

DALLAS HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS MUSEUM

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

DEPORTATION



“We were about three days on the road, when we saw two big chimneys in the distance... The flame was high up in the sky and my mother told us: ‘I don’t know where we are going, but you get ready. Maybe we are going right in that flame.’”

—Magda Mittelman
Hungarian Survivor, Dallas resident

Some deportations were small and local. Others were massive. In the largest single operation of the war, over 437,000 Hungarian Jews were deported in 54 days on 147 trains.



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2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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As a museum focused on the study of history, we understand the devastating consequences of unchecked antisemitism and hatred — it led to the murder of 6 million Jews at the hands of the Nazis as the world largely stood by, or worse, was complicit. The October 7 attack on Israel perpetrated by Hamas, the deadliest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, and the ongoing devastation of war have made our mission to teach the history of the Holocaust and advance human rights to combat prejudice, hatred, and indifference all the more imperative. Our conviction to standing up against antisemitism and hatred in all its forms has been strengthened.

During this challenging time, we have found hope in new opportunities for the Museum to reach more students than ever before. During 2023, the Museum expanded its innovative Upstander Partnership program to serve 73,500 students from kindergarten through 12th grade in Dallas ISD, Coppell ISD, and Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD. Through age-appropriate lessons and activities aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills curriculum requirements, students receive an educational experience that goes beyond textbooks throughout each year of their academic journey.

In the classroom and within our doors, the Museum reached more than 217,000 people in 2023. Students visited on field trips and participated in our educational offerings, visitors from DFW and around the world learned from our exhibitions, the community engaged with public programs, and educators and law enforcement attended trainings, and much more.

All of this is only possible with you — our members, donors, volunteers, and supporters. We are especially grateful for your meaningful support and contributions at a time when educating others and inspiring Upstanders is even more vital.

Warmest regards,

Mary Pat Higgins

Mary Pat Higgins
President and CEO

Lee E. Michaels

Lee Michaels
Board of Directors Chair



Cover: Students tour the Holocaust / Shoah Wing. Photo by Kim Leeson.
Back Cover: Ten Stages of Genocide Gallery.
Clockwise from top: Student explores the Holocaust / Shoah Wing; Handwritten letters from the collection of Mark Donald and Florence Donald Shapiro; Holocaust survivor Hanna Schrob. Photo by Kim Leeson; Detail of wall panel from *Rise Up: Stonewall and the LGBTQ Rights Movement* special exhibition.

Photo by Jason O'Rear.

SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

RISE UP: STONEWALL AND THE LGBTQ RIGHTS MOVEMENT



Guests touring *Rise Up: Stonewall and the LGBTQ Rights Movement*.
Photo by Kim Leeson.

Rise Up: Stonewall and the LGBTQ Rights Movement, a special exhibition developed by Freedom Forum, was on view at the Museum from January 25 to June 18. The exhibition explored the history of the LGBTQ rights movement in the United States, focusing on the June 1969 police raid of the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York’s Greenwich Village, which was a pivotal event for the movement. Key moments such as the 1978 assassination of Harvey Milk, one of the country’s first openly gay politicians, the AIDS crisis, and the fight for marriage equality were highlighted and shed light on how activists used their First Amendment freedoms to demand an end to the discrimination against LGBTQ individuals. *Rise Up* also examined popular culture’s role in changing attitudes about the LGBTQ community.

The exhibition engaged audiences through quotations from important LGBTQ figures, interactive touch screens, documentary clips, and artifacts including outfits worn by key figures, newspaper and magazine excerpts, protest and political signs, and a rainbow pride flag signed by the flag’s original designer, Gilbert Baker.

The Museum opened the exhibition with a discussion of the historical events surrounding the Stonewall Uprising and its legacy. Public programs included a panel discussion on securing and safeguarding transgender rights in the United States co-presented with Resource Center, and one that featured a panel of local LGBTQ trailblazers who talked about activism in Dallas, co-presented with The Dallas Way.

The exhibition was presented by Texas Instruments Foundation and was supported by Match Group. Sponsors included Dallas Tourism Public Improvement District, Fossil Group, Toyota, and American Airlines.



Rainbow pride flag signed by the original designer, Gilbert Baker.

BLACK CITIZENSHIP IN THE AGE OF JIM CROW

Following the Civil War, slavery was abolished, and all individuals born in the United States were to be considered citizens and equal before the law. However, this resulted in a harsh backlash; the concept of “separate but equal” emerged, resulting in a system of second-class citizenship and racial segregation driven by common practice, and state and local law, collectively known as Jim Crow. ***Black Citizenship in the Age of Jim Crow***, a special exhibition created by the New-York Historical Society that was on view from July 20 to December 31, explored this struggle for full citizenship and racial equality that unfolded in the decades following the Civil War. The exhibition highlighted the widespread inequality and discrimination Black people faced, such as limited educational and housing opportunities, and examined how Black people advocated for their rights.

Among artifacts, art, photographs, and media in the exhibition were slave shackles, a World War I toy soldier diorama featuring Black troops in the 369th Infantry Regiment known as the “Harlem Hellfighters,” and a contemporary portrait of Dred Scott, a Missouri slave who sued for his freedom and lost after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1857 that no Black person, free or enslaved, could be a U.S. citizen.



Guests observing artifacts in *Black Citizenship in the Age of Jim Crow*.

To accompany the special exhibition, the Museum hosted three public programs. The opening program featured a discussion on Texas freedom colonies, communities founded by newly freed slaves after the Civil War. An event about the impact of the Harlem Renaissance included a live jazz performance from Dallas singer/songwriter **Andrea Wallace**. A discussion on the Tulsa Race Massacre featured **Dr. Karlos K. Hill** detailing the Greenwood District, the aftermath of the massacre, and efforts to memorialize the victims and recognize the survivors and their descendants.

The exhibition was sponsored by Texas Capital, Amazon, Debbie and Ronald Greene, Nissan Foundation, Humanities Texas, Dallas Tourism Public Improvement District, Match Group, Bank of Texas, Larry Ginsburg, NFI Industries, and American Airlines.

Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in these programs do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Guests at the opening reception for *Black Citizenship in the Age of Jim Crow*.

PROGRAMMING

DISTINGUISHED LECTURES

Named in loving memory of Blanche and Max Goldberg and Fannie and Isaac Funk, the **Funk Family Upstander Speaker Series** showcases individuals and organizations who stand up for human rights on a local, national, or global level. For the first installment of the 2023 series, the Museum hosted **Opal Lee**, local legend and Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient known as the “Grandmother of Juneteenth” for her efforts to see Juneteenth made into a federal holiday. In March, Iranian-American journalist and women’s rights activist **Masih Alinejad**, who sparked a civil disobedience movement against compulsory hijab in Iran by posting a photo of herself with her hair uncovered, spoke about her activism and nonprofit work in support of Iranian women and in opposition to Iran’s regime. The Museum concluded the 2023 series with **Phyllis Frye**, the nation’s first openly transgender judge,



Opal Lee discusses her efforts to make Juneteenth a federal holiday at the Funk Family Upstander Speaker Series. Photo by Kim Leeson.

who talked about her work to advance the transgender civil rights movement. As part of the **Mittelman-Berman Holocaust Education Series**, in memory of Les and Magda Mittelman, the Museum explored media coverage of the Holocaust as the horrific events unfolded. The Museum welcomed journalist, professor, and author of *Buried by The Times: The Holocaust and America’s Most Important Newspaper*, **Laurel Leff**, who discussed how The New York Times consistently and purposefully downplayed the Holocaust.



The Museum launched **Rule of Law**, a new series which examines law and society and brings to light what happens when the rule of law breaks down, with a lecture by **Anne Applebaum**, a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, journalist, and commentator on geopolitics. In conversation with KERA Think host **Krys Boyd**, she discussed the rise of authoritarianism around the world and what makes people turn away from democracy.

Above middle: Krys Boyd interviews Anne Applebaum at the inaugural Rule of Law program. Photo by Tamytha Cameron.

Top right: Laurel Leff signs books after her Mittelman-Berman Holocaust Education Series lecture. Photo by Kim Leeson.



ENGAGING DISCUSSIONS

The Museum’s **Civil Discourse Series**, presented by The Meadows Foundation, explores multiple sides of a thought-provoking topic through respectful discussion. In 2023, a panel of legal experts discussed the structure of the Supreme Court, how it has evolved since its formation, and the role it should play in the lives of Americans.

In June, the Museum celebrated civil rights history through a discussion about the **Dallas NAACP Youth Council** that legendary civil rights activist Juanita Craft helped organize. Known as “Craft Kids,” the members participated in peaceful demonstrations against racial segregation and discrimination. Craft Kid **Patricia Perez** shared her firsthand account of her journey into civil rights activism and her experiences working with Juanita Craft in conversation with **Candace Thompson**, Friends of Juanita Craft House & Museum board chair. The program was presented in conjunction with the Candy Brown Holocaust and Human Rights Educator Series.

The Museum is grateful for programming support from Jones Day Foundation, The Summers Foundation, Julie Meetal Berman and Dr. Joseph M. Berman, IMA Financial Group and IMA Foundation, Candy and Ike Brown, Mavs Take ACTION!, Summerlee Foundation, Thomson Reuters, and Bank of Texas.

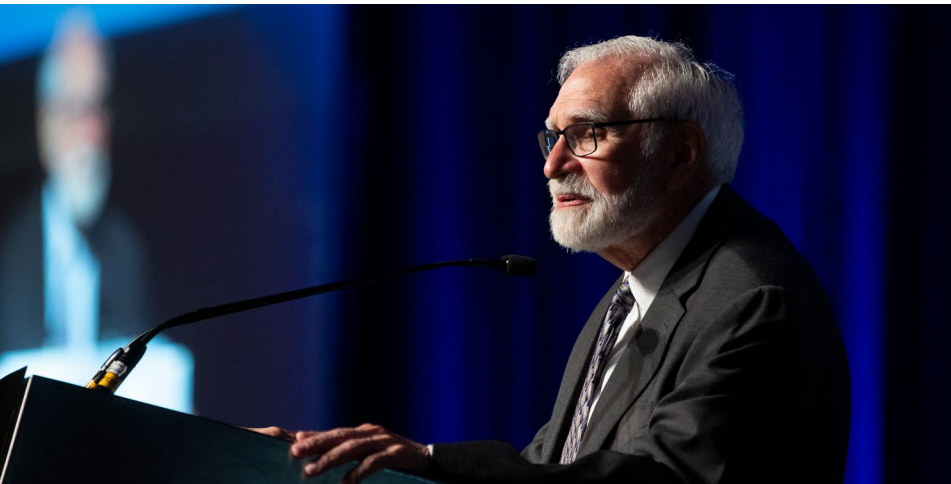
INSPIRING EVENTS

The Museum welcomed more than 460 guests to our annual **Spring Fundraiser**. Guests took part in Dallas’ opening night of the national Broadway tour of Aaron Sorkin’s play adaptation of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Set in the Jim Crow South, the play’s content aligned with our mission through its coverage of racial injustice and emphasis on combating prejudice. The production, hosted at the Music Hall at Fair Park and presented by Broadway Dallas, featured Emmy Award-winning actor **Richard Thomas** in the role of Atticus Finch.

On October 25, we held our annual **Hope for Humanity** dinner at the Hyatt Regency Dallas. More than 1,200 guests came together to pay tribute to our Holocaust survivors and to honor longtime Museum supporter and Lifetime Director **Larry Schoenbrun**, who has supported nonprofit organizations throughout North Texas and has dedicated his pro bono legal work to help those facing persecution and seeking asylum.

At the event, we debuted an original Museum-produced short film about children who survived the Holocaust in hiding. The film featured personal testimonies from hidden children **Ginette Mandelblum Albert**, **Paul Kessler**, **Dr. Max Spindler**, and **Rosian Bagriansky Zerner**, whose stories of parents and rescuers who risked their lives to save them serve as a reminder that one person can make a difference.

Top to bottom: Richard Thomas as Atticus Finch and Yaegel T. Welch as Tom Robinson in the production of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Photo by Julieta Cervantes; Randy Rubin, Julia Wada, and Richard Thomas post show at the 2023 Spring Fundraiser; Hope for Humanity Board Chair Lee Michaels, Event Co-Chairs Ken and Linda Wimberly, Honoree Larry Schoenbrun and Celia Schoenbrun, Event Co-Chairs Lynn and Gil Friedlander, and President and CEO Mary Pat Higgins; Larry Schoenbrun gives remarks at Hope for Humanity dinner. Hope for Humanity photos by Tamytha Cameron.



EDUCATION

Through education, we inspire our community to be Upstanders who make a positive impact.

In-person and virtual field trips during 2023 served 42,630 students, a 27% increase from 2022. Students connected with historical events and figures through interactive exhibitions, personal testimonies, artifacts, and films. Presenting lessons in these engaging ways helps students connect with this history through personal perspectives to better understand the lessons of the Holocaust, the role of human rights, and their role in being Upstanders against antisemitism and hatred.

Created in 2013, the **Museum Experience Fund** removes the barrier of admission cost that previously prevented students from visiting. Through this program, the Museum provides free admission, transportation, and curriculum support for students from Title I low-income schools. Made possible through

the support of generous Museum Experience Fund donors, 25,142 students in 2023 were able to visit the Museum, participate in educational programming, and learn these lessons.

The innovative **Upstander Partnership** program helps school districts integrate the Museum's lessons through engaging, custom, curriculum-aligned educational materials that cover a student's K-12 education. During 2023, the program expanded to serve 73,500 students across Coppell ISD, Dallas ISD Region I, and Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD. While a single Museum visit has many lasting benefits, it is more beneficial to provide students with access to this education throughout each year to better inform and positively impact them beyond the classroom.

Below: Students walk through the WWII era boxcar in the Holocaust / Shoah Wing. Photo by Kim Leeson.

The Museum's hope is that students engaged in the Upstander Partnership learn these lessons during all 13 years they are in school, having a dramatic positive effect on the youth in our community.

Educators at the Museum's Candy Brown Holocaust and Human Rights Educator Series.



During the summer months, the Museum continued to reach students with these important lessons. **Camp Upstander**, for students in kindergarten through sixth grade, engaged more than 2,200 students in partnership with the Jewish Community Center's Camp Chai. The **Upstander Institute** featured project-based learning created for grades seven to 12.

The Museum provided trainings, professional development opportunities, and programs for educators throughout the year, including the **Candy Brown Holocaust and Human Rights Educator Series**. Generously supported by Candy and Ike Brown, this series took on a new format in 2023, pivoting from a weeklong conference to allow educators, librarians, and counselors to connect with the Museum five times during the

year on topics related to the Museum's educational mission, with each session featuring a public program and a thematic speaker. These included Holocaust Remembrance Week, featuring the International Holocaust Remembrance Day Commemoration; Teaching Genocide Studies, with survivors in conversation; Ethnic Studies Day, and a public program discussing civil rights and the Dallas NAACP Youth Council; Teaching Holocaust Literature with a meet-the-author event with **Alan Gratz**; and Human Rights featuring a presentation about Eleanor Roosevelt and the fight for human rights. This series reached 191 educators.

Our **Professional and Community Programs** use history to teach law enforcement, health care, legal, and corporate professionals about the ramifications of unchecked hatred and equip participants with the tools and means to combat it. In 2023, 4,275 professionals participated in these programs.

Support for the Museum's educational programs was provided by Moody Foundation, Santander Consumer USA Foundation, Amazon, Toyota, Candy and Ike Brown, Bank of Texas, Ronit and Haviv Ilan, KERA, Summerlee Foundation, and Jewish Federation of Fort Worth and Tarrant County. The Museum is grateful for the many donors to the Museum Experience Fund.

On July 11, New York Times bestselling author Alan Gratz spoke about how his lack of enthusiasm as a young reader inspired him to write engaging books. He puts faces, names, and stories to statistics to personalize the history of the Holocaust and help young readers empathize. Fans of all ages attended this program, and he left them with advice for aspiring writers as well as inspiration to continue learning about history.



CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY

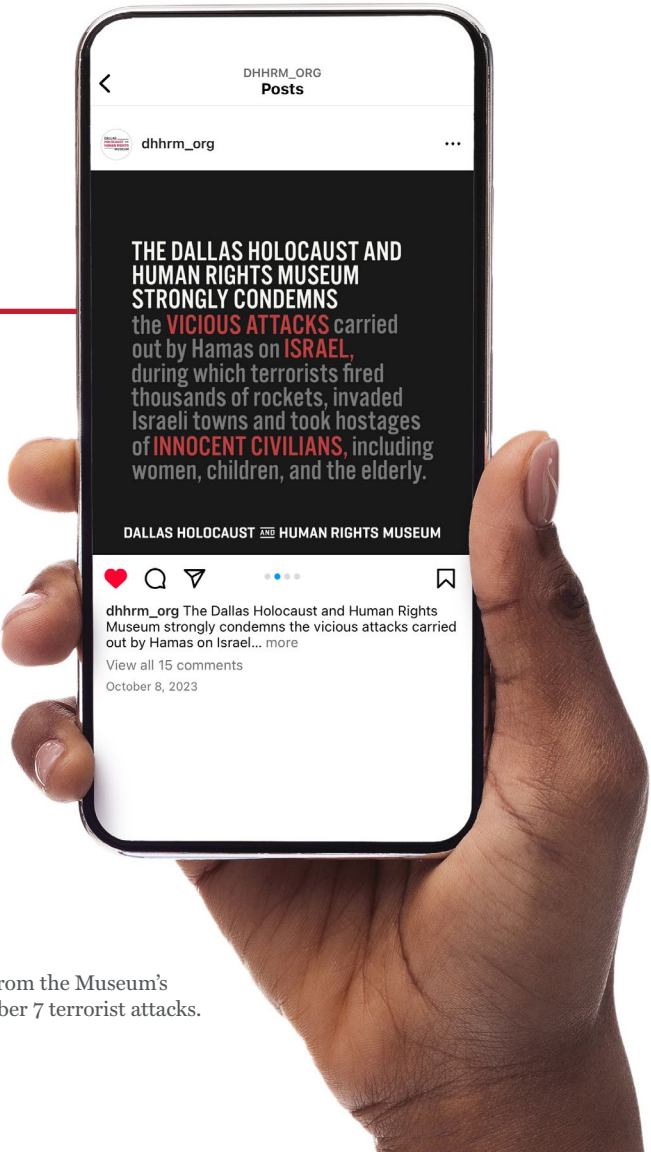


In 2023, the Museum reached **217,751** people through Museum visits, classroom programs, and online offerings.

This included welcoming **132,282** individuals to the Museum for visits, student field trips, public programs, events, and professional trainings. Visitors and program participants hailed from all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and 78 countries.

MAKING A STATEMENT

In keeping with our mission to combat prejudice, hatred, and indifference, the Museum issues statements in response to local, national, and global human rights violations and antisemitic or racist incidents, or in support of action taken against prejudice. In 2023, the Museum issued seven public statements covering topics such as the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel and the subsequent rise in antisemitism worldwide, and the shooting targeting a Black neighborhood in Jacksonville, Florida. The Museum also released statements in support of the first-ever U.S. national strategy to counter antisemitism and the termination of two Southlake, Texas, police officers who drew a swastika during a meeting.



Social media graphic from the Museum's statement on the October 7 terrorist attacks.

ACCESSIBILITY



To improve our website experience for people with disabilities, the Museum added accessiBe, a WordPress widget that applies ADA-compliant user interface and design-related adjustments to the website with one click. Through artificial intelligence, the widget also offers screen readers and keyboard navigation for users.

The Museum continued its efforts to ensure that cost is not a barrier to visiting the Museum by offering additional free admission days in commemoration of mission-aligned national holidays. On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we welcomed **1,321 visitors**, and on Juneteenth, **939 people visited**.

The Museum is grateful for underwriting support for Martin Luther King Jr. Day with funding from the City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture, and for Juneteenth from Museum members Peggy and Mark Zilbermann, and Susie and Larry Mondry.



Guests visiting during Martin Luther King Jr. Day learn about American ideals, reality, and repair in the Pivot to America Wing.



Dale Long, survivor of the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, speaks at the 2023 Corporate Night at the Museum.

A GATHERING PLACE

In 2023, the Museum served as the venue for **61 special events** for corporations and nonprofits. Welcoming organizations for meetings, receptions, conferences, video shoots, and speaker events provides opportunities to bring people together, educate, and create positive change.

The Museum was also honored to host the 2023 Association of Holocaust Organizations Annual Conference from June 10 to 13. Experts held sessions on the Holocaust and related topics for more than 100 national participants.

VOLUNTEER IMPACT

The Museum's dedicated volunteers continued to make an impact through their work as visitor guides, gallery docents, docent educators, and Dimensions in Testimony Theater facilitators. Additionally, volunteers assisted the Library and Archives and Development departments. In total, **380 volunteers served 7,047 volunteer hours**.



A docent provides a tour to students. Photo by Kim Leeson.

HONORING SURVIVORS AND SHARING THEIR STORIES

IN REMEMBRANCE

International Holocaust Remembrance Day was established by the United Nations in 2005 to mark the January 27, 1945, liberation of Auschwitz, a complex of camps where at least 1.1 million people, mostly Jews, were murdered, and to memorialize all those killed during the Holocaust. The Museum commemorated the day with a program screening excerpts from *The U.S. and the Holocaust*, a film by Ken Burns, Lynn Novick, and Sarah Botstein, and a discussion with Holocaust survivor **Ralph Hockley**, who shared his incredible experiences as a refugee fleeing Nazi Germany and arriving in the United States.

On April 16, we came together at Temple Emanu-El for our annual **Yom HaShoah** commemoration, which serves as a time to remember the 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust and honor our local survivors. Three members of the Museum’s Junior Board, which is comprised of high school students and provides them with opportunities to engage with the Museum’s mission and build leadership skills, relayed the history of the Warsaw Ghetto and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, which included testimonies from our survivor community.



Yom HaShoah commemoration.
Photo by Kim Leeson.

IN CONVERSATION

The Museum hosted its annual **Spring Break** and **Summer Survivor Speaker Series**, which featured testimonies from Holocaust survivors, refugees, hidden children, Kindertransport participants, and second-generation speakers. **Ralph Hockley** spoke at the Museum for a final time during the Summer Survivor Speaker Series before his passing on November 8, 2023.



Ralph Hockley (z"l). Photo by Kim Leeson.

In April, we commemorated Genocide Awareness Month, a time to remember and learn about mass atrocities committed around the world, with our **Survivors in Conversation** event. **Belma Islamovic**, who survived the Bosnian Genocide, and **Providence (Provie) Umugwaneza**, a survivor of the Genocide Against the Tutsis in Rwanda, shared their stories and inspired hope.

PRESERVING THE PAST

The Museum’s permanent exhibition and **Helen and Frank Risch Family Library & Archives** house documents, photographs, artifacts, and oral history testimonies. These archival materials cover the Holocaust and other human rights topics and are being preserved for future generations.

2023 ARTIFACT DONORS

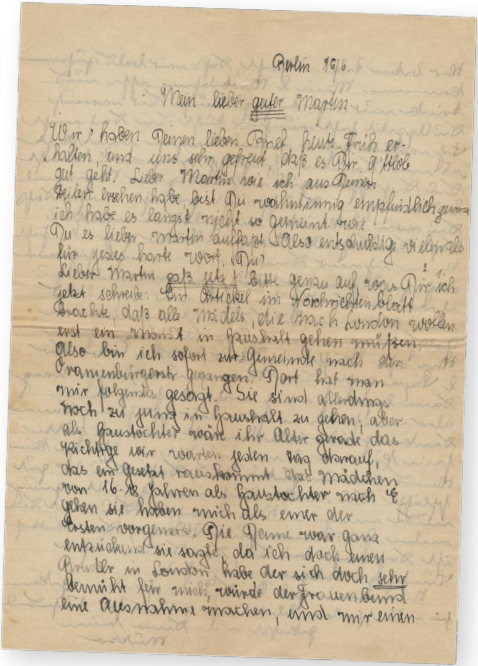
- Robert Adams
- Ginette Mandelblum Albert
- ArtWorks for Freedom
- Gina Lynn Bennett
- Black Cat Records
- Clifford Cary
- Charlotte Decoster
- Mark Donald
- James Evan Farrior
- Margaret “Magic” Furst
- Rozelle Gilman
- Naomi Green
- Anne Hanisch
- Sarah Hellman
- Ralph Hockley (z"l)
- Paul Kessler
- John William “Bill” Kongable
- Dale Long
- Kathy McCauley
- John Winniford Morton
- Elvira and Mihai Nadin
- Florence Donald Shapiro
- Max Spindler
- David Taffet
- Saul Waranch
- Jennifer Williams
- Paul von Wupperfeld

2023 ORAL HISTORY PARTICIPANTS

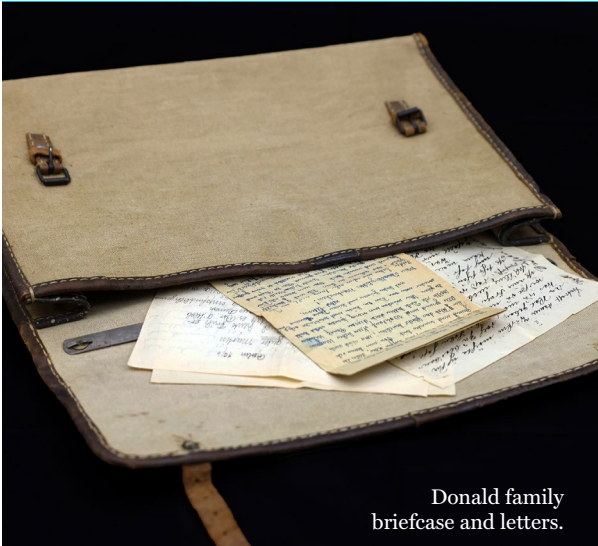
- Ginette Mandelblum Albert
- Al Green
- Naomi Green
- Paul Kessler
- Dale Long
- Bob Lydia
- Leslie McMurray
- Patricia Perez
- Max Spindler
- Diamond Stylz
- Rosian Bagriansky Zerner

In 2023, the Museum acquired 36 new collections of objects, oral history testimonies, and other archival items. One of these collections, donated by Mark Donald and Florence Donald Shapiro, includes artifacts that belonged to their parents, Martin and Ann Donald. While Martin and Ann were interviewed as part of the Museum’s oral history program in the 1980s and provided a handful of photographs, the Museum had no other documentary evidence reflecting the family’s complex Holocaust journey.

Mark and Florence discovered a briefcase after their mother’s passing. Upon opening it, they found approximately 300 letters written in German, most still in their original envelopes. Mark and Florence donated them to the Museum to be catalogued, digitized, and translated to learn their contents. The letters were found to be a correspondence between their father and his relatives in Nazi Germany.



Above: Handwritten letter from the Donald family collection.



Donald family briefcase and letters.

In honor of the service of Frank Risch on their board of directors, Pioneer Natural Resources made a lead gift in 2023 to establish the Frank Risch Library & Archives Endowment Fund, with additional contributions from leadership at Pioneer and his friends. This new endowment fund will provide long-term support for object conservation, high-level digitization of archival documents and photographs, and capturing new oral history testimonies as well as digitizing, preserving, transcribing, and cataloging testimonies for online research.



Below: Photograph of Martin Donald wearing a British Army uniform, circa 1940s.

DALLAS HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS MUSEUM

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$	1,797,981
Other receivables		382,315
Inventory, net		102,059
Prepaid expenses		265,892
Pledges receivable, net		2,846,248
Property and equipment, net		45,536,247
Investments unrelated to endowments		5,636,842
Assets held by the Endowment Foundation		12,364
Total assets	\$	56,579,948

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$	305,980
Deferred memberships		76,947
Lines of credit		-
Total liabilities		382,927

NET ASSETS

Without donor restrictions		51,173,266
With donor restrictions		5,023,755
Total net assets		56,197,021

Total liabilities and net assets	\$	56,579,948
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DALLAS HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS MUSEUM

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	2023 Total
REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT			
Admission fees	\$ 861,498	\$ -	\$ 861,498
Memberships	767,336	-	767,336
Upstander Partnership fees	10,000	-	10,000
Program service fees and museum store sales, net	238,533	-	238,533
Parking lot revenue, net	205,551	-	205,551
Contributions	1,337,911	1,151,486	2,489,397
In-kind contributions	115,180	-	115,180
Special event revenues, net of cost of direct benefits to donors	1,800,738	-	1,800,738
Endowment grants for operations	197,363	181,525	378,888
Endowment Fund management fee	23,050	-	23,050
Investment income, net	269,341	-	269,341
Net assets released from restrictions	2,291,033	(2,291,033)	-
Total revenues and other support	8,117,534	(958,022)	7,159,512
EXPENSES			
Education	7,974,581	-	7,974,581
Fundraising	1,046,667	-	1,046,667
Administrative	1,503,420	-	1,503,420
Total expenses	10,524,668	-	10,524,668
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(2,407,134)	(958,022)	(3,365,156)
Net assets, beginning of year	53,580,400	5,981,777	59,562,177
Net assets, end of year	\$ 51,173,266	\$ 5,023,755	\$ 56,197,021

Note: Expenses include \$3.6M of depreciation expense for the new building, which is a non-cash expenditure. However, the Museum has a Provision for Plant Replacement, Renewal and Special Maintenance (PPRRSM Fund), which is capital designated to fund future property, plant, and equipment expenditures.

SALUTING LIBERATORS

JOHN WILLIAM ‘BILL’ KONGABLE

The power and poignancy of stories told by a man who lived them

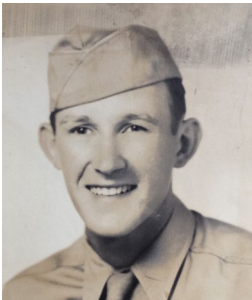
By Rob Brinkley



Among the many reasons that The Texas Liberator Project is a passion of Fran and Mark Berg, there is an especially compelling one: Mark’s father, Lee Berg, was a liberator. As a Jew, he held an intensely deep and personal connection to everything he witnessed as one of the liberators of the Dachau Concentration Camp. The oral histories of these Texas soldiers who helped liberate Nazi concentration camps are invaluable as records of the past. The Texas Liberator Project is a collaboration of Texas Tech University, the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission, and Texas Holocaust museums to be an educational resource for future generations on the history of the Holocaust and liberation. Through this project, the Bergs met John William “Bill” Kongable. Now 98, he is a World War II veteran of the 89th Infantry Division and a liberator of Ohrdruf, the first Nazi camp liberated by U.S. troops.

Above: During an official tour of the newly liberated Ohrdruf Concentration Camp, an Austrian Jewish survivor describes to General Dwight Eisenhower and the members of his entourage the use of the gallows in the camp. Ohrdruf, Germany, April 12, 1945. Courtesy of Eisenhower Library.

As a leader in The Texas Liberator Project, Fran knew that Bill’s oral history was essential. She introduced him to the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum and made his inaugural visit to the Museum, in May 2023, possible. Chesed Society members and hundreds of students from North Texas and Oklahoma were entranced by Bill and his youthful energy in relaying his liberation experiences firsthand as an eyewitness to a history that none of us would ever wish to see.



Courtesy of Bill Kongable.

Bill’s visit was the embodiment of recent enhancements to the Museum’s Liberator Gallery, including adding an interactive kiosk featuring a Texas Liberators Honor Roll with testimonies from 21 Texas liberators, a searchable map of liberated concentration camps linked to the names of Texas liberators and their hometowns, and new artifacts. Their place in history lives on in the gallery, made possible through a generous gift from the Bergs. “There are thriving generations here and around the world,” says Fran, “who wouldn’t be here without the selfless acts of courage demonstrated by these liberators. We will forever look to them as the gold standard of Upstander behavior.” ■



On May 3, the Museum was honored to host John William “Bill” Kongable, World War II veteran of the 89th Infantry Division and liberator of Ohrdruf, a subcamp of Buchenwald Concentration Camp, for a memorable evening with Chesed Society members (pictured right). Thanks to hosts Fran and Mark Berg (pictured left with Bill Kongable) and Northern Trust for making this event possible. Photos by Kelly Alexander.

IN APPRECIATION

CHESED SOCIETY

Named after the Jewish virtue of *chesed*, which means “loving-kindness,” this major giving society is composed of those who support the Museum with annual gifts of \$25,000 or more.

Anonymous
Amazon
American Airlines, Inc.
Bank of America
Betty Jo and David Bell
Fran and Mark Berg
Candy and Ike Brown
Cinemark USA, Inc.
Communities Foundation of Texas
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Lisa and Neil Goldberg
Debbie and Ron Greene
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The Lyda Hill Foundation
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Ann and Nate Levine
Sarah and Alan Losinger
Luther King Capital Management
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Raelaine Radnitz
Katherine Perot Reeves and
Eric Reeves
Helen and Frank Risch

Deddie Rose
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Santander Consumer USA Foundation
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Alice and Jim Skinner
The Sumners Foundation
Geraldine Acuña-Sunshine and
Gabe Sunshine
Catherine and Sam L. Susser
Daphne and David Sydney
Texas Capital
Texas Instruments Foundation
Toyota
Jackie and Steve Waldman
Linda and Ken Wimberly
Peggy and Mark Zilbermann
Cathy and Mark Zoradi



ANNUAL DONORS

The Museum is grateful for its annual donors who make our work possible through their membership, contributions, and generous gifts in support of fundraising events, education, and programming.

\$10,000 - \$24,999

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Debbie and Marc Andres
Christell and Michael Baum
Janet and Jeffrey Beck
Dr. Joseph and Julie Meetal Berman
Diane and Harold Brierley
Rebecca and Ken Bruder
Jennifer and Richard Dealy
Ann Marie and J.D. Dell
Sandy and Howard Donsky
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Lynn and Gil Friedlander
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HOBLITZELLE FOUNDATION

Across eras and sectors, a shared mission makes for an inextricable bond

By Rob Brinkley

“The essence of the Museum is inclusive compassion,” says Katie Robbins, president and CEO of the Hoblitzelle Foundation, “how developing a compassion for others, through learning about others’ lived experiences, can instill a sense of community, belonging, and togetherness between us all. The stories told in the Human Rights Wing of the Museum provide layers to the education — and ultimate compassion — a visitor walks away with.” In 1942, Dallas philanthropists Karl and Esther Hoblitzelle established Hoblitzelle Foundation for charitable, scientific, literacy, and educational purposes within Texas.



Student views artifacts in the Holocaust / Shoah Wing.
Photo by Kim Leeson.



Guests read about the Ten Stages of Genocide in the Human Rights Wing.

Hoblitzelle Foundation has invested in the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum since 2001, most recently for improvements to its permanent exhibition and as a donor to the capital campaign. Education, especially, is where Robbins sees an affinity with the Museum, which she admires for what she calls its genuine mission and compassionate supporters and employees. “I love the Museum’s concept of us all being Upstanders, not bystanders. By the Museum instilling a call to action with its education, visitors take an important step toward not just learning about genocides and aspects of history that should not repeat but also by being an active part of the solution.”

Hoblitzelle Foundation’s campaign gift has also helped support the cutting-edge Dimensions in Testimony Theater, where visitors can sit across from a Holocaust survivor and ask them questions about their life and survival, thanks to high-definition filmed interviews paired with voice-recognition technology. “We were thrilled to help capture one of the survivors’ stories,” says Robbins. “The ability to share [Museum co-founder] Max Glauken’s personal account is a great example of what sets this Museum apart.” ■



Guests experience Dimensions in Testimony.

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Guests tour the Orientation Wing.



CINEMARK™

How a global movie giant and a regional museum are telling the same stories

By Rob Brinkley

For Wanda Gierhart Fearing, there is something rivetingly unique about the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum: “It was started by those very people who witnessed those horrors — and you can feel that in every aspect.” Fearing is the chief marketing and content officer of Cinemark USA, Inc., the Plano-based movie-house empire with more than 500 theaters in the U.S. and Latin America. She draws a parallel between her company’s mission and the Museum’s: “At Cinemark, we are focused on bringing people together for shared, captivating experiences through immersive storytelling. The Museum is a master class in that, conveying important stories through multiple mediums.”

During planning for the new Museum, Cinemark founder Lee Roy Mitchell committed to building a state-of-the-art theater inside it, ultimately bringing in more than two dozen companies that provided in-kind donations of equipment, services, and materials. Today, the 250-seat Cinemark Theater is the epicenter for programing at the Museum, hosting films, lectures, and events. The Museum is also one of the beneficiaries of Cinemark’s annual Charity Classic Dinner and Golf Tournament.

Says Fearing, who is a Museum board member: “Lee Roy Mitchell instilled his passion for people deep in our company culture, saying that, ‘We’re not in the movie business, we’re in

the people business.’” She loves that Cinemark and the Museum value community and understanding — and, for her, a favorite facet of the Museum is its focus on educating younger generations. “The Museum offers so many opportunities for young people to become Upstanders and help combat prejudice in their everyday lives.” ■

Leza Mesiah performs at the Museum’s Voices of LGBTQ+ Dallas event in Cinemark Theater on June 7.
Photo by Kim Leeson.



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In the Holocaust / Shoah Wing, students learn about concentration camps.



In the Holocaust / Shoah Wing, students learn about the Wannsee Conference participants.
Photo by Kim Leeson.

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Students explore the Ten Stages of Genocide Gallery.

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This Place, Everywhere (2019) sculpture by James Surls.
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