



ANNA OLIVEK

March 22, 2013

Age 89, of Franklin, died March 20, 2013.

A Holocaust Survivor, Anna's story has been written about in a variety of articles including the Washington Post, and was the subject of Steve Luxenberg's "Annie's Ghosts".

THE FUNERAL SERVICE WILL BE HELD AT HEBREW MEMORIAL CHAPEL ON FRIDAY 3/22/2013 AT 1:00 PM

A LINK WILL BE PROVIDED FOR A WEBCAST OF THE FUNERAL SERVICE.

Family Info:

Beloved wife for 46 years to the late Steve Oliwek.

Loving mother of Bella Oliwek, David Oliwek and Doris Oliwek.

Proud grandmother of Andrea (Dan) Augustine, Jeremy (Becki) Water and Zachary Water.

Adoring great-grandmother of Maggie, Sophia and Avery.

Cherished sister of the late Mendel Shlain and the late Esther Shlain.

Also survived by loving friend, Sidney Zatz and other dear friends and relatives.

Excerpts from the writings of Steve Luxenberg: author of "Annie's Ghosts" and also William Crockerham:

In October 1942, Anna was just 18 years old when she fled the western Ukrainian town of Radziwillow with only the vaguest idea of where she was going; just 18 years old when she walked into a Nazi occupation headquarters with little more than an improbable tale and a facility for language; just 18 years old when she deceived the Nazis into believing her masquerade as the daughter of a German mother and Ukrainian father.

Within a month of escaping certain death in Radziwillow at the hands of a Nazi-led local killing squad, she had secured herself a job as a translator for the Wehrmacht's military police, a sensitive position, a position of trust, a position reserved for a member of the German Volk, the German people. "The major, whose last name was K♦nitzer, was a small, stocky man. He listened to Anna's fabricated account and said she reminded him of his daughter back in Germany. He asked her how she had learned to speak so many languages at such a young age, and she told him: "I have a gift, I guess; it comes easily to me." She could have told him she spoke a fifth and sixth language, but now was not the time to brag about speaking Hebrew and Yiddish...Her counterfeit identity gave her a new life, but it also took its toll, requiring her to nurture the deceit, to learn the art of lying -- not merely how to tell a lie, but how to live a lie, because lying was the route to survival.

But, always, "she lived with the fear of being discovered. She was a Jew hiding in plain sight, and to make her disguise believable, she had to believe her own deception; she had to make herself appear comfortable among the very enemy that had killed her family. She had to turn herself into a secret "Another time, a German officer hauled in a Jewish woman he had found hiding in the nearby forest, calling her a "dirty Jew." ""The terrified woman saw Anna, who had been summoned to translate, and asked in Polish, "Are you Jewish?" Anna, acting quickly, told the woman to be quiet, that she would

handle it. She went directly to the major's office and informed him that the officer was mistaken. "If she's a Jew, then I'm a Jew," she says she told the major. "The major said, 'Fraulein Anna,' -- that's what he called me -- 'If you say she's not a Jew, then she's not a Jew. Tell the officer to let her go.' "

"She spent the rest of the war in Memmingen, primarily working as a translator for a construction company that was using Allied POWs from a nearby Stalag as forced labor. Within three weeks of Germany's formal surrender on May 7, 1945, she went to the local office set up by the Allies and emerged with a new ID card and her old identity."

Tribute Wall



“ Hebrew Memorial Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of ANNA OLIWEK



Hebrew Memorial Chapel - March 22, 2013 at 12:00 AM

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“ My dear mother was a woman with a heart of gold. Intelligent and dedicated to her children. Mom had gone through so many tragedies in her life; but never complained. Towards the end of her life what the courts had done to her and family breaks my heart to even mention. Shame on the courts for making my dear mother's life a living hell!! Miss you so much mom!! Love you forever!

Bella Oliwek - December 12, 2018 at 01:29 PM