



#WeRemember on International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2023

02 Feb 2023

To mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January – the day Auschwitz concentration camp was liberated 78 years ago – the National Fund of the Republic of Austria is taking part in the #WeRemember campaign.



The team of the National Fund of the Republic of Austria joins #WeRemember for International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Shoah Wall of Names Memorial in Vienna. (c) Nationalfonds

In the days surrounding Remembrance Day, people who were persecuted following the “*Anschluss*” of Austria to Nazi Germany, who went on to survive Auschwitz and give testimony after their liberation will have their say on the social media channels of the National Fund; quotations, photos and short biographies will give readers an insight into their lives and survival.

Their stories are published in Volume 6 of the series *Erinnerungen. Lebensgeschichten von Opfern des Nationalsozialismus* (“Lives Remembered. Life Stories of Victims of National Socialism”), entitled *Überleben in Auschwitz* (“Surviving Auschwitz”). The two-volume book was published in October 2021 to mark the opening of the new Austrian exhibition at Auschwitz. It contains 20 autobiographical testimonies by survivors from different victim groups and provides a deep insight into everyday camp life, death and survival in Auschwitz.

Entries recorded in the digital guestbook by visitors to the new Austrian exhibition at Auschwitz are also documents of remembrance and commemoration. Visitors can express the thoughts and feelings that are elicited by the exhibition. These messages are displayed on the exhibition website and in various public places in Austria.

The publication *Überleben in Auschwitz* can be obtained from the National Fund.

The website for the new Austrian exhibition at Auschwitz containing biographies of Austrian Auschwitz inmates and the digital guestbook is online at www.auschwitz.at

24 January 2023 – Ella Lingens

Ella Lingens, née Reiner was born on 18 November 1908 into a wealthy Viennese family. She attended a private school and joined the Social Democratic Party as a teenager. Ella first studied law and then medicine. In March 1938 she married her fellow student Kurt Lingens, and on 3 August 1939 their son Peter Michael was born. After the “*Anschluss*”, Ella Lingens and her husband joined forces with fellow student Karl Motesiczky to help persecuted Jews. They used Karl Motesiczky’s house to hide them, providing food and helping prepare their escape.

In 1942, the group was betrayed and arrested. Kurt Lingens was assigned to a penal company, while Karl Motesiczky was deported to Auschwitz and murdered.

After spending several months in prison, Ella Lingens was also deported to Auschwitz, where she was put to work – without any previous practical experience – as a doctor in the infirmary under the infamous camp doctor Josef Mengele. After recovering from a bout of typhus, she was transferred to Dachau in 1944 to work as a doctor in a women’s detachment. She was liberated in April 1945. She died in Vienna on 30 December 2002.

Ella Lingens’s life story “Auschwitz was different” is published in Volume 6/2 of the book series *Erinnerungen. Lebensgeschichten von Opfern des Nationalsozialismus*, entitled *Überleben in Auschwitz*.

Read Ella Lingens biography at: <https://www.auschwitz.at/ella-lingens>

Nur wer selbst im Konzentrationslager war, ohne zu wissen, wie lange dies dauern werde, kann ermessen, was das bedeutet, eine wenn auch noch so vage Hoffnung auf Befreiung zu haben. Mein einziges Kind war drei Jahre alt gewesen, als ich von ihm getrennt worden war. Nur wer selbst Kinder hat, kann verstehen, wie groß und wie schwer die Sehnsucht einer Mutter nach ihrem kleinen Sohn zu ertragen ist.

Ella Lingens

25 January 2023 – Susan Cernyak-Spatz

Susan Cernyak-Spatz was born Susanne Eckstein on 27 July 1922 in Vienna; she grew up in a middle-class family in Döbling. After the “*Anschluss*” of Austria to the German Reich in March 1938, Susanne and her mother managed to flee to Prague, where Susanne's father awaited them, having travelled there for professional reasons shortly before the “*Anschluss*”. In Prague, the family lived together in a small apartment.

In May 1942, Susanne and her mother were deported to Theresienstadt. Susanne was admitted to the camp upon arrival, her mother was transported onward to “the East” on the same day and murdered at Sobibór.

In 1943, Susanne was deported to the concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. In January 1945, in the course of the camp's evacuation, she was sent on a death march to Ravensbrück concentration camp for women.

Susanne was liberated in early May 1945.

In 1946, she emigrated to the USA with her husband, where she worked at the University of North Carolina until her retirement. She died on 17 November 2019 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Susanne Cernyak-Spatz's life story “Lessons on Survival” is published in Volume 6/2 of the book series *Erinnerungen. Lebensgeschichten von Opfern des Nationalsozialismus*, entitled *Überleben in Auschwitz*.

In der Nacht vom 17. auf den 18. Januar 1945 wurde der ganze Auschwitz-Komplex, Auschwitz I, II und III, ins Reich evakuiert. Mit diesem Befehl begann der „Todesmarsch“. [...] Wurden wir evakuiert, weil die Deutschen Angst hatten, die Russen könnten uns befreien? Oder war es, weil wir eben dazu bestimmt waren, das Ziel der „Endlösung“ zu vervollständigen, bis zum letzten Juden, auch wenn inzwischen alle wussten, dass der Krieg verloren war?

Susan Cernyak-Spatz

26 January 2023 - Freddie Knoller

One year ago today, on 26 January 2022, Freddie Knoller passed away at the age of 100.

Freddie Knoller was born in Vienna on 17 April 1921. His parents, Marja and David Knoller, hailed from the Ukraine. Until November 1938, he lived in Vienna with his family – his parents and his two older brothers Eric and Otto. Freddie's parents' experiences during the “Night of Broken Glass” and the fact that they had good contacts in Belgium persuaded them to send him to Antwerp, Belgium, to live with family friends. His brothers were also sent abroad, Eric to the United States and Otto to Great Britain. After leaving Vienna, Freddie never saw his parents again. They were deported to Theresienstadt in 1942 and Birkenau in 1944, where they perished.

In July 1943, Freddie fled to southern France and worked for the Résistance, but he was betrayed and taken to the camp at Drancy. From there he was deported to Auschwitz in October 1943. He was sent on a death march, which took him via Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp then onward to Bergen-Belsen, where he was liberated on 14 April 1945.

Freddie Knoller's life story “Every event in my story leads to Auschwitz” is published in Volume 6/2 of the book series *Erinnerungen. Lebensgeschichten von Opfern des Nationalsozialismus*, entitled *Überleben in Auschwitz*.

Und dann hat es geheißen, wir haben ja dort
[in Jaworzno] auch Karteien gehabt, und da ist
uns gesagt worden [...] am 15. Jänner, wir sollen
alles, die ganzen Karteien sollen wir zurecht
machen, die werden vernichtet. Und morgen
gehen wir weg von hier. Er hat aber nicht gesagt,
wohin. [...] Die ganzen Karteien sind dann von
der SS genommen worden, sind verbrannt
worden. [...] Ich hab damals mit einem SS-Mann
gesprochen, mit einem Posten, der neben uns
gegangen ist, und der hat uns gesagt: „Der Krieg
wird wahrscheinlich für uns zu Ende sein, aber
wenn wir gehen, dann nehmen wir euch mit. Es
kommt keiner von euch lebend davon.“ [...] Da
hat der Todesmarsch am 15. begonnen und hat
gedauert praktisch bis 5.5. Damals sind wir von
den Russen befreit worden.

Paul Grünberg

28 January 2023 – Ceija Stojka

10 years ago on this day, on 28 January 2013, Auschwitz survivor Ceija Stojka passed away in Vienna.

She was born on 23 May 1933 in Kraubath an der Mur in Styria as Margarethe Horvath. Her family were Lovara Roma, an ethnic group that had been involved in horse-trading in Austria since the 19th century. Ceija's parents Karl "Wakar" Stojka and Maria "Sidi", née Rigo were travelling horse traders set up home in Vienna over the winter. Ceija grew up with her five siblings Kathi, Mitzi, Johann "Mongo", Karl and Ossi.

In 1941, her father was arrested, sent to Dachau concentration camp and murdered in the same year at Hartheim Castle, a Nazi killing facility in Upper Austria. In 1943, she was deported with her mother, her sister Mitzi and her three brothers to the extermination camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau, where her little brother Ossi died of typhoid fever. In Auschwitz, Ceija was reunited with her sister Kathi, who had been imprisoned in the "Gypsy camp" in Lackenbach, Burgenland.

Ceija Stojka survived the concentration camps Auschwitz-Birkenau, Ravensbrück and Bergen-Belsen. As a writer and painter, she processed her experiences from the camps.

Ceija Stojka's life story "I remember Auschwitz every waking moment of my life" is published in Volume 6/1 of the book series *Erinnerungen. Lebensgeschichten von Opfern des Nationalsozialismus*, entitled *Überleben in Auschwitz*.

More on the life of Ceija Stojka

du hast angst vor der finsternis?
ich sage dir, wo der weg menschenleer ist,
brauchst du dich nicht zu fürchten.
ich habe keine angst.
meine angst ist in auschwitz geblieben
und in den lagern.
auschwitz ist mein mantel,
bergen belsen mein kleid
und ravensbrück mein unterhemd.
wovor soll ich mich fürchten?

Ceija Stojka
