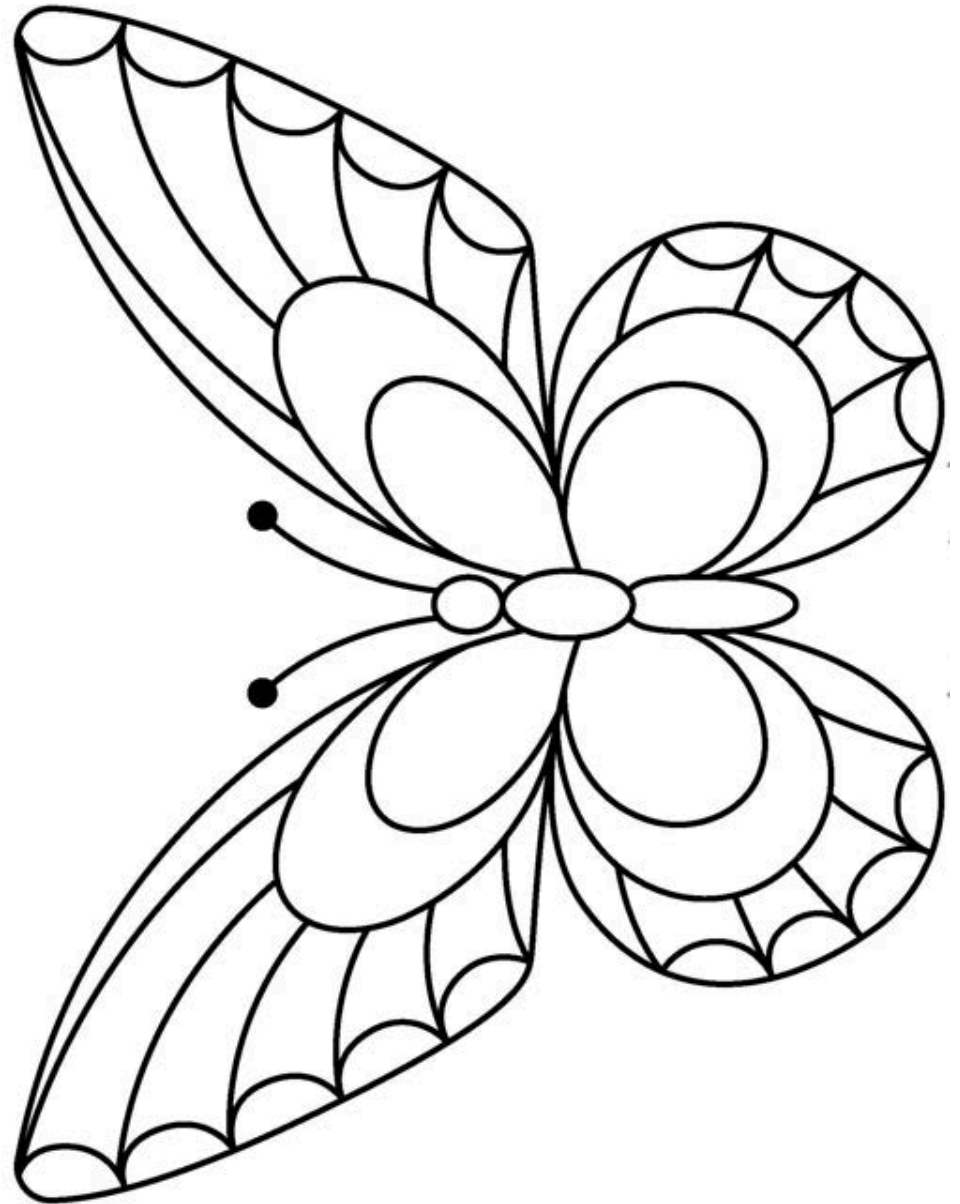
Born: 1932 Berlin, Germany

Refugee: Berlin, Germany

Seven-year-old Clark and his parents were among the 937 refugees who sailed to Cuba in May 1939 to escape Nazi persecution. Following Kristallnacht, Clark's father had been arrested and taken to a concentration camp. His mother applied for permits to leave the country. Clark recalls, "My father was released from the camp to join us as we sailed out of Hamburg."

"The trip from Germany to Cuba lasted about two weeks," Clark says. When the St. Louis reached Havana on May 27, only twenty-eight of the Jewish refugees were allowed entry. The documents for all of the others, purchased from a corrupt consular official, were invalid.

The passengers stayed on the ship for five days. Then the St. Louis sailed slowly toward Miami. Telegrams to the White House and the United States State Department proved futile. The ship turned back. Belgium accepted 241 passengers, Clark and his parents among them. When the Germans invaded, they were trapped again, recalls Clark: "We ran and hid in our cellar and heard bombs going off overhead. After the destruction, we were arrested for being German nationals." Upon release, they traveled through France to Spain and boarded a boat for Morocco. After eight years in Casablanca, they finally made it to the United States.



Wallace Carden



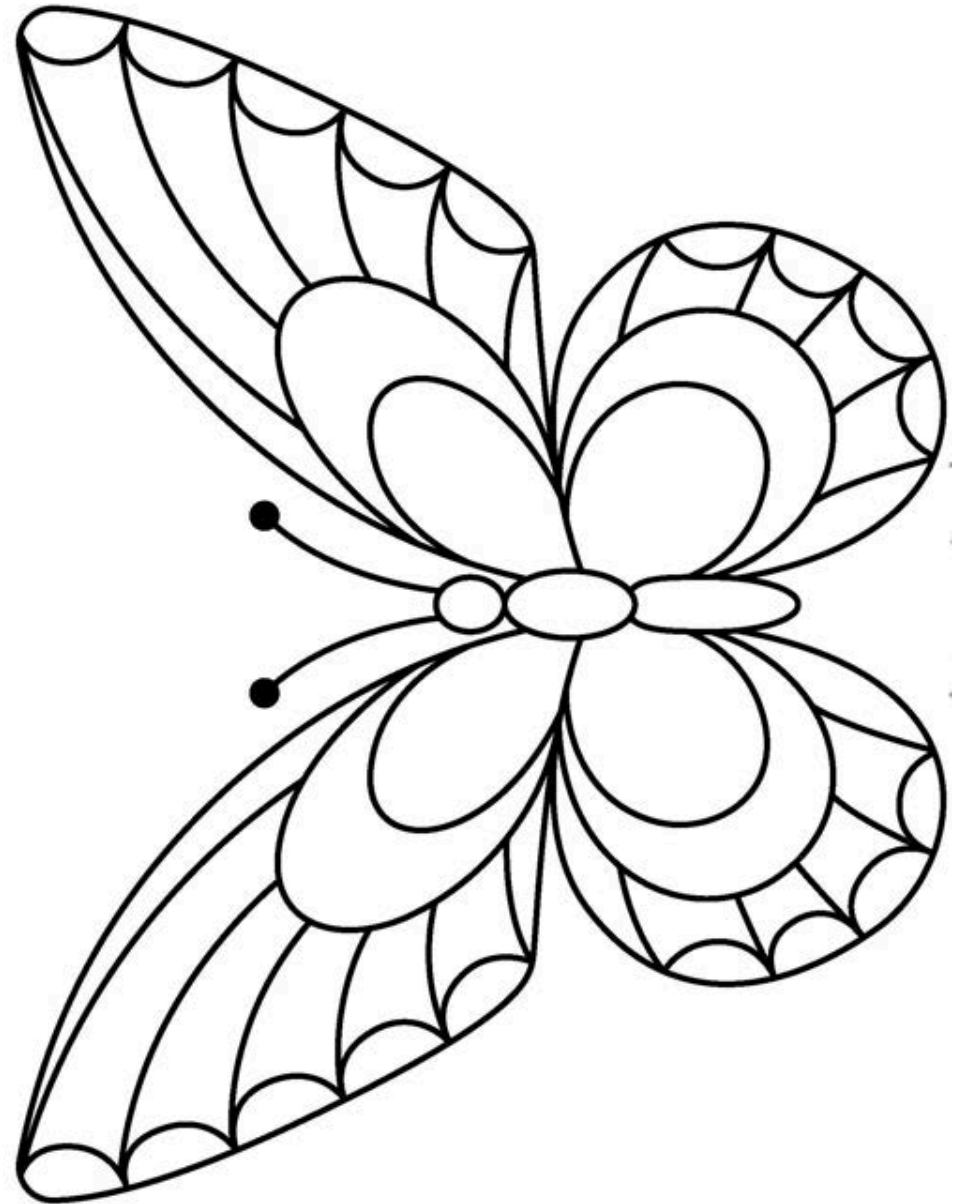
Moved to: Clinton, Tennessee

Born: 1924 Briceville, Tennessee

Survivor: Berga Slave Labor Camp

Wallace was among the 350 American soldiers captured by the Germans during the Battle of the Bulge and sent from Bad Orb Prisoner-of-War Camp to Berga Slave Labor Camp because they “looked” Jewish. For 69 days they were tortured, starved, and ordered to dig tunnels through solid rock for an underground fuel depot.

When the Nazis evacuated Berga, the prisoners were forced to march. “We walked for 15 hours a day,” Wallace remembers. “Some of us could barely stand. People just watched us as we moved through the towns. Some cried. Some just looked at us. It was as if they didn't know what to do.” When the guards found a barn, he recalls, “we dropped right where we were standing and fell asleep.” One morning, the Nazis were gone. “I ran outside the barn and looked up the road,” he continues. “I saw American tanks coming and I began to run towards them. I kept falling down, I could barely make it but I got to our boys.” Wallace had lost one hundred pounds in two months of captivity. Seventy of his fellow soldiers had died.



Jack Cohen



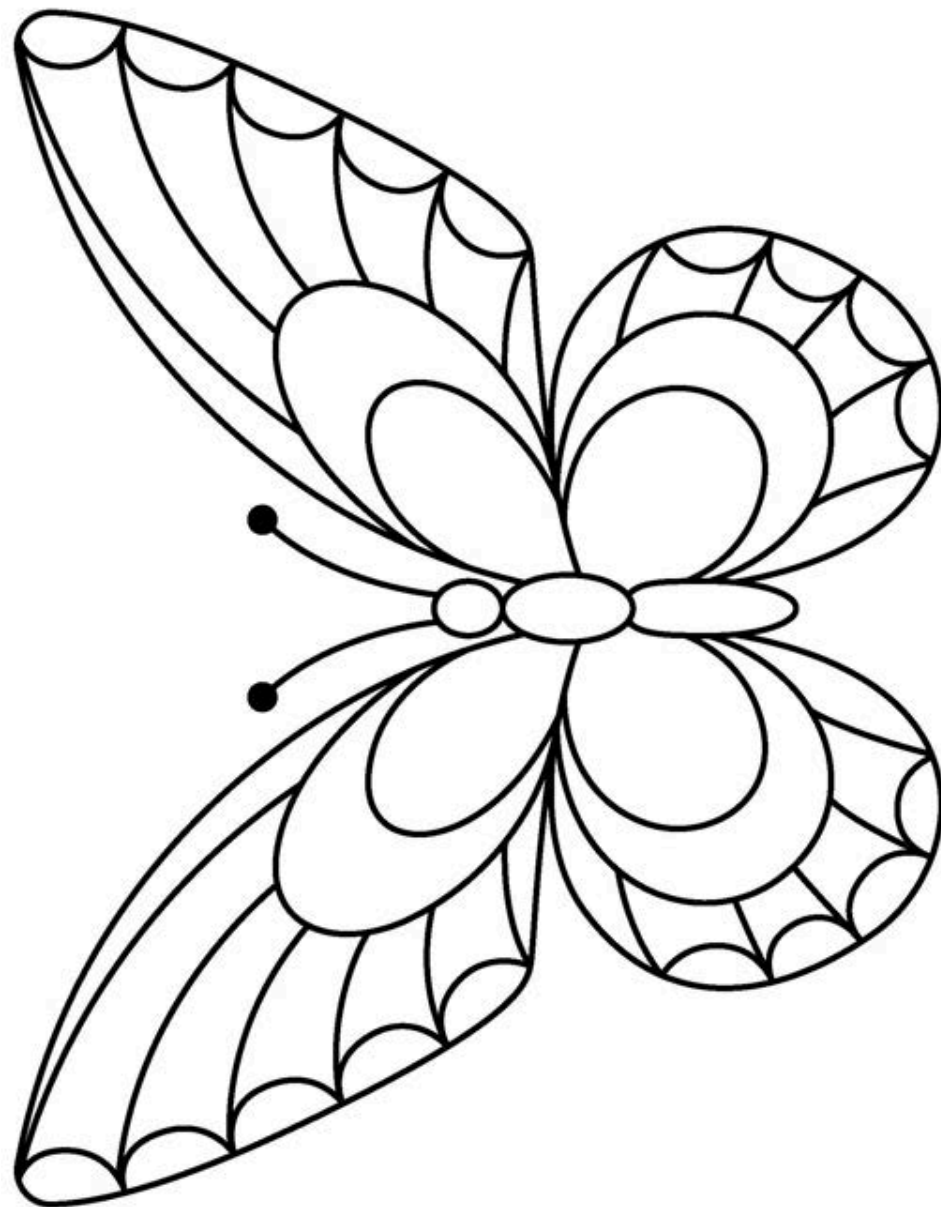
Moved to: Memphis, Tennessee

Born: 1932 Chalkis, Greece

Survivor: Greece

In 1941, following the invasion of Greece by Germany and its Italian allies, Jack's village was in the Italian-occupied zone. His family kept a low profile. In 1943 the Germans began arresting Greek Jews. Jack remembers, "Father contacted the underground resistance movement. They led us into the mountains during the night to safety." The Greek Orthodox Archbishop instructed monasteries and convents to shelter any Jews who sought help. Jack's family hid in a monastery for nearly two years. When the Germans closed in, the family fled to a village in the forest. "My grandmother was captured there and we don't know what happened to her." He adds, "Townspeople reported that she was Jewish."

When the Germans pulled out, the family returned: his father to his ruined business, Jack to three years of missed schooling. Their home had been occupied by strangers. Jack says, "Nothing felt the same again."



Rachel Glikzman Chojnacki



Moved to: Nashville, Tennessee

Born: 1926, Belchatow, Poland

Survivor: Lodz Ghetto; Auschwitz-
Birkenau Concentration Camp; Halbstadt
Forced Labor Camp; Salzheim and Freisig
Displaced Persons Camps

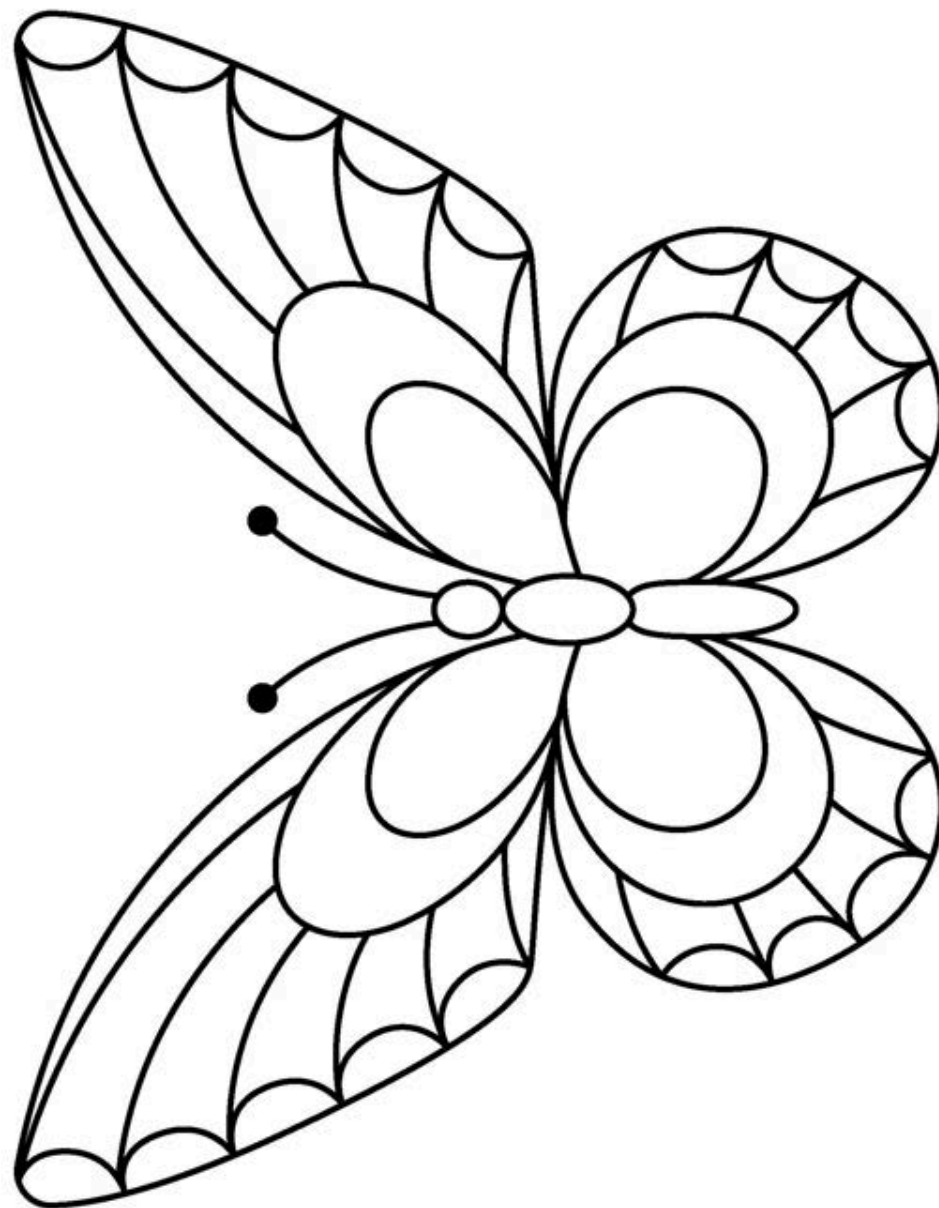


"I could speak German and I could work, my eyes were good," states Rachel Chojnacki. "I made little tiny parts for the ammunition; we had to make seven thousand per day to make the quota." Rachel was nervous when munitions factory supervisors came by and credits her eye for perfection with saving her life.

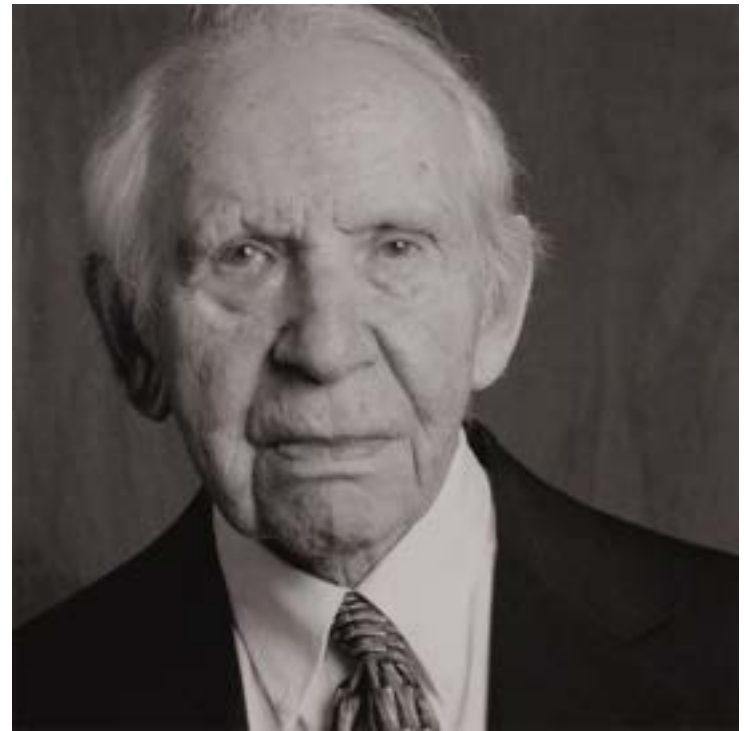
She recalls the most horrifying day of her life, when German and Polish soldiers came to take her father and older brothers away. Her mother instructed her to run after them, taking a backpack with a few belongings. As Rachel returned, she heard a shot. The next thing she saw was her mother dying in the street.

Rachel and one brother and sister were taken to the Lodz ghetto in 1942, where they were squeezed into a two-room apartment with ten to twelve others. Everyone worked from 6 A.M. to 6 p.M. at different factories. After about a year, both her siblings disappeared. In September 1944, says Rachel, "the people from our factory were taken together to the station." They were sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau for three months and then forwarded to Halbstadt, a forced labor camp in Czechoslovakia, to assemble munitions.

After liberation by Russian soldiers in the Spring of 1945, nineteen-year-old Rachel Gliksman made her way to the American zone in Germany. She found her childhood boyfriend and married him.



Joseph Exelbierd



Moved to: Memphis, Tennessee

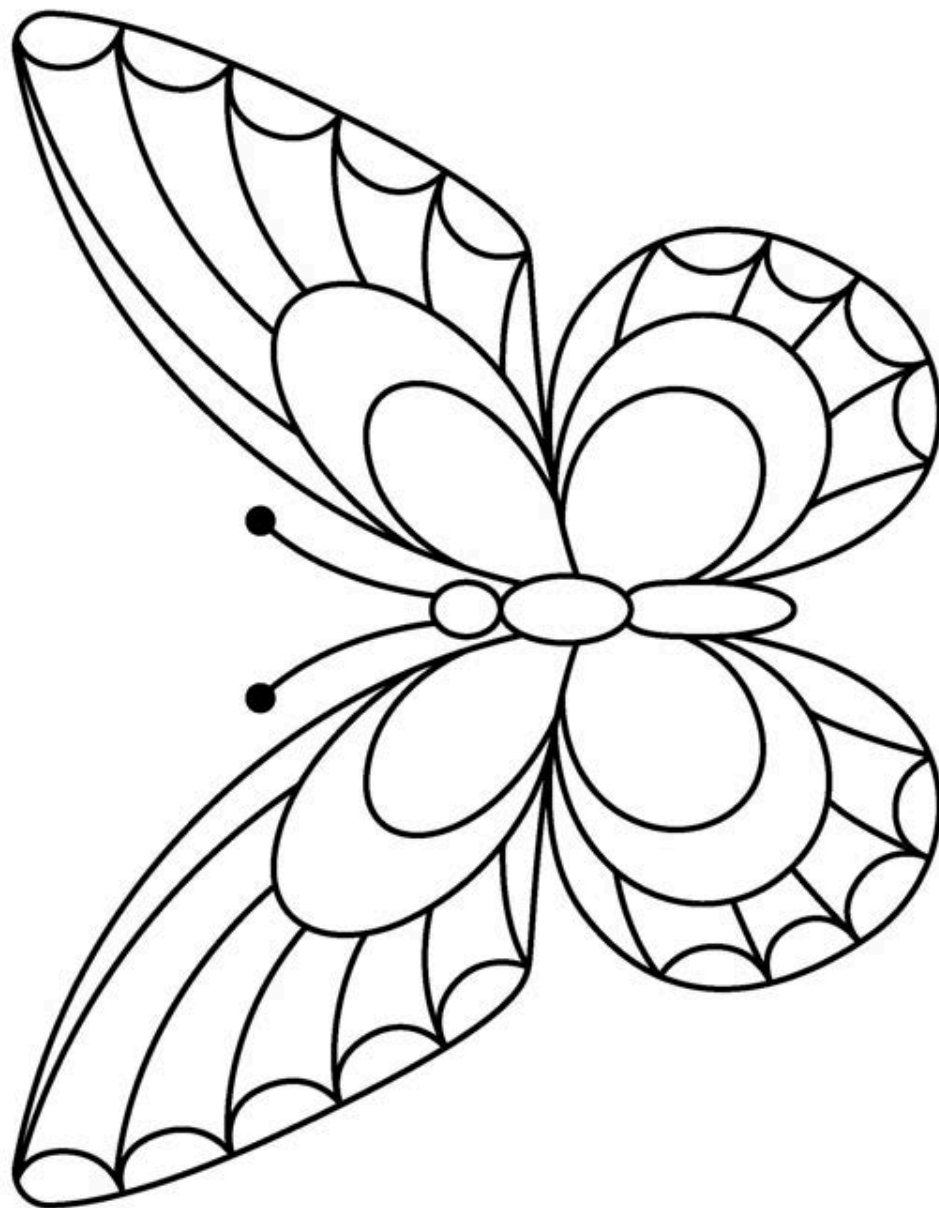
Born: 1911, Tarnopol, Poland (Ukraine)

Refugee: Windsheim Displaced
Persons Camp

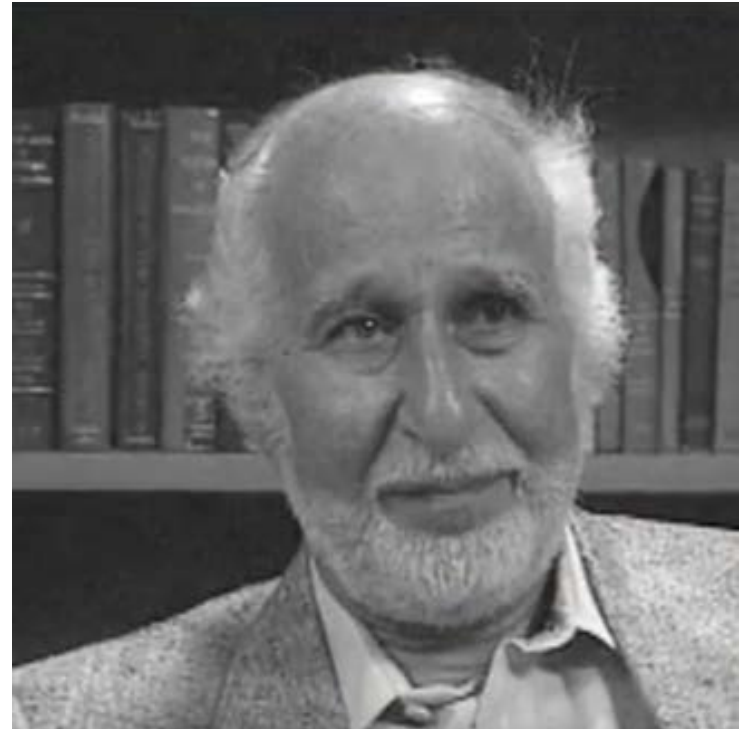
After the collapse of the Nazi regime, "oppressed people everywhere came out into the light again," recalls Joseph Exelbierd. "The lands they came from became graveyards to them. They had nowhere to go." Exelbierd was one of only three survivors from an extended family of over one hundred.

Joseph remembers feeling disbelief and fear on September 1, 1939: "Poland was overrun by Germans from the west and Russians from the east. The borders were sealed and there was no escape." A math and physics teacher, he was able to trade tutoring for food and shelter at first. But in June 1941, Tarnopol was taken over by Russian soldiers and, he says, "the Jews were either murdered or forced into ghettos." He and his wife passed for non-Jews. They were put to work clearing land for train tracks and then transported to Kazakhstan in the Soviet Union. "Rachel and I were always together and that helped us survive," he says. "We suffered in leaving our families behind; we were cut off from everything and everybody." In the spring of 1945, when Europe was liberated, an exodus of survivors traveled back into Germany and Poland. Joseph and Rachel Exelbierd came to the Windsheim displaced persons camp in Germany.

In April 1947, Joseph was put in charge of the camp, becoming the first Jewish camp administrator in U.S.-occupied Bavaria. "We did our best to make this place a turning point to create a process of healing," he says. "It was the only way to survive the pain."



Ernest Freudenthal

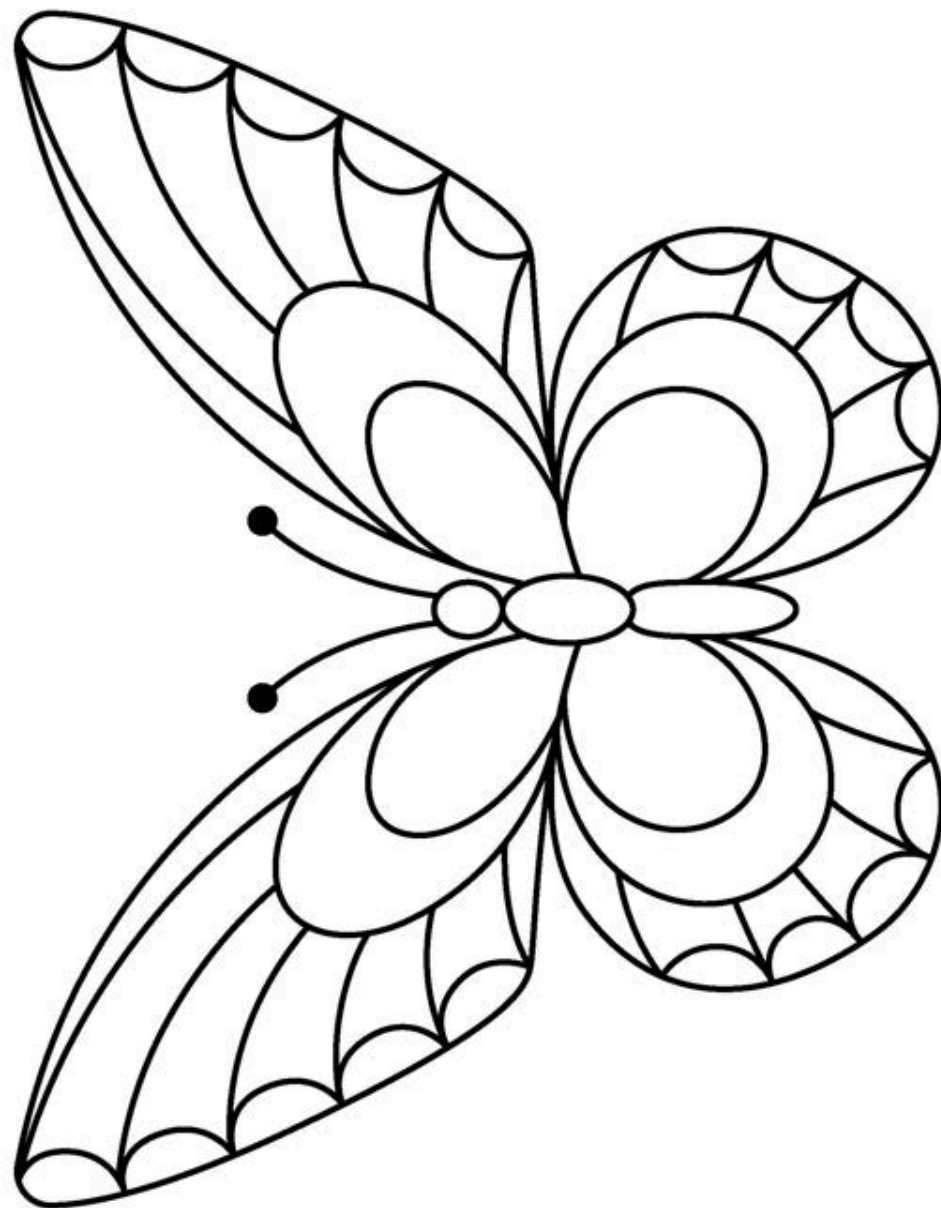


Moved to: Nashville, Tennessee
Born: 1920 Mannheim, Germany
Refugee: Frankfurt, Germany

Before Hitler came to power, Ernest Freudenthal lived a fully integrated life in Mannheim, Germany. In 1933, life began to shift for the Jewish population. It was difficult to participate in trade or education. Because of the political change and his father's death, the family moved to Frankfurt. Ernest realized that he would probably not be able to attend a university in Germany. He learned a trade, making it easier for him to immigrate to America. At age 15, he took a job in a clothing factory, to help support his family.

Mortimer May, a distant relative from America, visited Germany, and Ernest told him that he really wanted to immigrate to America. Mortimer sent Ernest an affidavit, and in the spring of 1937, Ernest left Germany. It was for economic and academic reasons rather than in anticipation of the war. He stayed in New York for about two weeks and then traveled on to Nashville. He worked in the May Hosiery Mills and housing was provided for him. In 1939, his mother came to Nashville from Germany, and she also worked at the mill for a time. Finally, in 1941, Ernest's grandmother was able to emigrate from Germany to Nashville; but it was much more difficult by this time. She had to have an account with \$5,000 in it before she was allowed to immigrate to America.

Ernest missed many of the cultural events that had been part of his life in Germany, such as the theatre, the opera, and soccer. He gradually adjusted to his new home, and he even tried to learn American sports such as baseball and football. When asked about how he felt being in America, Ernest was quick to speak of his love for his new home: "I loved it...I loved it from the minute I set foot in the New York harbor...I loved everything, milk shakes, subway rides. It was great. And we didn't have any money, but we didn't need much money. And so, it took me no time at all and I soaked up American culture. I just loved it."



Stephanie Freudenthal

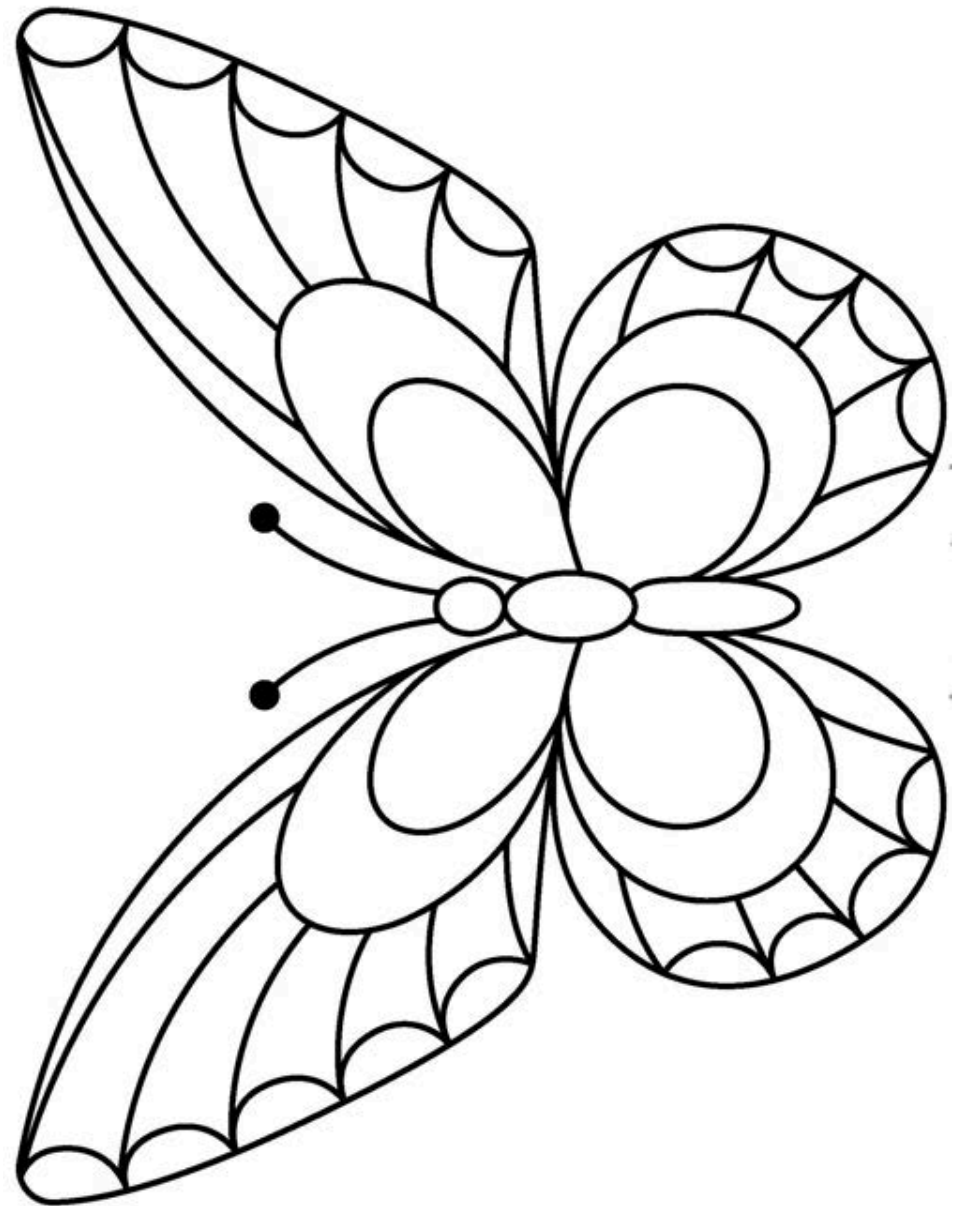


Moved to: Nashville, Tennessee
Born: 1929 Mannheim, Germany
Refugee: Mannheim, Germany

Stephanie Freudenthal lived in Mannheim, Germany where her family ran a business until the laws began to restrict the life of the Jewish people. Her brothers, although still teenagers, left for America. The family that brought them over, the Wimpfheimers, also sponsored German Jews. Stephanie and her parents reunited with her brothers in New York in 1938, but the standard of living for the family was substantially lower than it was in Germany. Her brothers worked to help support the family. Stephanie found life in America different and difficult. However, she believed that being so young –only nine when she began school in New York--it was easier for her to adjust.

In 1947, Stephanie met her husband, Ernest, through her older brother. They had both emigrated from Mannheim, Germany, and they became friends and began to date. In 1948, Stephanie and Ernest were married at the Warwick Hotel in New York City. They later had two daughters together. After coming to America, Stephanie’s Jewish religious education ended. Her family still observed the holidays, but her father believed that the Holocaust could not have happened and there still be a God. Stephanie was not raised in the synagogue and was never sent to a religious school. However, she felt that it was important to raise her daughters in the Jewish religion.

Although she did not feel antisemitism in America, she did not think that it had died in the world. “...I don’t doubt that one day there’ll be antisemitism on the rise again. We hope our children will never see that. That’s why I think we have to give them a strong feeling of identity, that they know who they are and that they’re aware.”



Fred Jarvis



Moved to: Bristol, Tennessee

Born: 1935 Freiburg, Germany

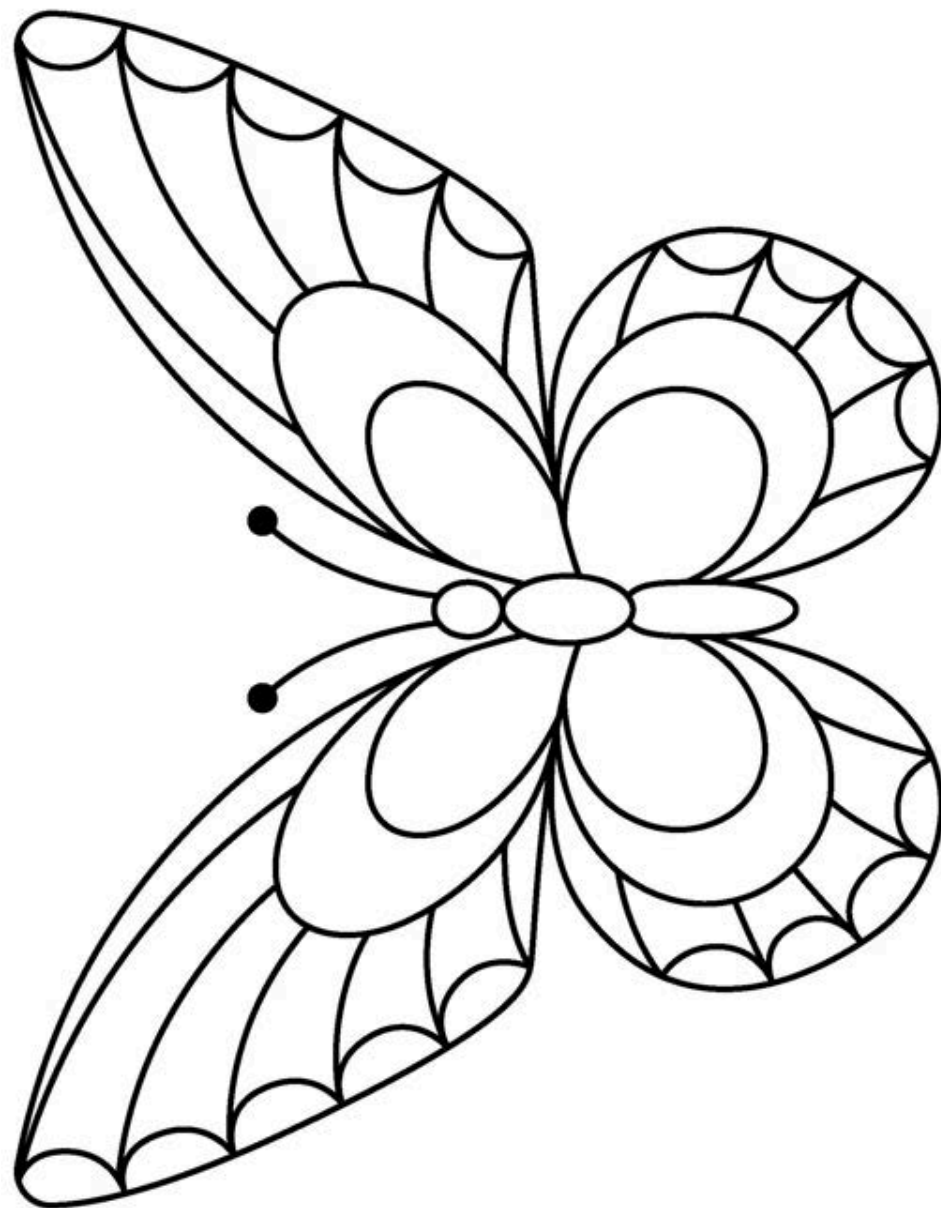
Hidden Child: Gurs And Rivesaltes
Concentration Camps

Fred Jarvis recalls being smuggled out of a French concentration camp in 1942 when he was seven years old, “My mother’s courage saved my life. The fear of losing me to murder surpassed her fear of surrendering me to a total stranger.”

His earliest memory is of the Gestapo coming to his home in 1940 and telling them to pack. Fred and his parents (his older brother had been on the last Kindertransport to England) and several hundred other Jews were shipped on cattle cars to Gurs, a French concentration camp near the Pyrenees, then transferred a year later to nearby Rivesaltes. With the help of a cousin, they escaped, driving toward Switzerland to find the border closed.

As deportations to Auschwitz began, the OSE (Society for the Rescue of Jewish Children) surreptitiously collected the small children. Fred was given a new identity and taken to a farm. “Madame Burra was very good to me,” Fred recalls, “She took me in as her supposed nephew at the risk of her own life.” In school he had to speak French. “We had to learn very rapidly, without making the slightest mistake. Mistakes were fatal,” he says.

At war’s end, his brother Joseph located him through the Red Cross and found that their parents had perished at Auschwitz. An aunt in New York City sponsored Fred’s immigration to America. He quips, “I spoke only French, lived in a household that spoke mainly German, and went to a school that spoke only English. I had a lot of adjusting to do.”



Mira Kimmelman



Moved to: Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Born: 1923 Danzig (Gdansk), Poland

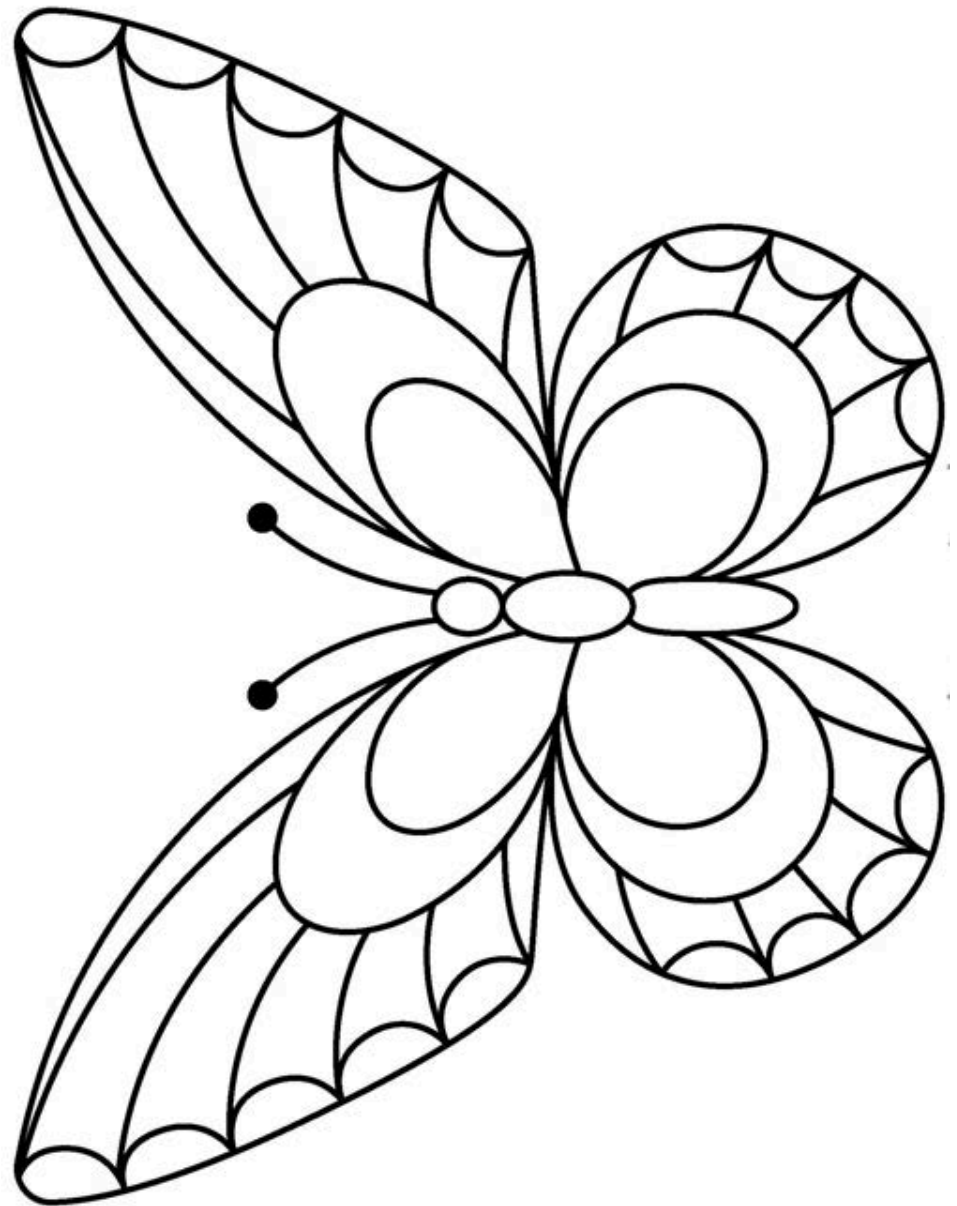
Survivor: Warsaw and Tomazow-Mazowiecki Ghettos; Blizyn-Majdanek, Auschwitz, Nordhausen and Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camps

Mira doesn't know how she lost her family, but she knows why. When the Germans invaded Poland, she and eighteen members of her family were separated from their non-Jewish neighbors and forced to live in ghettos, where they suffered from hunger, extreme cold, and typhus. The Jewish administration of the ghettos opened secret schools. "To be caught with a pen or paper would mean instant death, so we taught privately through song and poetry. I was a student and then a teacher," recalls Mira.

In 1942 the Germans liquidated their ghetto and spoke of opportunities for work in the east. Mira says, "We believed it. Work meant security and food. We were hopeful...and we didn't have a choice. My mother and I were marched out of the ghetto toward the railroad station. An SS officer ordered me to step out."

Mira was sent to Blizyn, a concentration camp attached to Majdanek in Poland, and then to Auschwitz. She is haunted by a final memory of seeing her brother, who died at seventeen, at the gates of Auschwitz.

Mira's journey ended at Bergen-Belsen. With no work or food or water, the women drank urine to survive. In mid-April 1945 the camp was liberated by the British Army.



Frida Landau



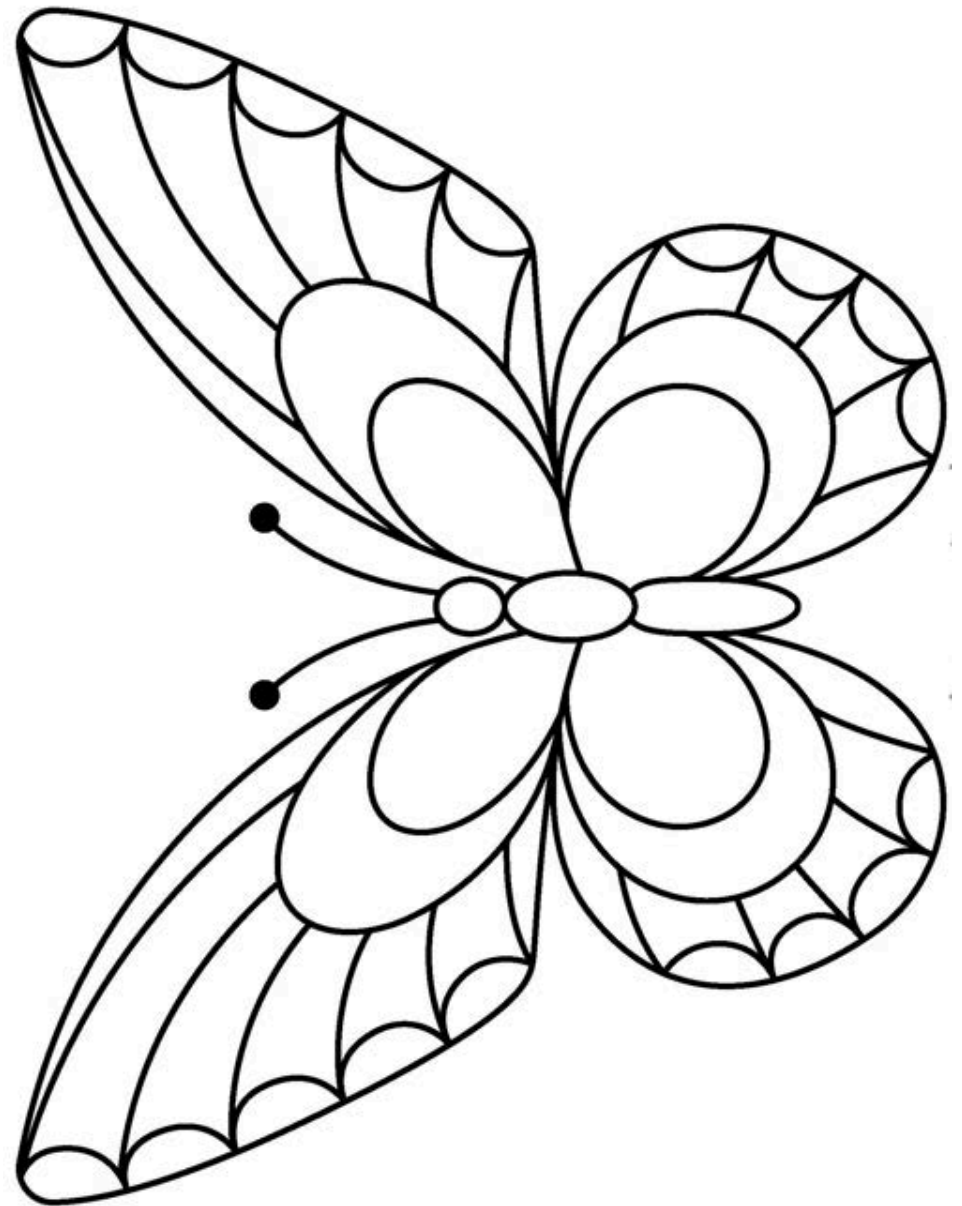
Moved to: Nashville, Tennessee
Born: 1925 Pavlovice, Czechoslovakia
(Now Czech Republic)
Survivor: Auschwitz and
Theresienstadt Concentration Camps

“We were afraid every minute for our lives, and every day we had grass or even a sip of water, we were grateful. I guess we thought that was better than dying...I suppose it was,” says Frida Landau. She and her sister ate grass in an attempt to survive the ten-day train journey to Theresienstadt concentration camp.

By then it was 1945. They had managed to live through nine months of imprisonment in Block 16 at Auschwitz, where they had lost their parents along with their sister and her daughters. “It was during separation,” she recalls. “We walked left to the showers and they went to the right...they died never really knowing what was happening to any of us.”

Concentration camp guards routinely separated family groups according to age and fitness to work. Teenagers and young adults were spared, while parents and younger siblings were often sent to their deaths.

At Auschwitz they slept four to a bunk. Frida remembers praying a lot and talking to others. “The Polish inmates had been there for about a year and would tell us many detail,” she says. “I could hear them but I just couldn't believe what they were saying. I knew, but then I really didn't know anything.”



Terry Moses Freudenthal Lapidus



Moved to: Nashville, Tennessee

Born: 1929, Wolfenbüttel, Germany

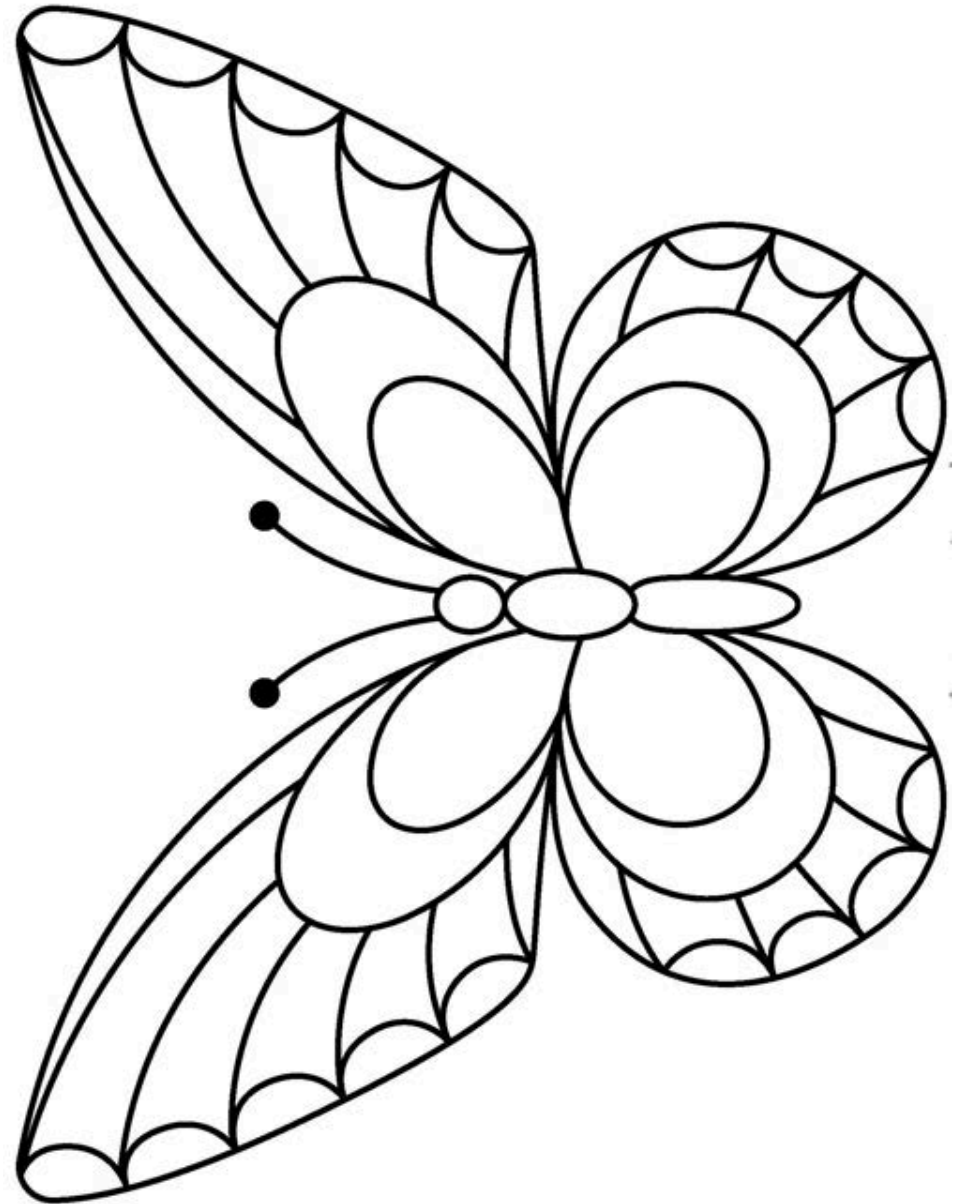
Refugee: Wolfenbüttel, Germany

Teresa Moses grew up in a very traditional Jewish home. Terry, as Teresa was known, first encountered antisemitism when she was not allowed to start school at the age of six; the German government said that it was because she was underweight. When she did attend, she was the only Jewish child, and the other students called her names and threw stones at her.

After her father, a successful shoe store owner, was arrested several times on false charges, the family decided to sell their store and leave for America. On August 31, 1938, the family left Germany and went to live in New York with relatives. Her family was on the last ship that would allow you to take your personal belongings with you, so they took all of their household goods. It took them 10 days to cross over to America.

There were many differences between America and Germany, beginning with their first meal, which she said was an embarrassment to her father. "They served corn on the cob, and in Germany, the only thing you do with corn is to feed it to the pigs, the hogs, and the geese and he was insulted because he felt, 'We're not that undernourished that they have to stuff us with corn.' ... and then we realized afterwards that this was a vegetable that was very, very popular here in America."

Terry's parents both found work, but it was menial labor. Terry and her sister had to take on many adult responsibilities around the home, because their parents had to work such long hours. The Moses family lived in Washington Heights in Manhattan, and there were many other German Jews who lived there, too.



Jack Lorch



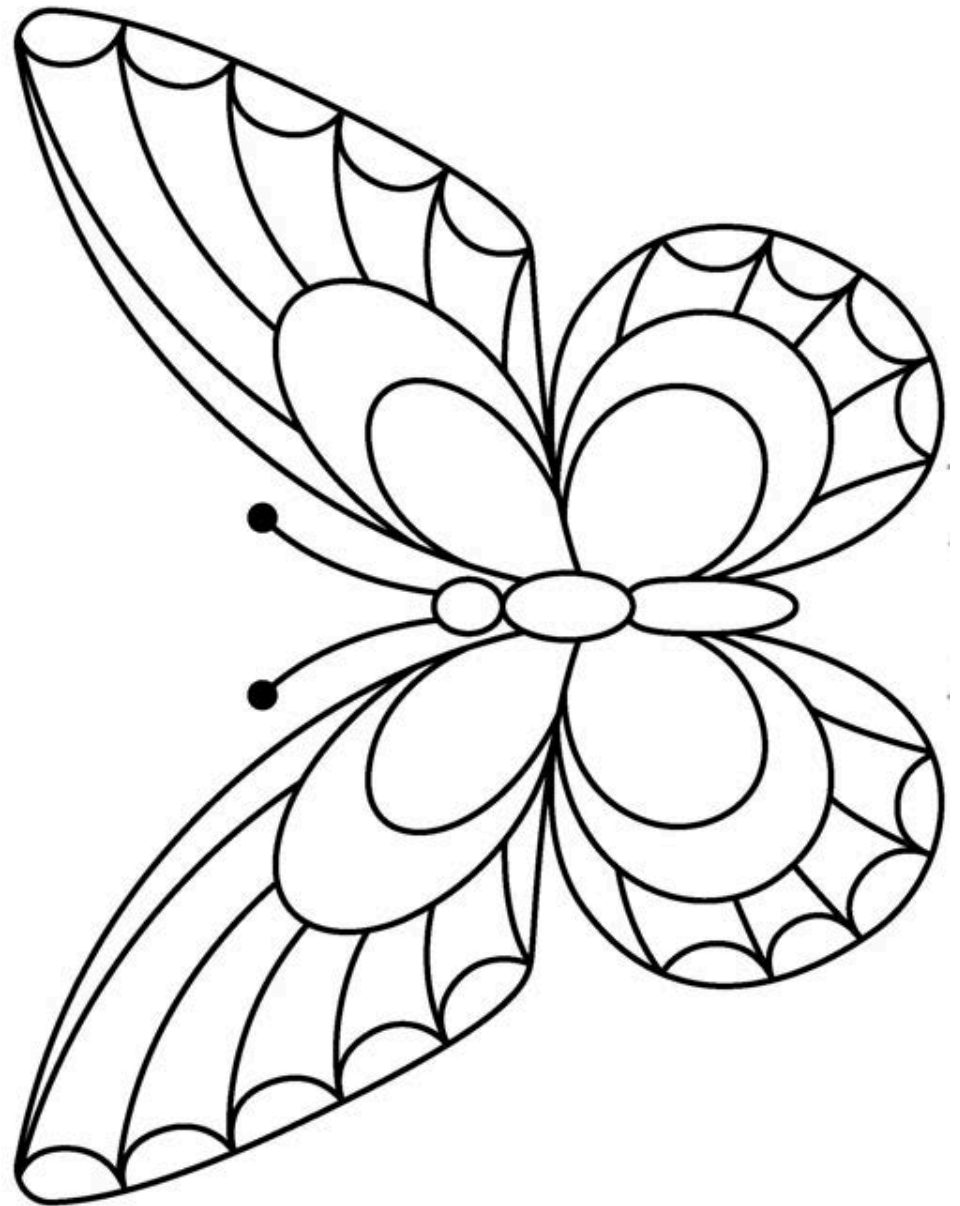
Moved to: Nashville, Tennessee

Born: 1911 Dieburg Germany

Refugee: Dieburg, Germany

Jack did feel the effects of antisemitism after graduating from high school. Many of his friends were Gentiles, and they frequently went to each other's houses. He began his studies at Frankfurt University in 1930, and began to sense a difference, "It was in the air." After graduating from university in 1934, Jack began working at his uncle's shirt factory in Duisburg, Germany. There, one of his Gentile roommates who had become a Nazi warned him of the necessity of leaving Germany; the Nazi was worried about Jack's safety.

Jack found a second cousin who had been living in Staten Island, New York since the 1920's, and he agreed to provide an affidavit of financial support. Jack then wrote to the American consul in Frankfurt, sending his medical report, the affidavit, and all of the necessary paperwork. The entire process took about six to nine months, and in 1938, Jack finally joined his cousin in New York. He became active in the garment industry, working in Natchez, Mississippi, and then returned to New York and started a shirt factory with two other men.



Herman Lowenstein



Moved to: Nashville, Tennessee

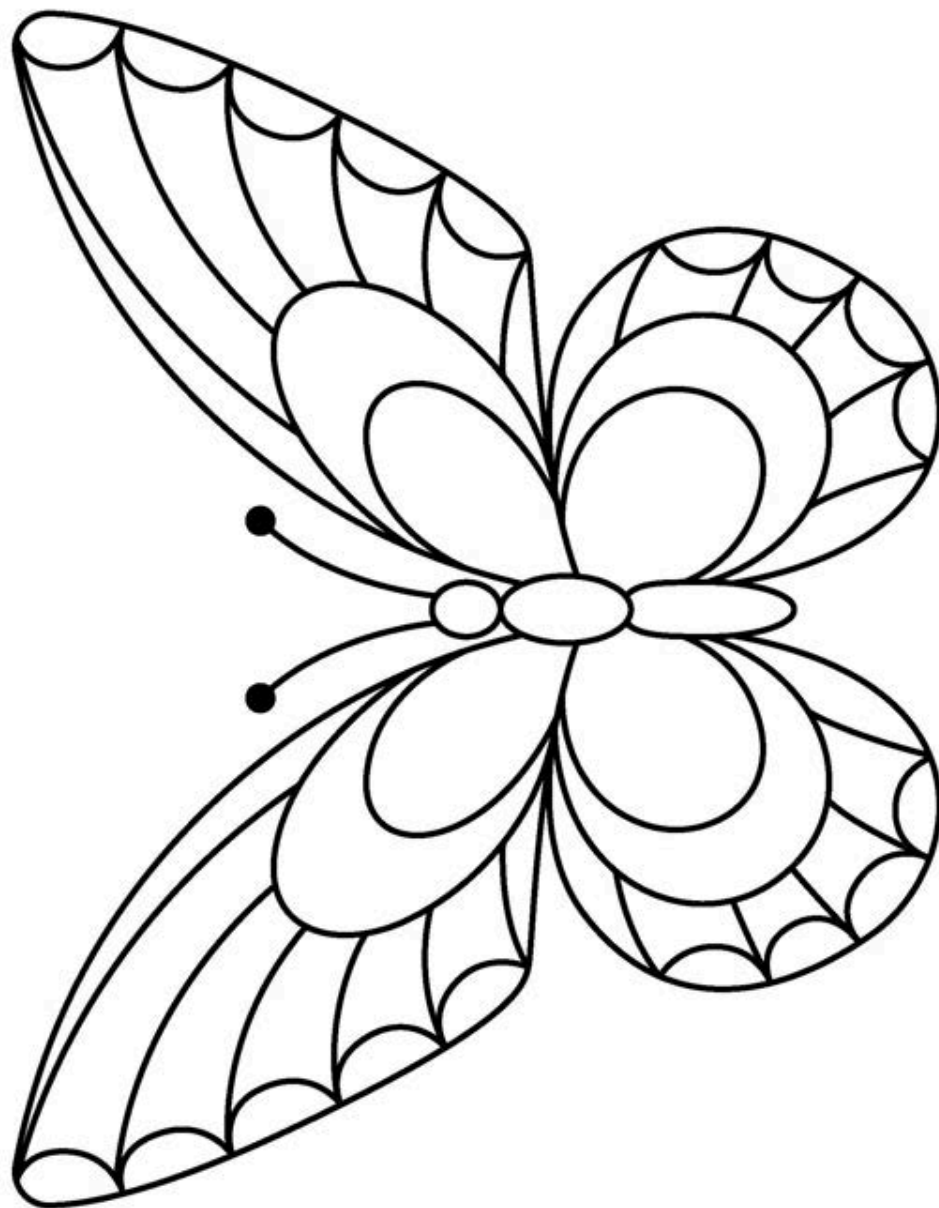
Born: 1927 Hameln, Germany

Refugee: Hameln, Germany

“The SA (Nazi Storm Troopers) came to our house and shot out the lights, threw milk cans through our windows...we were terrified,” recalls Herman Loewenstein. “All of a sudden we were no longer acceptable citizens.”

It was known as Kristallnacht, the “Night of Broken Glass,” and Herman remembers the nightmare well. On November 9 and 10, 1938, outbursts of violence, spearheaded by Nazi Special Police, occurred in German and Austrian towns and cities. Synagogues were ravaged and burned, Jewish-owned businesses were looted and their windows shattered, and Jewish men were beaten and arrested. Thirty-thousand Jewish men were sent to detention camps.

Afterward, eleven-year-old Herman was not allowed to associate with his childhood friends. When Jewish children were forbidden to go to school in his hometown of Hessich-Oldendorf, Herman was sent to live with an uncle. In 1939 Herman left Germany through the Kindertransport program, an extraordinary rescue operation that transported 10,000 Jewish children to safe houses and foster families in Great Britain. He remembers, “I was sent to North Hampton. I can still hear the planes flying overhead.” Herman was one of the fortunate ones; his parents came to retrieve him. They made their way to Montreal, to New York, and finally to Nashville.



Inge Lowenstein



Moved to: Nashville, Tennessee

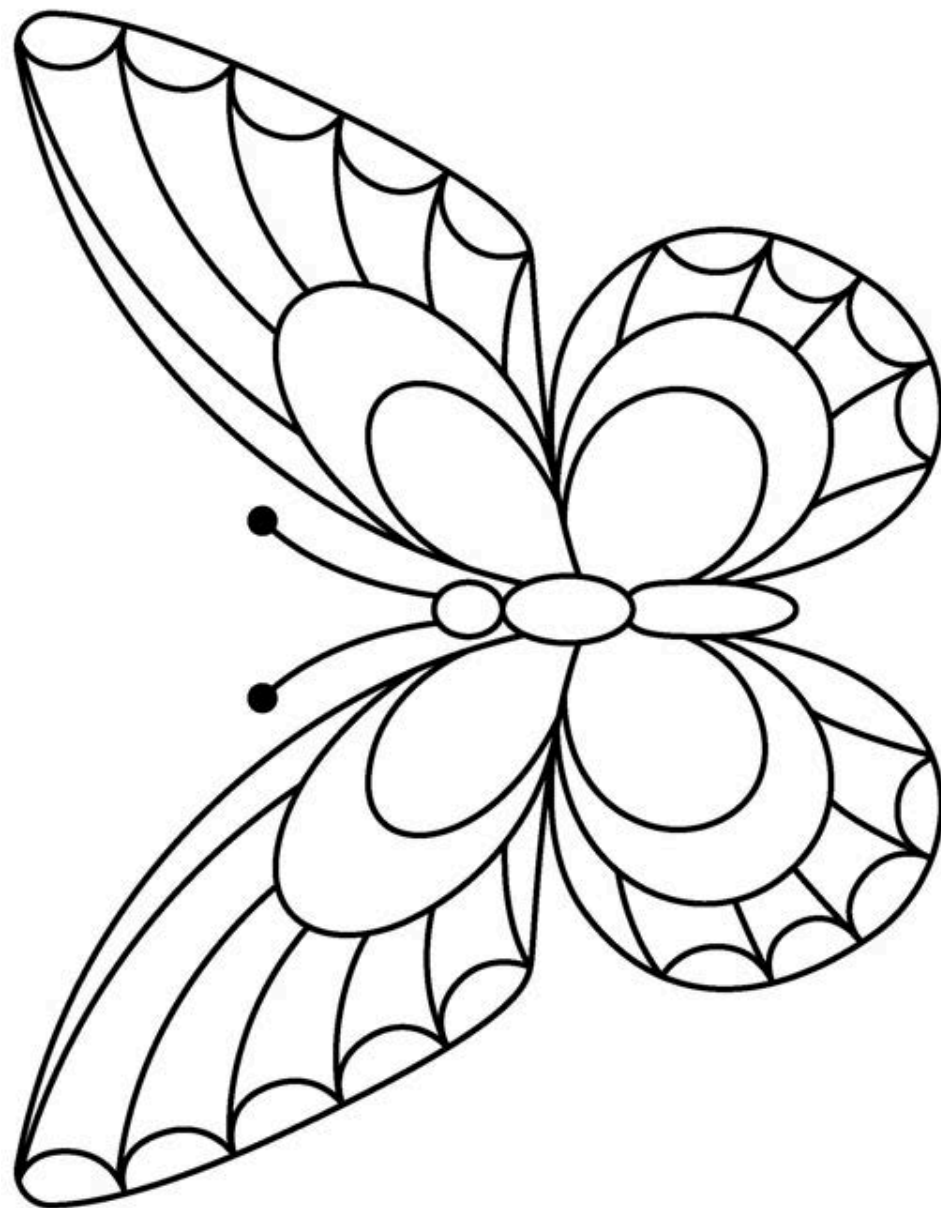
Born: 1925, near Aachen, Germany

Refugee: Aachen, Germany

“Things have no value. Lives have value,” advised Inge Jaffe Lowenstein. She was born Ingeborg Jaffe in 1925, and soon after, her family’s lives were at risk. Inge and her younger brother Henry lived with their parents in a small town near the Belgium-Netherlands border, a town with a convent and a synagogue. Her father was a WWI combat veteran and a textile engineer and sales representative.

In 1937, Mr. Jaffe’s sister emigrated to Peru, and little Henry went to Belgium, thought to be safer. On Kristallnacht 1938 her parents were arrested but veteran Jaffe’s patriotic scars led to their release. One uncle disappeared forever that night; and one went into hiding in the Netherlands. Inge’s father decided to contact his sister in Peru, and paid an American consul in Paris for expensive tourist visas. They would go where their lives were more valued.

The Jaffe family first went to the harbor city of Hamburg in 1939 with their visas; but the suspicious visas were denied. France would honor them, so the family then went to Cherbourg and shipped to Peru, meeting Henry onboard. The family lived in Lima, learning Spanish. Father again sold textiles, and there was little antisemitism. In 1944, Inge graduated from the American school, where she had studied English, and began secretarial courses. Invited by her maternal uncle and aunt, Inge moved to the USA in 1946 when she was 21. She married in New York City in 1953, and the Loewenstein couple moved to Nashville. Inge made several visits with relatives to her German hometown in the 1980s.



Leon May



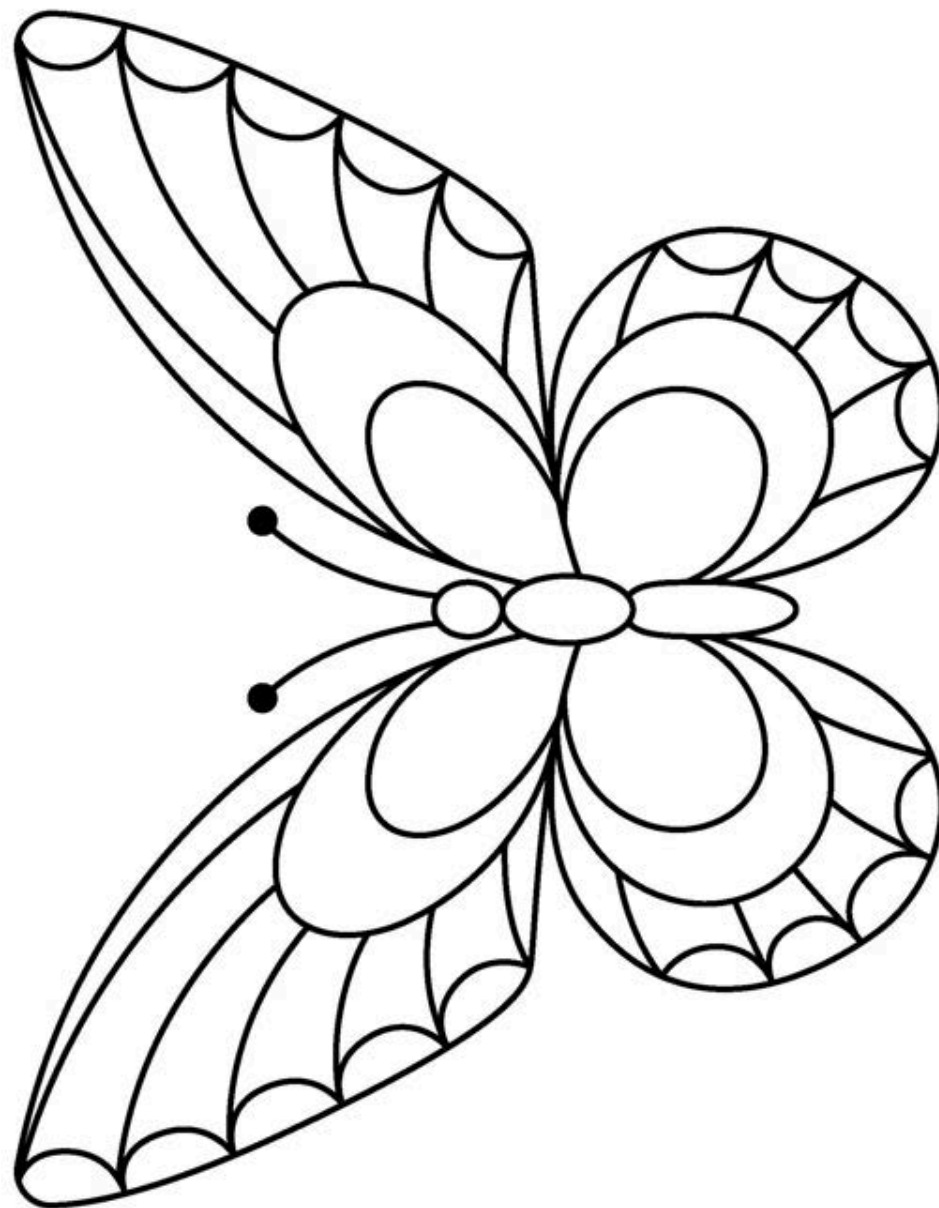
Grew up in: Nashville, Tennessee

Born: 1922, United States

American Rescuer: Hoescht,
Germany; Nashville, Tennessee

Although his grandfather moved to the U.S. from Germany when he was 19 years old, the family still felt tied to those who were suffering in Germany under the Nazi regime. Leon and his father traveled to Europe in 1934, 1936, 1938, and 1939 to try to get Jews out of the country. In 1934, they traveled to Strasbourg, France. In 1936, they actually went into Germany. Leon remembers the extreme nationalism of the people in Stuttgart in 1936, stating that, "the whole city was decorated with flags everywhere, much more than you would see here in this country anywhere on the Fourth of July." In 1936, he also remembers that the Jewish residents were very anxious and hoping for the possibility of getting out from under the Nazis.

The May family provided many Jews with affidavits, enabling them to escape from under the Nazi regime between the years of 1934 and 1939. Leon said that his father felt very deeply that he must save the Jewish people. Because his family had started the May Hosiery Company in 1896 in Laconia, New Hampshire, they were able to provide jobs for the Jews who immigrated to the U.S. When Leon's father was four, his family moved to Nashville, Tennessee, and that was where Leon lived. Leon said about the rescuing, "I don't really know (that) there were any philosophical discussions; it was just a thing you did." For some of the refugees, especially the wealthy, moving to Nashville was a shock. The heat and the decreased position were difficult, but they were thankful to be in America.



Max Notowitz



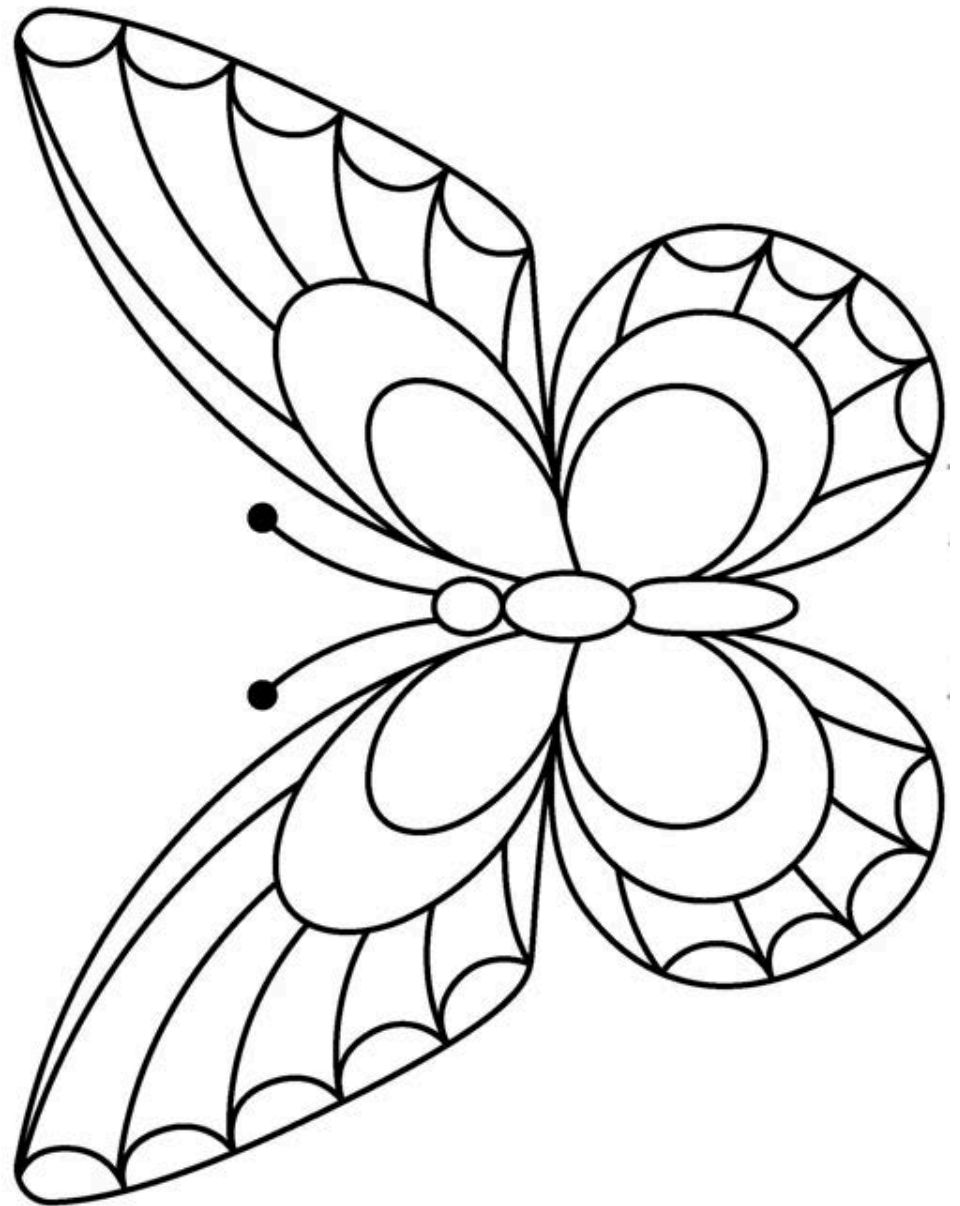
Moved to: Memphis, Tennessee

Born: 1927 Kolbuszowa, Poland

Survivor: Kolbuszowa Ghetto;
Pustkow Slave Labor Camp

Thirteen-year-old Max was alone. His father was murdered at Auschwitz in 1941. His mother and two siblings were killed after their ghetto was liquidated. He recounts, “They were unloaded from the train, undressed, marched off into the trenches, and machine-gunned down.” In 1942 Max went to Pustkow, a slave labor camp near Krakow. He says, “Our job was to clear the forest: cut down trees and dig out stumps so the Nazis could build factories.” Just as they were about to be transported, probably to the death camp at Belzec, Max learned about a planned escape. “One man asked me to go with them, and I agreed,” he relates. They succeeded, hiding in surrounding forests until Russians liberated the area in 1944.

Only then could Max begin to accept the loss of his entire family. “I was deprived of the gradual change from childhood to teenager to adulthood,” he muses. “I didn't exhibit any emotions during the war, but it really came out after liberation when I realized how different my life was from others who had never suffered.” Eventually he moved to Warsaw and became secretary/treasurer for the American-German Distribution Committee, a refugee relief agency.



Reva Oks

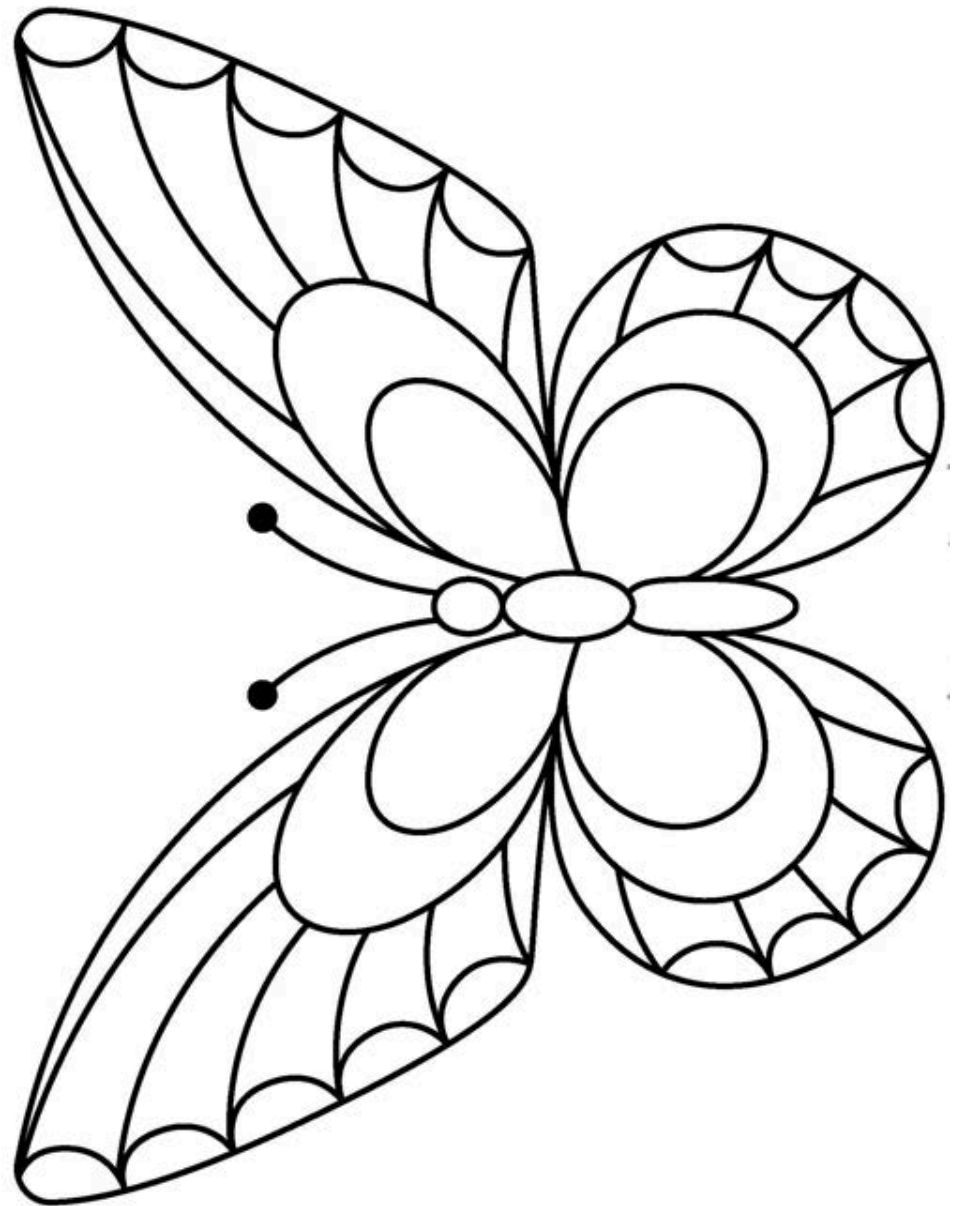


Moved to: Memphis, Tennessee
Born: 1917 Goworowo, Poland
Survivor: Siberian Forced Labor Camp

Reva grew up in a small town. In the summer of 1941 Nazi soldiers arrived and called all Jews out of their houses. Reva says, “They lined us up and forced us to stand for hours. My family was kept together on one side of the line.” Miraculously, they were let go. They went to Bialystok and hid in a Yeshiva, a former religious school.

Her parents then sent Reva and her sister to Russia to scout for places to live. Reva recalls, “My older sister thought we would never be able to return to Poland and wanted to go back.” Before they could return, Russian soldiers dispatched them to Siberia. Her parents and younger sister, living in a “safe” town near the Russian border, were shot and killed by Germans. In Siberia, Reva contracted malaria. She says, “We worked in a coal mine and it was very hard work. There was no food and it was bitter cold in the winter. We were sent into the surrounding forest to cut trees, which was worse.”

At war's end, Reva and her sister wanted to return to Poland but found it impossible to do so. She met her future husband in Germany.



Art Pais



Moved to: Knoxville, Tennessee

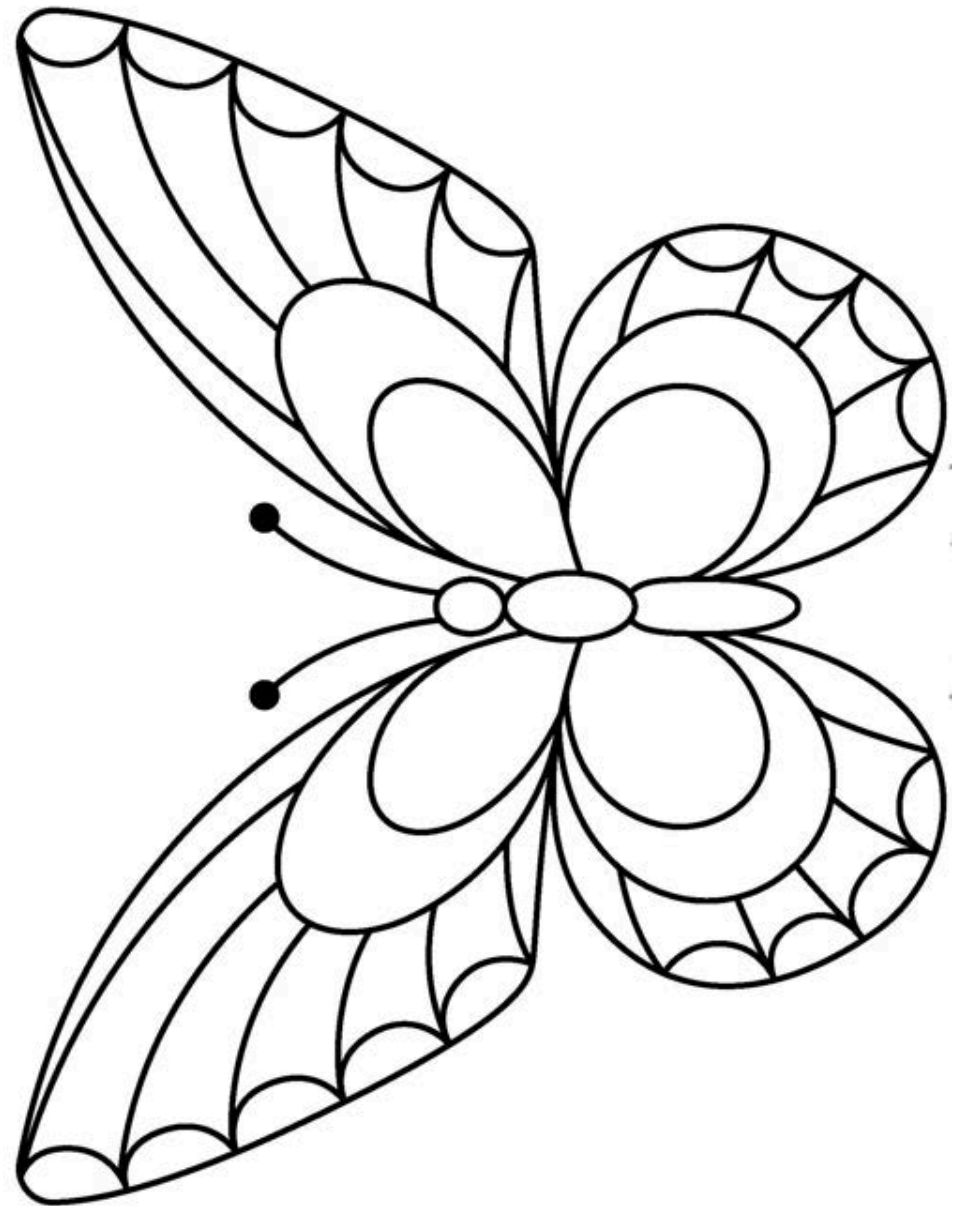
Born: 1927 Ukmerge, Lithuania

Survivor: Kovno Ghetto, Dachau
Concentration Camp

“My sister carried my mother through the death march. [My mother] died one month after liberation...we were very grateful to know that she was buried. What a thing to be grateful for,” says Arthur Pais, who was among the ten percent of Lithuanian Jewry to survive the Holocaust.

Pushed into the Kovno ghetto after his town was destroyed, Arthur remembers, “German soldiers came in during a workday and took all the children and older people and shot them.” Those who remained were loaded into boxcars. When the train stopped, Arthur's mother and sister were rerouted to Stutthof, a concentration camp in Poland. Arthur says of the last time he saw his mother, “My only memory of that day is of her crying.” Arthur, his father, and his brother were sent to Dachau.

After working fifteen-hour shifts for weeks on end and surviving on watery soup and a daily slice of moldy bread, the inmates at Dachau heard rumors about the advance of the American Army. The Germans evacuated the camp, forcing the prisoners into a death march. Arthur's father, too weak to move on, stayed behind. Starving, exhausted, and ill, Arthur and his brother pressed on toward the Bavarian Alps. When they awoke one May morning, they discovered that the guards had fled. They wandered to the nearest town. A few days later, American troops took them to Munich. It was there that Arthur found his father, just barely alive, and learned that his mother had at least lived long enough to see her home once again.



Fredericka Saharovici



Moved to: Memphis, Tennessee

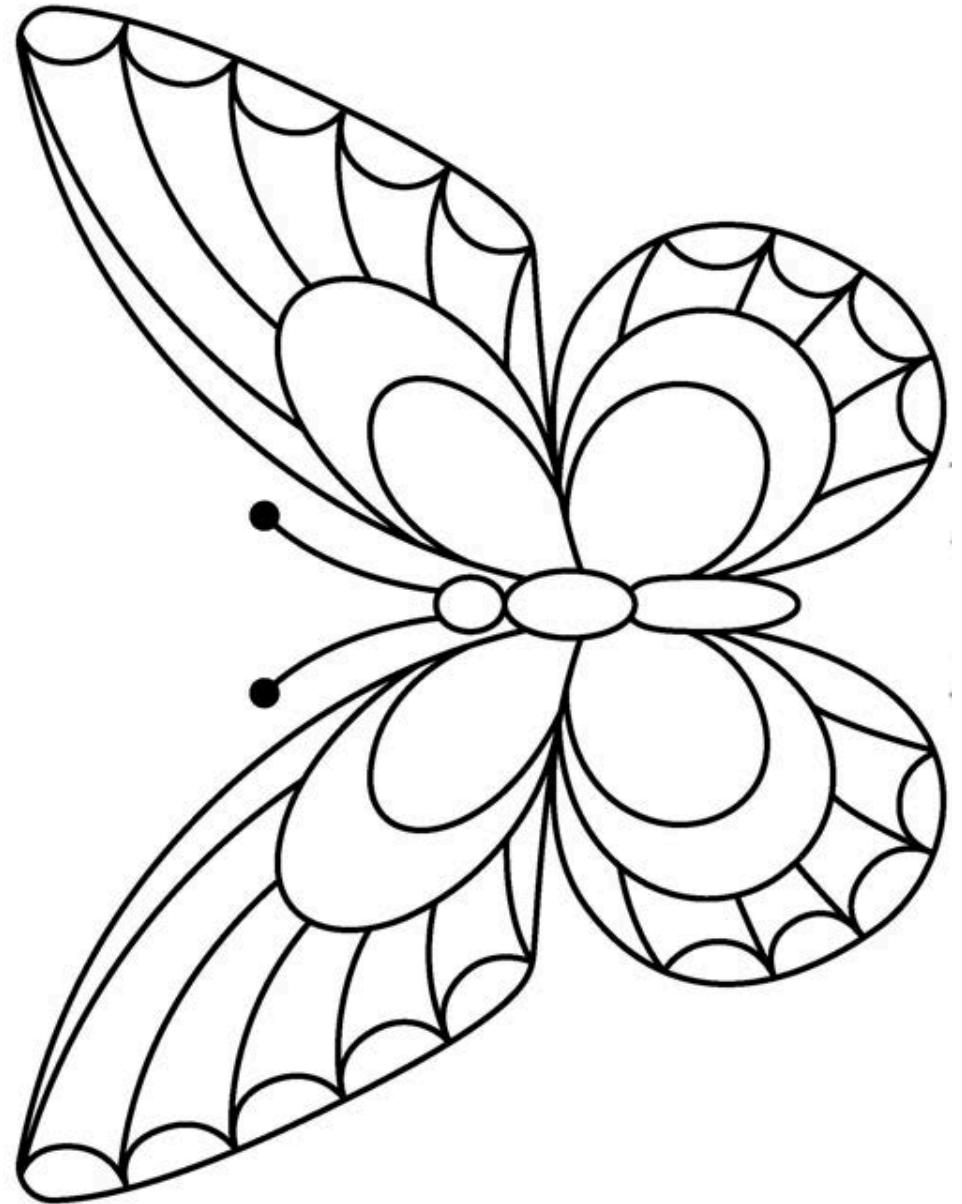
Born: 1932 Targu Neamt, Romania

Survivor: Romania

Romania, allied with Nazi Germany, entered the war in June 1941. German troops flooded the country, adding muscle to the Romanian Iron Guard and its policy of persecution of the country's Jews. Fredericka's father and seventeen other Jewish community leaders were taken hostage. "They said if anyone left the city, these men would be shot," she recalls. Her mother took her to the schoolhouse. She could see her father through a crack in the wall. "The guards were so cruel. They said he would be shot and killed tonight." By the next morning the men had been sent to a forced labor camp.

In April 1944, as Soviet troops fought their way across the border into Romania, the Jews of Targu Neamt were marched away from the front. "We walked for several days. I remember the rabbi who refused a ride on a wagon. He believed that as long as the poor and sick would walk, he would walk." Fridericka says the battle over Moldova was "so fierce we could not return home until late September. Romanians stayed in our homes and helped themselves to whatever they wanted. Everything was looted and destroyed."

Fredericka finished high school after the war ended. She went to university in Bucharest, where she met her husband, Leonid.



Leonid Saharovici



Moved to: Memphis, Tennessee

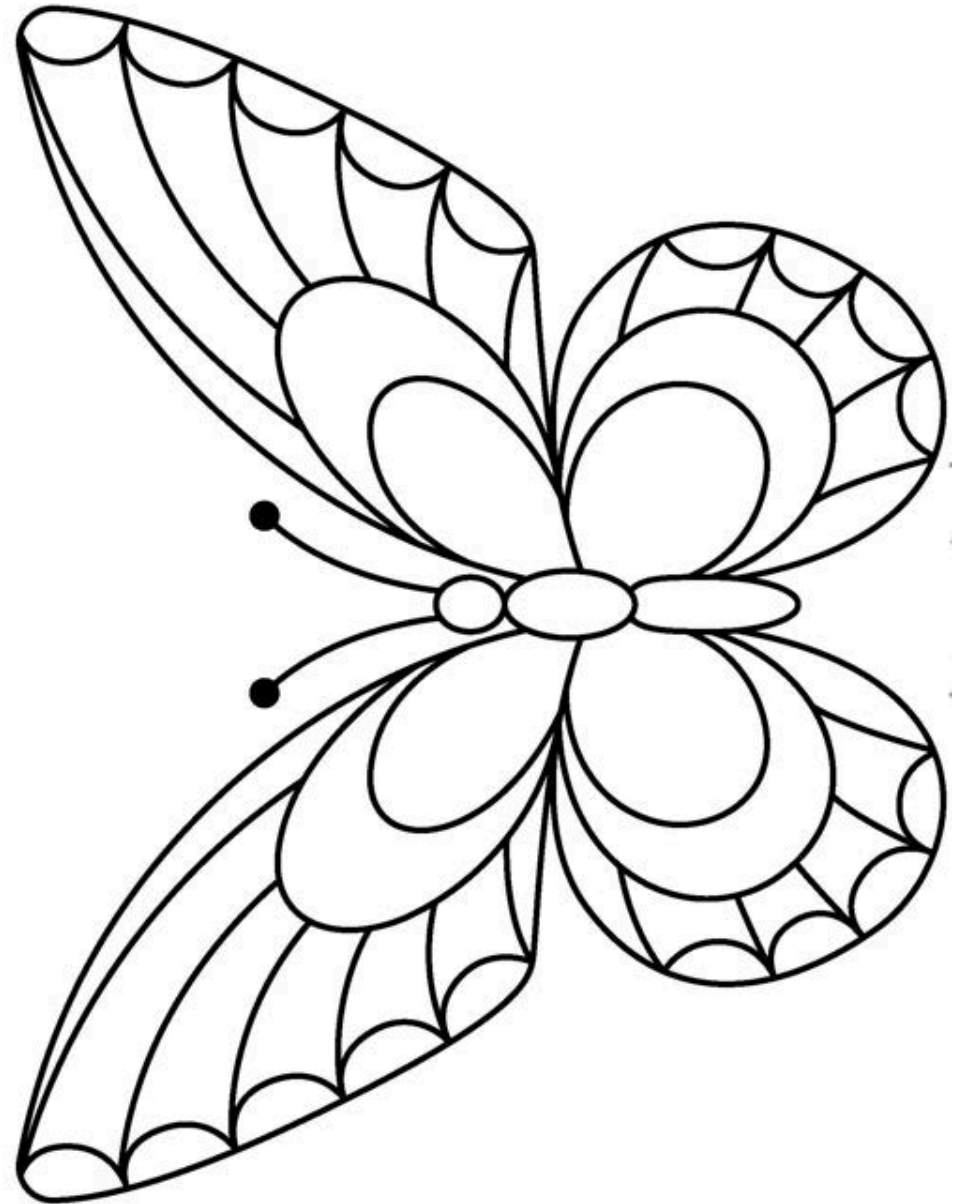
Born: 1927 Bucharest, Romania

Survivor: Romania

In 1940 thirteen-year-old Leonid was expelled from school. His family's home was confiscated, their belongings put on the street. His father was sent to a forced labor camp. Leonid, his mother, and his grandparents moved in with his aunt-five people in one room.

Even before the formal alliance with Nazi Germany in June 1941, Romania's Iron Guard enforced racial hatred. "People were put out of business and dismissed from jobs." Leonid calls it anarchy; no rule of law could protect the Jews. In one vicious raid, Leonid recalls, Jews were "taken and placed in slaughterhouses. The fascist militia ran out of ammunition, so they put Jews on meat hooks."

Leonid went daily to a forced labor camp. "We did everything we were asked. Much was not so pleasant for a boy of fifteen." One very cold day, when Leonid was shoveling snow, a kind woman appeared. "She called to us and offered us hot tea and some bread. Her husband came home and began yelling, 'What are you doing? These are dirty Jews, let them freeze...they must die!' She pushed him into the house, told us to finish the tea and leave. Her heart was in the right place."



Frieda Weinreich



Moved to: Memphis, Tennessee

Born: 1924 Łódź, Poland

Survivor: Łódź Ghetto; Auschwitz
Concentration Camp; Parschnitz
Slave Labor Camp

“The inmates must have known that she was going to the crematorium. But I just held onto my mother as they dragged me away,” says Frieda Weinreich. “I had no idea what was happening, but they knew, and they saved my life. She died in a gas chamber.”

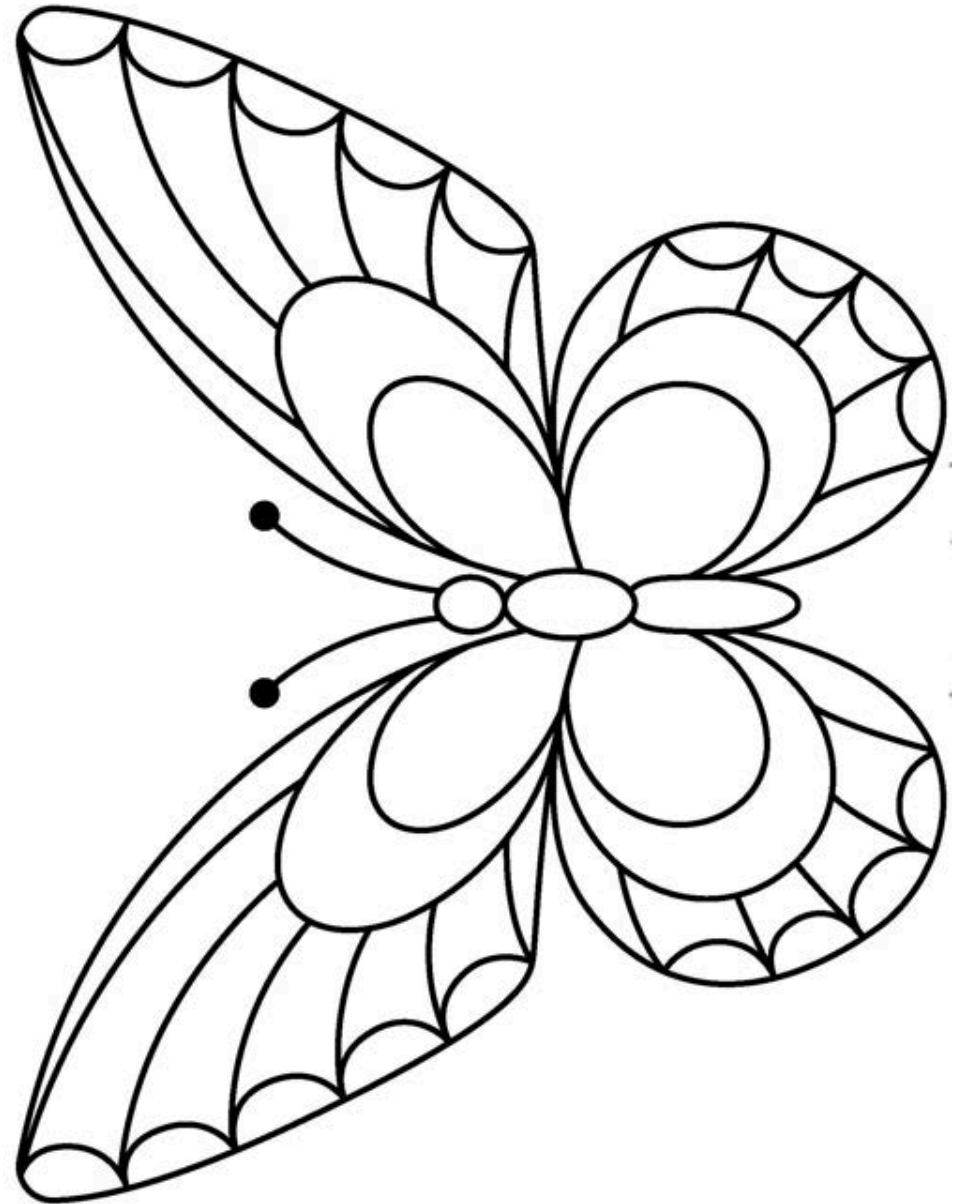
Frieda had five brothers and sisters, loving parents, and a home in which she felt safe. Just months after her fifteenth birthday, the security she had known was gone.” The war broke out and the Germans came to Łódź and began beating people up,” she recalls.

“Synagogues were burned down; schools for Jewish children were destroyed.”

By December, 1939, Frieda and her family were in the Łódź ghetto. “Life in the ghetto was cramped,” she says. “We had limited food and no coal to heat our home. We were so cold and many people died from starvation.” Her father was among them; he died in 1941.

Frieda and others prayed in secret, knowing that their Jewish faith bound them together. They honored the Sabbath in whatever way they could. “We saved potatoes through the year,” she recalls, “so that during Passover we could go without bread and still survive.”

In 1944, Frieda and her mother were sent to Auschwitz. It was there that fellow prisoners pulled her out of a line headed to the gas chambers. She survived to work as a bricklayer at Parschnitz, a labor camp in Czechoslovakia. Frieda reflects, “I have no idea how I survived long enough to see the Russian soldiers.” They arrived on May 9, 1945.



Sam Weinreich



Moved to: Memphis, Tennessee

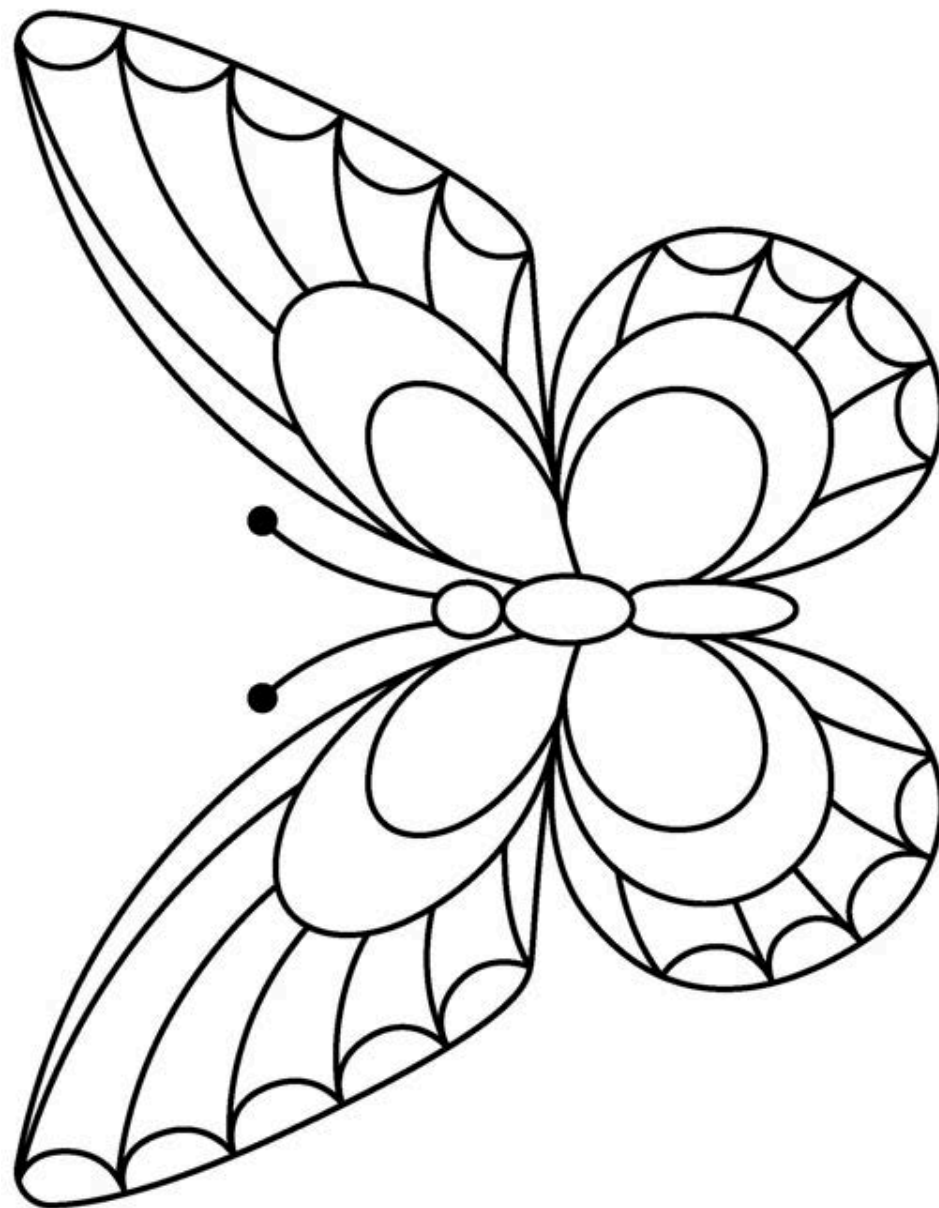
Born: 1919 Łódź, Poland

Survivor: Łódź Ghetto, Auschwitz and
Dachau Concentration Camps

At Auschwitz concentration camp, Sam Weinreich labored by day covering corpses with chlorine disinfectant. By night he sang for the doctors for an extra piece of bread. His song—and maybe the bread—kept him alive. “I would sing a particular song that would always make this one Czechoslovakian doctor cry.”

Sam remembered his home in Poland and his eight brothers and sisters. He remembered the family-run furniture and antique shops. He remembered the piercing shout of a cyclist going door to door warning that the Germans were coming. “I fled to Warsaw to protest the treatment of the Jewish people, but the city was burning and people were starving. I returned home.” When the Nazis seized his shop, Sam's father lost the ability to support his family. Cold and desperately hungry, they went willingly to what they thought would be a better place: the Łódź Ghetto. Sam chopped wood all day for an extra bowl of soup. In 1944 he was deported to Auschwitz. He never saw anyone he knew again.

Later sent to Dachau, Sam managed to escape as he exited the train. “We walked through the forest for weeks...we were hungry...we had just about given up.” One morning, as they slept on a bed of leaves, nearly frozen to death, an American soldier found them. “This American soldier said he would take care of us...I never thought I would live to hear that. Ever.”



Fred Westfield



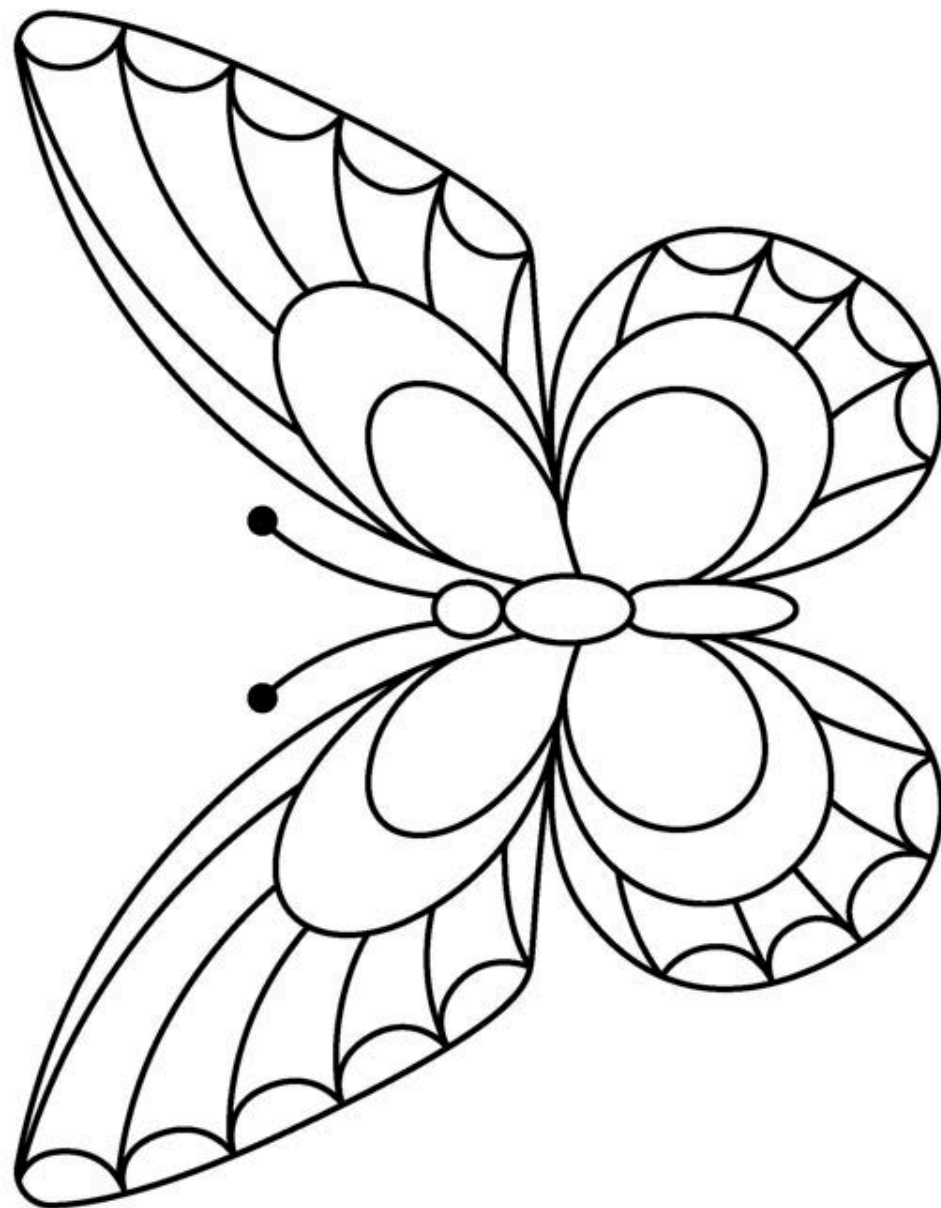
Moved to: Nashville, Tennessee

Born: 1926 Essen, Germany

Refugee: Essen, Germany

Fred had boarded a train bound for London in 1939 as part of the Kindertransport, a British effort to save Germany's Jewish children from Nazi terror. Thirteen-year-old Fred was placed with a foster family until his parents could safely retrieve him. Weekly letters allowed them to keep in touch. In 1936, at the first rumblings of civil unrest in Germany, Fred's parents had filed for United States visas. His 15-year-old brother had been allowed to emigrate, but Fred, his mother, and his father were trapped by the United States quota system, which granted only a certain number of Jewish refugees entry in a given year. The British, however, were accepting Jewish adults who could financially support themselves and would agree not to seek employment. The Westfields were assigned a number and told to wait their turn.

By the time their U.S. visa number came up, Fred's parents were in England, but his father was being detained along with other German nationals. The U.S. visa secured his release and the family boarded a ship from Liverpool, England, for New York. They were reunited with Fred's brother in Nashville.



Henry and Sally Wolkoff



Moved to: Nashville, Tennessee

Henry: **Born:** 1914 Lutomiersk, Poland
Survivor: Pabianice and Łódź Ghettos;
Auschwitz, Mauthausen, and Ebensee
Concentration Camps

Sally: **Born:** 1914 Pabianice, Poland
Survivor: Pabianice and Łódź Ghettos;
Auschwitz, Freiburg, and Mauthausen
Concentration Camps

Henry was sent to Mauthausen Concentration Camp and taken by cattle car to Ebensee. At liberation in May 1945, Henry, was sick with typhus. But both made their way back to Poland. Henry reaches for her (his wife Sally's) hand. "We don't talk about it. It is very hard for us," he says, bowing his head in memory of family members who did not survive.

Sally remembers the last time she saw her family together: "It was in line awaiting separation at Auschwitz. Two of my sisters were sent to the airplane factory and my other sister and I were sent for office work." Her father's instructions were, "Whoever survives must return to Poland to find each other." Sally survived Freiburg and Mauthausen. She whispers, "It is impossible for me to describe what I saw there at the camps. Death everywhere. Bodies, sickness...I just can't explain it." As she confronts the memories, she cries.

At liberation in May 1945, Sally was suffering from starvation and from typhus, a disease caused by lice and crowded, unsanitary living conditions. Henry, too, was sick with typhus. But both made their way back to Poland. When Sally saw Henry again, she says, "I knew he was the man I wanted to marry. I just looked at him and I knew." Henry reaches for her hand. "We don't talk about it. It is very hard for us," he says, bowing his head in memory of family members who did not survive.

