

Judy Weissenberg Cohen

Judy Weissenberg Cohen was born in Debrecen, Hungary, in 1928. She was the youngest of seven siblings. Judy's father owned a scrap iron and hardware store. Judy used to tutor students to make enough money so her family could afford her going to high school. Debrecen had a large and thriving Jewish community. Judy and her family were middle class and orthodox. Before the German invasion of Hungary in 1944, multiple members of Judy's family (as were many Hungarian Jewish men) were forcibly conscripted to do deadly forced labour for the Hungarian Army (where they were treated brutally and harshly).

Following the German invasion of Hungary in 1944, the Debrecen Ghetto was created in the area where Judy and her family already lived. Ghettos were a place where Jewish people were forced to live. Ghettos were dirty, overcrowded and cut-off from the rest of the world. Judy volunteered as an assistant nurse at a makeshift hospital inside the ghetto. Judy and her siblings only lived in the ghetto for six weeks before they were sent to work at a brick factory. From there, they were deported to Auschwitz, where they were separated from their mother and aunt. Judy was taken to the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp in September 1944 and forced to work in an airplane factory. She survived a four-week-long death march before she was liberated by the American Army in April 1945. After liberation, Judy was in a Displaced Persons Camp for two years and discovered that two of her siblings had also survived while the rest of her family was murdered.

Judy immigrated to Canada in 1948 and worked in the garment industry in Montreal. She also worked in real estate and became an assistant property manager. She met Sidney Cohen in 1959, after being set-up on a date by a mutual friend. They got married in June 1961 in Montreal and moved to Toronto that year, settling in the Bathurst Manor neighborhood. They had two children, Michelle and Jonathan. Judy spent many years as a Holocaust educator and continues to share her story of survival.



*Judy Weissenberg Cohen (far right) with two of her sisters.
(Toronto Holocaust Museum via Judy Weissenberg Cohen)*



Miriam Frankel after liberation.

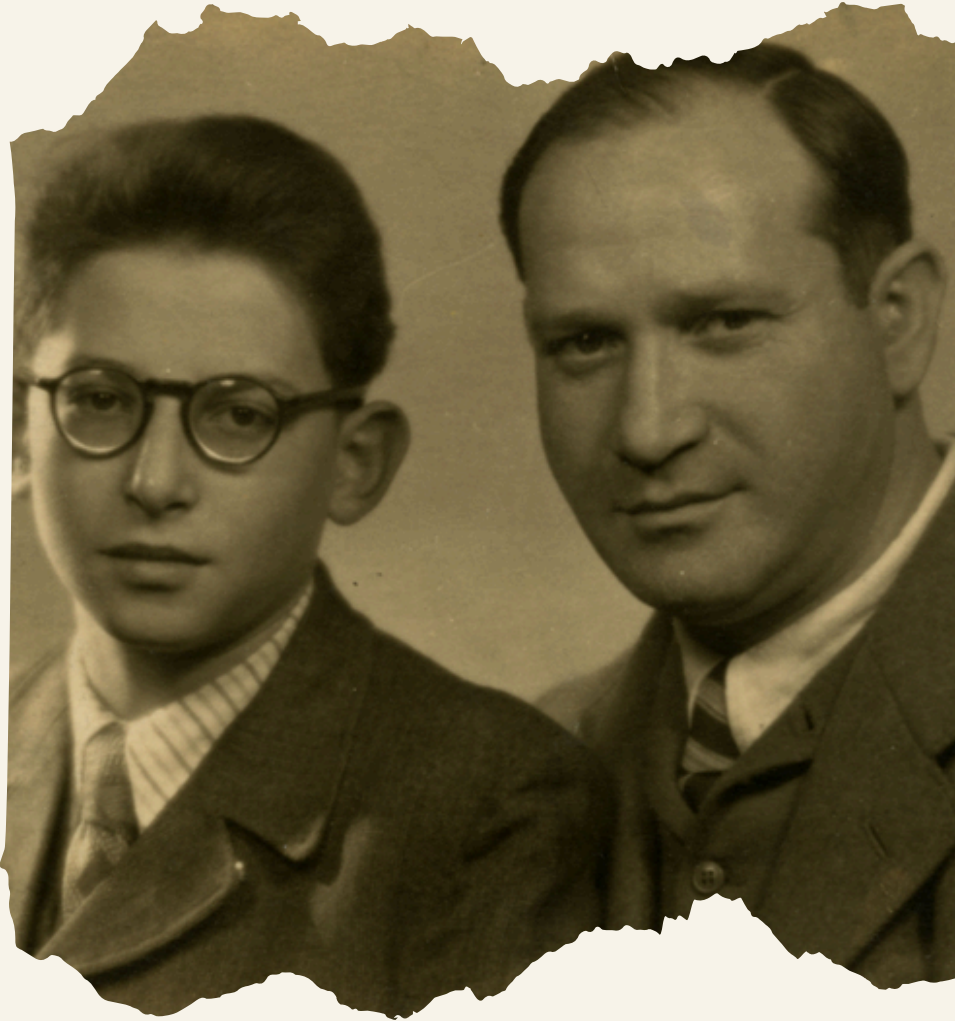
(Toronto Holocaust Museum courtesy of Miriam Frankel)

Miriam Frankel

Miriam Frankel (née Grünklas) was born in Dunajská Streda, Czechoslovakia (today in Slovakia), in 1927. The oldest of four siblings, Miriam was raised in Trieste, Italy after her parents moved there when she was a baby. Her father was a cantor who led prayers in synagogues, before eventually operating a hospitality business. Miriam's family was an orthodox family. Miriam learned multiple languages while growing up, including Hebrew, English, German, and more. Miriam did not experience any antisemitism growing up until the rise of fascist dictator Benito Mussolini. Miriam enjoyed walking near the sea in the beautiful climate and city.

In 1940, Miriam and her family were forced to leave their home in Italy and return to Czechoslovakia. In spring of 1944, authorities sent Miriam and her family to the ghetto in Técső and, after six weeks, deported them to Auschwitz. Miriam was separated from the rest of her family on arrival, and never saw them again. After three months, she was sent to Fallersleben, Germany, to work in a munitions factory. Miriam endured forced labour, sparse food, and frequent air raids. The Germans later forcibly evacuated her and the prisoners to Saltzwedel Concentration Camp, where the American Army liberated her on April 14, 1945.

Following liberation, Miriam spent three months in a displaced persons camp. She then underwent surgery in Prague for injuries that she sustained while she was at Auschwitz. After searching for her family for two years, Miriam realized that she was the sole survivor of her family. After being unable to immigrate to British Mandate Palestine, Miriam immigrated to Canada in 1948 with a group of orphans. While studying Commercial Art at Central Technical School, Miriam met her husband, Aron Frankel, and they had three children together. Miriam spent years sharing her experience of the Holocaust.



Nate Leipciger with his father, Jacob (Jack), in 1946 after their liberation.

Nate Leipciger

Nate Leipciger was born in Chorzów, Poland, in 1928. Nate was the youngest of two children and lived with his parents and older sister in a small home. Nate was a street tough kid growing up in Chorzów, which was a mining and smelter town. He mostly spent time with non-Jewish children his age, while also having a number of Jewish friends. His family was somewhat assimilated but did attend synagogue and he attended a Jewish school. Nate experienced antisemitism growing up, including when his father was assaulted.

Because of the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, Nate and his family moved to Lodz to be further away from the Polish-German border. The family returned briefly to Chorzów after the invasion but were forced to move to the Sosnowiec ghetto where Nate's father did forced labour. Nate worked as an electrician's apprentice for six months in the ghetto. Nate's father was forced to join the ghetto's Jewish police after he was caught escaping from a forced labour camp. After being forced into the Środula ghetto and hiding through a roundup of the ghetto, Nate and his family were discovered by the SS. In 1943, the Germans transported Nate and his family to Auschwitz, where they murdered his mother and sister. Nate survived with his father, who at times saved his life, and was deported to multiple other concentration camps. Together they were liberated by the American Army on May 2, 1945, at a subcamp of the Mühldorf concentration camp complex.

After recovering from injuries at an American military hospital, Nate attended high school and obtained a university degree in engineering in Bamberg, Germany. He immigrated to Canada in 1948, where Nate married his wife Bernice and had three daughters. In 1982, he chaired the Toronto Holocaust Remembrance Committee. Nate was a founding member and has been a long-time speaker at the Toronto Holocaust Education Centre, now the Toronto Holocaust Museum. In 2016, he guided Prime Minister Justin Trudeau through a visit to Auschwitz. Nate has collaborated with Indigenous leaders and survivors of Canada's residential school system, sharing experiences of systemic oppression and genocide.

Bill Glied

William "Bill" (Vojislav Eliezer) Glied was born in Subotica, Yugoslavia (now Serbia), in 1930. Bill's family ran a flour mill and traced their history in the town back at least 200 years. Bill had a younger sister, and the family lived a middle-class, Orthodox religiously observant life. Bill's family would travel to many countries, and Bill was close with his large extended family. Bill split his days between public school and Jewish religious school.

In 1941, Germany invaded and occupied Yugoslavia, ceding the area where Bill's family lived to its ally, Hungary. Jews were required to wear a yellow star, and Bill's family were forced to give up their flour mill to the occupation government. In 1944, Germany invaded and occupied Hungary, as well as Hungarian-annexed territories, like Subotica. The Germans deported Bill and his family to Auschwitz. Upon arrival, he was separated from his mother and sister and never saw them again. In June 1944, the Germans transferred Bill and his father to Dachau Concentration Camp, then to the Kaufering subcamp where they worked as forced labour. The American Army liberated Bill in April 1945. His father died of starvation and typhoid fever eight days before liberation.

Bill returned to Yugoslavia and only found that an aunt and an uncle had survived from his entire family. Bill arrived in Canada as an orphan in September 1947, and in the mid-1950s, he established his business, Cadillac Lumber. He met his wife, Marika (née Nyiri), and they married in 1959 and had three daughters. In 2016, he testified in Detmold, Germany, in the prosecution of Reinhold Hanning, one of the last surviving guards at Auschwitz. Bill passed away in 2018 after years of sharing his experiences of the Holocaust.



*Bill Glied (center) with his mother, Miriam, and father, Alexander, in Subotica, Yugoslavia (today Serbia) in 1935-36. Not pictured is Bill's little sister, Aniko.
(Toronto Holocaust Museum courtesy of Glied family)*