

### SHABBAT SHOLOM

When Rabbi Kane announced last Shabbat at the late service that I would be speaking about the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht and my vivid memories of it, he also stated that I had lived through this event as a child of 12. If you are good in arithmetic, you all know my age, which I have never tried to hide.

My whole life changed on November 9, 1938, and as a 12 year old, one became very frightened of what the future had in store for me.

Growing up in an upper middle class affluent Jewish family, with two very loving parents and one wonderful sister, a beautiful grandmother, Uncles and Aunts, 11 of whom were doctors, 3 of them world famous, and only 5 survived, real fun cousins, life was uncomplicated and we never dreamt what lay in store for us.

My family had lived in Germany for many generations. My father was a cavalry officer in World War I, was wounded in the service of the Kaiser, and was awarded the Iron Cross. We enjoyed an enriched life in the beautiful city of Berlin. Berlin was a cultural center and we were exposed to the theatre, concerts from an early age on. We took walks through Tiergarten, which was like Central Park in New York, was near our home, the zoo was there and as a child I enjoyed rowing with my sister on the lake there. The coffee houses were the places where I could find my grandmother whenever I was looking for her.

Living on the westside of Berlin was elegant, with servants & a governess at home, dancing lessons, piano lessons, belonging to young Zionist groups, and going to Hebrew school after public school, summers at our North Sea summer home and later, overnight camps in Sweden every summer and winters in Switzerland. All this changed on November 9, 1938. Every November 9th has been a difficult day for me and my family. We have always observed it in our own way.

This November 9th, we are commemorating the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht, which means the night of broken glass. Edward R. Murrow characterized this event as "the day that changed the course of human history". We remember this date because this day was the start of the Holocaust.

Let us look briefly at some of the events that led up to this day. Hitler came to power in January 1933. He promised everyone employment and Kraft Durch Freude, meaning strength through joy and shortly afterwards, took all kinds of repressive measures to eliminate Jews from the German scene.

With the passage of the Nuremberg Laws, Jews were excluded from citizenship and deprived of property rights and legal protection. During the next three years, Jewish life became increasingly intolerable. Among other things, the public schools were closed to the Jewish children. I remember when I had to leave the public schools and attend the Jewish schools, first at the Adas Israel Synagogue and later, at the Fasanenstrasse Synagogue.

WE all got identification cards with a "big J" for Jude on it. Every man was given the middle name of Israel and every woman had the middle name of Sarah. My name now became Inge Sarah Moser.

Our apartment house faced the river Spree (very much like Riverside Drive) and there were benches facing the river. We could sit only on the yellow benches with a Mogen Dovid on it. Every Jewish business had a big "J" for Jude in the window to show people that this was a Jewish-owned business, and most shops had a sign in the window "JUDEN VERBOTEN" Jews forbidden to shop here.

The spark that triggered Kristallnacht took place in Paris on November 7th. A young Jewish man whose parents had been deported from Germany to Poland, assassinated the third secretary of the German embassy in Paris. The official died on November 9th and Propoganda Minister Goebbels organized the Gestapo and Nazi storm troopers to incite "spontaneous" mob riots against the Jews. The rationale for this action was that all Jews were responsible for the action of this one Jewish young man.

On the night of November 9th and throughout the day of November 10th, mobs were rioting, burning down synagogues and Jewish businesses, Jewish schools, and other Jewish institutions.

Jews were dragged from their homes and beaten in the streets. That night trucks came to our house and the Gestapo were banging on the doors. They made arrests of all men and boys. Our best friends, the Fischmans lived in the apartment below us. The Gestapo arrested Mr. Fischman and his son Eli, then 14 and loaded them like cattle in the trucks outside. The only reason my father was spared was that the truck was full. We learned later that this group went to Dachau.

There is no complete tally of the destruction, but at least 30,000 Jews were arrested and sent to concentration camps at Dachau, Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen. According to some statistics, 91 Jews were murdered that one night. More than 1100 synagogues were set on fire and destroyed, 7500 Jewish businesses and thousands of family homes were robbed, vandalized and burned. Jewish cemeteries were desecrated and bonfires of Torah scrolls and prayer books were lit in the Jewish neighborhoods. Jewish men were subjected to hours of punishment and some were forced to urinate on synagogue walls.

The following morning, November 10th, and not realizing the seriousness of the situation, I took the U-Bahn train to my school, only to find that the synagogue and the school, which was next to it, was still burning from the previous night. The firemen were standing around, and were just concerned that the fire did not spread to the next buildings. I was pushed back together with my schoolmates and was told to go back home. I arrived back home, and completely shaken. I was sitting in the lobby of our apartment house talking with my other friends. My father came back from his business a short time later. His face was ashen white and he was incoherent.

He hugged me and said, "This is it, it is all over". His business, like all the other Jewish businesses was completely destroyed and looted. The Nazis then took over the remaining businesses. Many men bought train tickets and literally lived on the trains, trying to avoid being taken into custody by the Gestapo.

From this day on, all men had to report to their district police headquarters three times a day, saying here is the Jew-Israel, as my father did-Bernhard Israel Moser.

Some officials (but very few) said to my father, "We wish that you did not have to go through all of this".

The Gestapo came to our home to search for valuables, i.e. fur coats, silver, diamonds, gold, etc. which they inventoried. I accompanied my parents to the police station when they turned in all their valuables. From that day on, a curfew was imposed and no Jews could be on the streets after 7 p.m.

We then walked to our synagogue, the Levetzow Strasse Temple, that magnificent structure with over 2,000 seats. It was still burning and would burn for a few days. The prayer books, Torah scrolls and tallisim were in the street, as was the organ. The top hats which were worn by the men on the high holidays and were stored in the cloak room were all battered and smoldering (3 years ago we visited the site of this synagogue). The site is still vacant, and a bronze plaque is all that remains of this beautiful house of worship.

We next went to check on my beloved grandmother, who had recently entered a luxurious home for the Jewish elderly. At that point, the home was not harmed, but within several months, all the occupants were transported to the gas chambers at Theresanstadt.

The people in our apartment building continued to help us. The superintendent of our building was concerned about our welfare, and kept coming after dark to see what he could do for us.

Kristallnacht marked a turning point for the Jews in Germany. There were some thoughts that the situation in Germany would improve, but after the events of Kristallnacht, they all knew that there was no future for them in Germany. Jewish life had collapsed.

There were 300,000 Jews in Germany at the eve of Kristallnacht, 10% of that number, about 30,000 were arrested that night and deported to the concentration camps for weeks and months before being released. At these camps, thousands were tortured and approximately 1,000 Jews were murdered.

As the world was falling down about them, my parents immediate concern was the safety of my sister and myself. <sup>knowing that we could not leave Germany together</sup> They made arrangements for the both of us to leave Germany. My sister, Trudi, then 16, went for Hachshara training prior to going to Palestine on Youth Aliyah in March of 1939 and I, who was too young to go to Palestine at age 12, went to England on the children's transport, not knowing if we would ever see our parents again. This was next to the last transport ever to leave Germany before World War II.

WE must never forget this lesson of history, that in the 20th Century, for people to allow pogroms to occur is unthinkable. 50 years ago, the world was silent, the German people were silent, and by their silence, were accomplices to the Nazis.

Delegations of several organizations have been invited to East and West Berlin by their respective governments to participate in ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht. This would seem to indicate quite a different atmosphere from what existed 50 years ago. The Germans now feel that the Jewish people are our fellow citizens and are ashamed and are trying to make good as far as they can do so.

Last week, the Holocaust Memorial in Edgewood Park was defaced. Coming at the same time when we are preparing to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht, it is very disturbing to those of us who have lived with the memories of pogroms. I feel strongly about this, especially since I bought a brick for each member of my family who perished in the Holocaust. We will not forget these events, nor will we allow them to ever take place again. May I ask each and every one of you to light a candle on Wednesday night, November 9th. Thank you.

**BETH EL-KE' R ISRAEL**  
(Conservative)  
Harrison St. at Whalley Ave.  
Steven Kane, Rabbi  
Louis Friedman  
Ritual Dir.  
Sabbath Eve. Serv.  
5:45 & 8:15 p.m.  
8:15 p.m. Service  
**INGE FISH WILL SPEAK**  
**ABOUT HER MEMORIES**  
**OF**  
**KRISTALLNACHT**  
Sat. Sabbath Service  
9:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m.  
**SUNDAY**  
9:00 a.m. & 5:45 p.m.  
Daily 7:00 a.m. & 5:45 p.m.