

HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS IN KENTUCKY INTERVIEW PROJECT

INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION

Robert Holczer

Residence: Paris, KY.

Length of interview: approximately 10 hours.

Date(s) of interview: 1/10/96; 4/29/96; 3/17/99

(note: a transcript exists of tapes 1 through 7)

Related resources:

- A transcript has been made of tapes 1-7 by the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.
- The Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation produced an interview on videotape, which was not reviewed for this project.

Evaluation/further information about interview:

Robert was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1929. This interview chronicles his life in detail, starting with his family background, and ending with his reflections on life in Paris, KY. Robert spent the war years in Budapest in a “safe house”, a makeshift hospital that treated wounded members of the Arrow Cross, Hungary’s fascist party. The house served the unofficial purpose of saving Jewish doctors and their families from deportation to concentration camps. After the war, Robert joined a Zionist organization (he was searching for a utopian society, and hoped he’d find it in Israel), and emigrated illegally to Israel in 1948, where he lived on a kibbutz. In 1950, homesick for his parents and disillusioned with Israel, he returned to Budapest, where he struggled to find work, being branded by the communists as a traitor for having left Hungary. He escaped to the US after Hungary’s ’56 revolution, and lived in St. Louis, MO, Aspen, CO, northern California (where he married his wife, Jan, and worked as a schoolteacher). He and Jan moved to Germany together, where they lived for many years. Finally, in 1993, he and Jan retired to a horse farm in Paris, KY.

Robert has a remarkable memory and an ability to tell wonderful stories. The depth and variety of his experiences, and his keen observation, make this a very rich interview.