



The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

**William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy
Lecture Series**

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy,
in cooperation with the
Sara and Sam Schoffer Holocaust Resource Center,
presents:

The Relevance of Remembrance

**Wednesday, October 7, 2009
Elizabeth B. Alton Auditorium, 7 p.m.**



“There are people whose remembrance gives light in this world long after they have passed away. This light shines in our darkest nights on the roads we must follow.”

—Talmud



Chief Justice
STUART RABNER

Chief Justice Stuart Rabner was sworn into office on June 29, 2007 after being nominated by Governor Jon S. Corzine and confirmed by the Senate. He is the eighth Chief Justice to lead the New Jersey Supreme Court since the 1947 Constitution.

Born on June 30, 1960, Chief Justice Rabner was raised in Passaic. He graduated summa cum laude from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University in 1982. He graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School in 1985. He was a law clerk to U.S. District Court Judge Dickinson R. Debevoise before joining the U.S. Attorney's Office in Newark in 1986.

The Relevance of Remembrance

After beginning his career as an assistant U.S. attorney, Chief Justice Rabner worked in a number of positions including first assistant U.S. attorney and chief of the terrorism unit. He was chief of the office's criminal division when he was named chief counsel to Governor Corzine in January 2006. He was named New Jersey attorney general in September 2006 and served in that position until his nomination to the Court.

Chief Justice Rabner and his wife, the former Deborah Wiener, have three children.



ETA LEVIN HECHT

Survivor

*B*orn October 7, 1938, in Kovno, Lithuania, Eta Levin Hecht was an only child whose parents, Rafael and Rachel, were Hebrew schoolteachers. In June 1941, the Germans invaded Kovno and the family was sent to the Kovno Ghetto with other Jews. Eta spent three years in this ghetto in army barracks. Her parents and grandmother lived in a one-room house and worked as slave laborers. Eta had to hide in the house since Nazis were looking for children. In March 1944, a Kinder Aktion took place—a major search for Jewish children. One time she had to hide under the stairs for two days. When her mother thought it was too dangerous for her to stay in the house, she put Eta in a potato sack and smuggled her out of the ghetto during working hours.

The Relevance of Remembrance

From April 1944, Eta lived with a Christian family that her mother knew. Eta was given a new name, Elenyte; she learned Lithuanian and practiced Christianity. She still keeps in touch with one of the children.

In July 1944 the Kovno Ghetto was burnt down. While her parents were being deported to Stutthof Concentration Camp, her father was able to escape by jumping off a train and hiding in the woods. Eta's mother ended up at Stutthof Concentration Camp.

After he escaped, Eta's father went back to Kovno to Eta, and, eight months later, they escaped from Lithuania, meeting with her mother in Poland. The family then stayed in Bavaria in St. Ottilien Displaced Persons' Camp, where her brother was born. Eta attended school in France for four years.

In October 1952, the family, sponsored by an aunt and uncle, moved to the United States, where they had an apartment in Morristown, New Jersey. In 1960, Eta graduated from Rutgers University with an Economics major and a minor in Languages. Eta married Warren Hecht, who was attending medical school.

She has three children, one girl and two boys, and five grandchildren—all boys.



RELLA EHRLICH ROTH
Survivor

*R*ella Ehrlich Roth was born in Mukachevo, Czechoslovakia, on August 23, 1923. At the time 26,000 Jews were living there. Rella's father, Leopold, managed a candle factory and a butcher shop where her mother, Fanny, and her three younger brothers, her sister, Elizabeth, and Rella helped serve customers. In November 1938, Hungarians marched into town and started arresting Jews; the more religious Jews were beaten and humiliated in the streets. Jewish children were separated from the non-Jewish ones. Her father could no longer operate a business legally so he turned to selling things on the black market to feed his family. In 1944, all families were ordered out of their homes and forced into a small ghetto. Their family had to leave all their possessions and live in an attic that was in horrible condition. Her mother would cry that she brought five beautiful children into the

The Relevance of Remembrance

world only to see them end up in such a terrible place. They were then deported to Auschwitz where Rella and her sister, Elizabeth, were separated from their parents and three brothers, whom they never saw again.

Rella went through three concentration camps—Auschwitz-Birkenau, Stutthof and Bromberg-Ost. At the end of the war when the Russians were advancing, the guards disappeared, which gave Rella and Elizabeth a chance to find a hiding place. First they found a barn and next they found an abandoned railway shack. Just when they thought they were going to starve and freeze to death, an old peasant found them and took them to his flourmill. Jewish Russian/Czech soldiers then took them to a Jewish family, the Shtufils, in another village. They remained there until the fighting stopped in that area. Then they returned to their hometown to discover that their home was taken over by non-Jews, who threatened them. They went to hide at their cousin's apartment where Rella was introduced to Martin Roth whom she married in September 1945. Her sister married his brother, Sam.

In 1948, the couple immigrated to America and had a son, Joseph. Rella's sister, Elizabeth, encouraged Martin and Rella to settle in Vineland, New Jersey. Eventually they had a number of chicken farms. After the chicken farms, they bought a wholesale produce business in Cape May County. Martin died in 1981, and Rella is now married to Zef Fried, a survivor from the same town—Mukachevo.



ERNEST PAUL

Survivor

Ernest Paul was born in Nove Selo, then part of Czechoslovakia. His father, Josef Pa'l, had been blinded in an accident during World War I. Despite his blindness, Dr. Pa'l, as he was called, learned Braille and was actively involved in business and politics. He was a role model for his seven children; four of whom survived the Holocaust. Ernest's mother, Serena Nani, was a small woman but a dynamo. She was strict but a devoted and loving mother. She ran their grocery store but always made sure that Ernest and his siblings were properly cared for.

In 1941, after his Bar Mitzvah, Ernest moved to Budapest, Hungary, to live with his aunt and uncle. While studying in Budapest he joined the Zionists who soon assigned him to work for their underground organization. With his blond hair and blue eyes, Ernest managed to become a member of the

The Relevance of Remembrance

Levente, the name of the Hungarian youth paramilitary unit. His jobs varied, a messenger, patrol duties, etc. His Levente schedule started at 8 a.m. and ended at 5 p.m.; therefore, all his Underground responsibilities had to be completed after 5 p.m.

Ernest was twice captured and tortured by the Szanda Mari police. While in Margit Korut Prison, he was forced to witness the execution of Hannah Szenes (Senesh), an Israeli paratrooper who had been caught by the Hungarian fascists. Ernest was freed during a daring raid by the underground. On April 1, 2004, Ernest was awarded the Hungarian Medal for Bravery, recognizing his “self-sacrificing” efforts to save persecuted Jews during World War II.

When the war ended, Ernest became one of the leaders of a kibbutz in Bucharest, Romania. There he met his wife, Sara, a Holocaust survivor of Auschwitz. When they married, Ernest was 17; Sara, 16. The couple went to Italy and then to Israel, where Ernest fought in the 1948 War of Independence. In 1956, the couple and their son and daughter immigrated to the United States. Another son was born in the U.S.

Over the years, Ernest established and prospered at various international businesses, especially with his Primex Company, operating in the United States, Israel, and South America.

Sara, his beloved wife of more than sixty years, died in 2008. Ernest has recently published a book about his wife’s life: *Sara Triumphant!* and is now writing his memoir. Ernest lives in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

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