

spoke started gave Gompertz shared survivor scapegoats Jews saved people
ship grew Iron Cross
part served family history homes
Learning father Nazi survived escape leave quick
Bluhm left shadow Rolf life family April antisemitism
Rabbi Holocaust worked Ron camps culture
schools Germany Jewish story played
years Krefeld Russian
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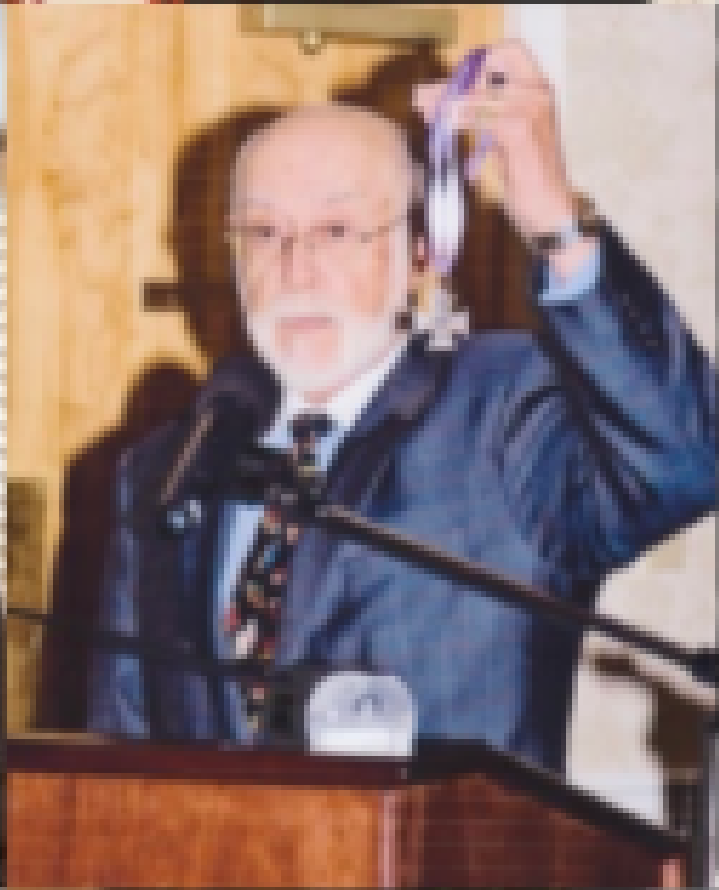
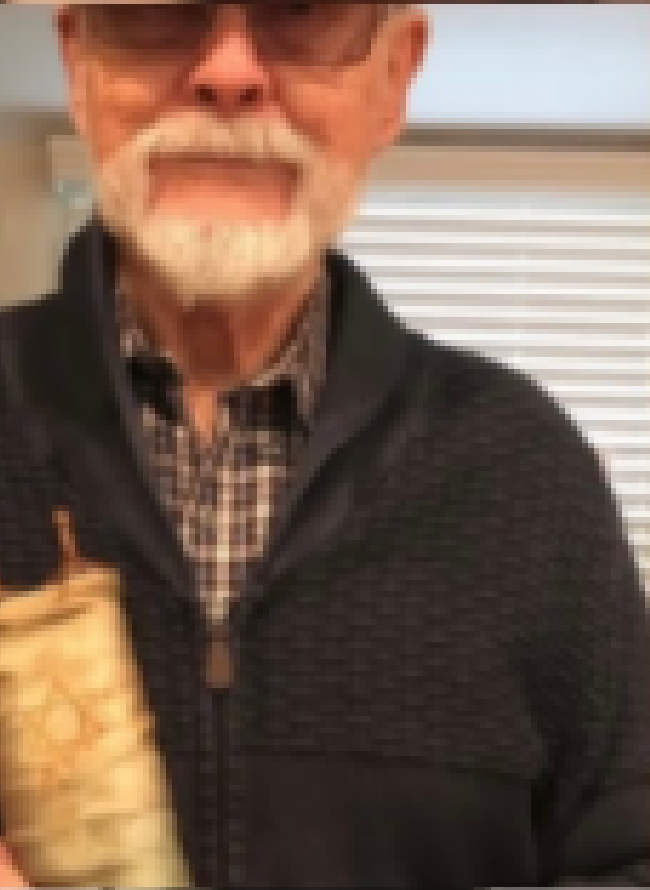
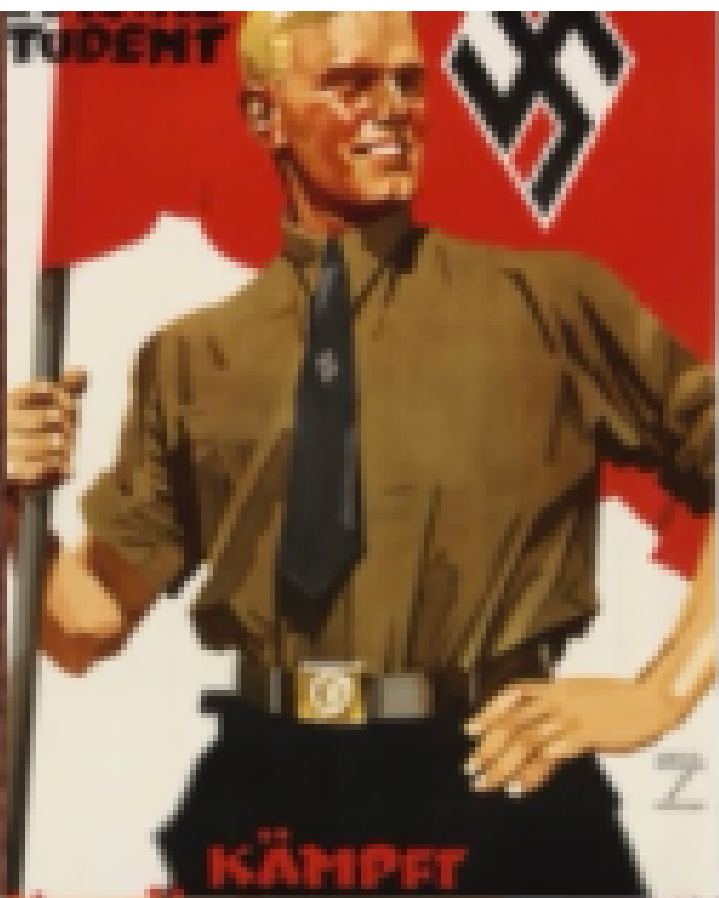
As our culmination project, we interviewed Ron Gompertz. Ron is the son of Holocaust survivor Rolf Gompertz, his father whose parents left Germany in 1939. Ron grew up knowing many survivors and now works with others to tell his father's story as Rolf is 93 years old and not healthy. Ron spoke to us about his father's experience to share his family's history and wrote a book about growing up in the shadow of the Holocaust even though he was not there himself.

Ron shared that Rolf is a Holocaust survivor who is also an author, writer, poet, speaker, professor, and most importantly, a father to Ron. Rolf grew up in Krefeld, Germany, and his father, Oscar, a silk salesman, served in WWI on the Russian Front receiving an Iron Cross for his bravery and service. Rolf was the first baby boy born in Rabbi Arthur Bluhm's congregation, which later played a significant part in his family's escape from Germany. Rolf enjoyed reading adventure novels and was interested in history and culture.

Prior to 1933, the community of Krefeld had a Jewish population of ~1500 people.

With an increase in antisemitism, there was violence and vandalism along with propaganda against the Jewish people. Jews were viewed as the scapegoats, and in 1933, when Hitler came to power, the Gompertz family started to learn of Jews being persecuted. November 9th, 1938, the night of broken glass, also known as Kristallnacht, forever changed Rolf and his family and so many other Jews. Jewish businesses, synagogues, schools, homes were burned, Jews were beaten, and men from Krefeld were taken away from their families and sent to camps. Nazi's rushed Rolf's house, telling him and his family they needed to leave. A quick thinker, Rolf's father ran for his Iron Cross medal and said, "This is how you treat someone who served your country?" By being quick on his feet, Rolf's father saved his family and the Nazi's left their home, allowing them to stay. Rabbi Bluhm was one of those taken to a concentration camp and, upon his return, gave Rolf and his family a quota to fly to America. The special relationship that Rolf and his family had with Rabbi Bluhm gave them the opportunity for a new life and to leave Germany. Leaving on April 22nd, 1939, which is considered escape day for Rolf and his family, Rolf spent 55 days on a ship and arrived in Los Angeles on June 1st, 1939. That ship saved their lives and make Rolf one of the lucky ones who survived the Holocaust. Six million Jews were murdered in the Holocaust, and Rolf and his family came to America only with the clothes on their back and a few pieces from their life in Germany.

Rolf survived and started school in the United States. He graduated from UCLA, joined the army serving as a translator for captured documents, worked in media, and taught public relations. Ron grew up not knowing a time where he didn't hear about the Holocaust from his father or other family members. Ron felt different and experienced antisemitism himself. Learning about the Holocaust was part of Ron's Jewish education and family history. He is determined to carry on his father's mission of telling his story, so the Holocaust never happens again.



Handwritten notes in German and English. The German text includes "48" Uhr", "auszugehen", "Schiff von", "Ankunft", "Kontingente", "Kontingente", "den auf", "y-billy ge". The English text includes "Lab of an", "I must a", "of the ju", "Division". There is also a small box with "He", "Los Ang", "on Ju".



LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Occupation	Country of Birth	Place of Birth	Place of Residence	Remarks
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3
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