



03 May 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As a University College London Beacon School for Holocaust Education, NUSA has been given the special privilege of receiving a Zoom call by Holocaust survivor, Ivan Shaw, on Tuesday 23rd May in the afternoon.

Given the importance of Holocaust Education, which is a compulsory element of the National Curriculum, and the rise of antisemitism across the world, coupled with the ever-decreasing number of opportunities to hear from Holocaust survivors first hand, we wish to provide all pupils at NUSA with the opportunity to hear from Ivan Shaw. At the end of this letter to you, you will find the profile and background of Ivan Shaw for your own personal knowledge and to guide the decision I am about to ask you to make. Although Holocaust education is compulsory in school, we require consent for pupils to hear from a Holocaust survivor when giving their testimony. Therefore, please choose from the following options:

Option 1: You are happy for your child to hear Ivan Shaw's testimony and therefore give consent by not responding to this letter.

Option 2: You do not wish your child to hear the Ivan Shaw testimony, in this event, please contact NUSA or email myself Dtownsend@nusa.org.uk with your child's name and tutor group for them to be removed from the Zoom call with their class.

I thank you in advance for your time reading this letter and for making your option choices. Pupils who previously took part in Holocaust testimony opportunities at NUSA departed inspired and motivated to learn more about the events that rocked the world during the 1940s.

Best regards

Mr Townsend
Head of Humanities and Social Sciences

Ivan Shaw Profile

Ivan was born Ivan Buchwald in February 1939 in Novi Sad, in former Yugoslavia (now Serbia). He lived in an apartment in the city centre with his parents, Gertrude and Andor and was an only child. His father owned an electrical store, and the family led a comfortable, middle-class life. Ivan grew up speaking Serbo-Croat, Hungarian and German depending on who he was talking with and remembers a happy childhood playing with his parents, with summers spent swimming in the Danube River.

In May 1944, Ivan's life changed dramatically. Until that point, the Hungarians (who had taken over the area in 1941) had not put many restrictions in place for Jewish people, but in May 1944 the Germans began rounding up Jews and deportations began. The Jews of Novi Sad were told to go to an assembly point – Ivan's mother had been summoned to go but his father was not because he was only half Jewish. His sisters begged him to stay, but he could not abandon his wife, and thinking that Ivan would be safe with his family, he left on the transports with her.

Ivan was cared for by one of his fathers' sisters, until his concealment was given away by a neighbour. He was taken away by the Gestapo to a prison cell where he stayed overnight, alone at just 5 years old. From here, he was taken by lorry to a transit camp where he was found by friends and family also there, and they looked after him. After about 10 days, all the inmates of the camp were marched to Novi Sad train station to be transported to a further camp. Another of Ivan's aunts had been following his movements from outside and used the opportunity to snatch him from the line and hide him in a forest before taking him to her home and concealing him there. In this way, he survived until the end of the war.

Soon after the war ended Ivan learned that both his parents had died in camps – his father in Buchenwald and his mother in Bergen Belsen just days after liberation. It was his mother's wish that he should go to live with her sister in England should they not survive, and so in 1947, Ivan was taken to live with his Aunt and Uncle in Amersham.

Ivan learned English quickly and adapted to a new life in England easily though he remains firmly connected to his Serbian roots and family. He gained a degree in Textile Engineering and worked for Marks & Spencer for 30 years before starting his own business. He married Eileen in 1965 – they live in London and have 3 children and 6 grandchildren.