Congregation Kol Tikvah’s Remember Us: The Holocaust Bnai Mitzvah Project

Presented by Ken Cutler, Esq.
Remember Us: The Holocaust Bnai Mitzvah Project offers an invitation to children preparing for bar/bat mitzvah to connect with the memory of children lost in the Holocaust before they could be called to the Torah.

At the Congregation Kol Tikvah in Parkland, Meryl Rome and my law partner, Andrew Rader endowing the synagogue with the opportunity for every bar/bat mitzvah to remember a child who died in the Holocaust. We will always remember!
Remember Us: The Holocaust Bnai Mitzvah Project offers an invitation to children preparing for bar/bat mitzvah to connect with the memory of children lost in the Holocaust before they could be called to the Torah.

This is a very simple idea. The Project provides the student and the bar/bat mitzvah teacher with the name of a lost child, information about him/her, and suggestions for simple acts of remembrance:

- doing mitzvot b’shem (in the name of the child)
- mentioning the child in a dvar Torah or speech from the bimah
- taking on the mitzvah of saying Kaddish
- lighting a yahrzeit candle yearly

Upon registration, the Remember Us program provides program materials and memorial sheets with names and a one-page information form to share with B'nai mitzvah students and their families.

We received a form with a list of 21 names with a link to The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names at Yad Vashem for each person. The Rabbi randomly picked which victim would be paired with one of the B'nai mitzvah students.
Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, is the ultimate source for Holocaust education, documentation, commemoration and research.

Since 1955, Yad Vashem has worked tirelessly to fulfill its mandate to preserve the memory of the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust by the Nazis and their collaborators. Through “Pages of Testimony” they record their names - the ultimate representation of their identities, thereby realizing our moral imperative to remember every single victim as a human being, and not merely a number. To date, the names of four million Shoah victims have been documented in the online Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names (www.yadvashem.org).
My idea was to find out more about these murdered children of the Holocaust so when the kids do their Bar/Bat Mitzvah they would know them as more than a name and some dates. So I did this kind of research for all 21 Mitzvot.
This is a sample of the information that we started with from the Remember Us Project. This is all they give you:

Rut Abraham, Germany
https://yvng.yadvashem.org/nameDetails.html?language=en&itemId=1856702&ind=1

Rut Abraham z”l
Rut was born in Berlin, Germany in 1936. Her father’s name was Richard and her mother’s name was Herta nee Mikhaelis. Rut died in the Shoah at Auschwitz Camp in Poland in 1942. She was 6 years old.
When you go to the link provided, you see this form and the following information is given:

**RUT ABRAHAM**

Rut Abraham was born in Berlin, Germany in 1936 to Richard and Herta nee Mikhaelis. She was a child. Prior to WWII she lived in Berlin, Germany. During the war she was in Zerbst, Germany.

Rut was murdered in the Shoah.

This information is based on a Page of Testimony (displayed here) submitted by her aunt, Ana Rozental.
I don’t speak Hebrew but one way to increase the odds of finding clues is to get someone to translate.
THE CLUES I DO HAVE:

RUT ABRAHAM

Rut Abraham was born in Berlin, Germany in 1936 to Richard and Herta nee Mikhaelis. She was a child. Prior to WWII she lived in Berlin, Germany. During the war she was in Zerbst, Germany.

Rut was murdered in the Shoah.

This information is based on a Page of Testimony (displayed here) submitted by her aunt, Ana Rozental

This is a clickable link!
These are the names on the forms submitted by Ana Rozental:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Birth Year</th>
<th>Place of Residence</th>
<th>Fate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Herta</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>murdered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>murdered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Rut</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>murdered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayer</td>
<td>Irma</td>
<td></td>
<td>Burgkundstadt, Germany</td>
<td>murdered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cahn Kohen</td>
<td>Mathilde</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Bayreuth, Germany</td>
<td>murdered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cahn Kohen</td>
<td>Jette</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Bayreuth, Germany</td>
<td>murdered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cahn Kohen</td>
<td>Heinrich</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Bayreuth, Germany</td>
<td>murdered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cahn Kohen</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>Bayreuth, Germany</td>
<td>murdered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When you click on the name you see the form submitted and the information transcribed from the Hebrew. More Clues!

Herta Abraham nee Mikhaelis was born in Zerbst, Germany in 1896 to Oskar and Marta. She was a housewife and married to Richard. Prior to WWII she lived in Berlin, Germany. During the war she was in Zerbst, Germany.

Herta was murdered in the Shoah.

This information is based on the records/documents displayed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Birth Year</th>
<th>Place of Residence</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Herta</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>Page of Testimony Submitted by Ana Rozental</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Remember, every detail is a clue!!!
The next steps for me are typically to not re-invent the wheel but to go to the BIG 3 family research sites to see if I can find anything:

https://www.ancestry.com/ subscription $$

https://www.familysearch.org/en/ Free

https://www.geni.com/home Free/subscription $$
32,495 results on broadest search.
ZERO results on Exact search.

All results for Rut Abraham

Your Search for Rut Abraham returned zero good matches

Why?
We couldn't find any results that exactly matched the information you marked as 'Exact'. Learn more

What should you do?
* Try un-checking one or more 'Exact' boxes to show close matches even when no exact matches are found.
Search Historical Records

Search for a deceased ancestor in historical records to uncover vital information from their life.

**Deceased Ancestor's Information**

First Names | Last Names
--- | ---
rut | abraham

**Search with a life event:**

Birth | Marriage | Residence | Death | Any

Birth Place

berlin, germany

Birth Year (Range)

1935 | 1937

**Search with a relationship:**

Spouse | Father | Mother | Other Person

Father's Given Names | Father's Last Names
--- | ---
richard | 

Mother's Given Names | Mother's Last Names
--- | ---
hertha | 

FamilySearch
All indicate survival and coming to US. Further clicks not our gal.
Geni is a commercial genealogy and social networking website, owned by Israeli private company MyHeritage. The Basic searches are free, after that it’s a subscription site.
No results found. Try changing your search criteria.
Search terms: Rut abraham herta richard

When in doubt give GOOGLE a shout!
Ruth Nelly Abraham (1934 - 1944) - Genealogy - Geni
https://www.geni.com › people › Ruth
Oct 17, 2017 - Genealogy for Ruth Nelly Abraham (1934 - 1944) family tree on Geni, with over 190 ... Daughter of Richard Abraham and Herta Abraham.
Missing: Rut
You visited this page on 12/7/19.
Remember, Phyllis Kramer used to drill it into our heads, **SPELLING DOESN’T COUNT!!!**

Translation missed the “H” in Ruth.

And

Sometimes the memories of people are not exact. Dates may be off so always try to **widen search parameters** if at first the exact doesn’t succeed!
All kinds of clues and information on Geni.
With the newly found information matched to the Yad Vashem info, much more was now available on the internet to bring this family to life.

Found out that Ruth’s father’s full name was **Franz Richard Abraham** and he was born in Berlin on 22 May 1895. He was a war veteran from WWI and walked with a limp.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>Berlin</td>
<td>22 May 1895</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Found his photo:
Richard Abraham self portrait circa 1935
According to the Memorial book "Victims of the Persecution of Jews under the National Socialist Tyranny in Germany 1933 - 1945" prepared by the German Federal Archives, we find out what happened to this family. Dates of deportation to Theresienstadt, ghetto and death at Auschwitz.

https://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch/index.html.en
To bring the story to life there are lots of photos and information on Jewish deportation, what it was like in the City of Berlin for Jews, what the Terezin concentration camp looked like, or Auschwitz, etc.
Entrance at the inner camp of Terezin. "Arbeit macht frei" means "Works frees."
Terezin barracks, where Jewish prisoners lived and slept.
In deportation from Terezin, the prisoners were loaded into freight train cars and sent to Auschwitz Death Camp.
Snow-covered personal effects of those deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland litter the train tracks leading to the camp's entrance, circa 1945.

Hulton Archive—Getty Images
A chilling view of what Auschwitz looked like can be seen in a film that was taken by a Soviet military film crew upon liberating Auschwitz in January 1945.

https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn1001373
This is the residence at Wallstraße 84 in Berlin where the Abrahams lived as it looks today.
Wallstraße 84 is a set of stolpersteine in memory of the Abraham family members who perished.
“Who has a picture of Ruth Nelly Abraham?”

Auerbacher, 80, was looking for a picture of her childhood friend, Ruth Nelly Abraham, who was murdered at Auschwitz. The two girls became friends in the Terezin concentration camp, where they lived together from 1942 until Oct. 9, 1944, when Ruth was taken to Auschwitz.

The rest of the story can be found at this link:
In January 2019, Inge Auerbacher shared her account as a child survivor of Terezin, during the annual United Nations Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony.
Inge Auerbacher points to Ruth’s stolperstein when she visited Berlin
And now...the rest of the story...
Ruth Abraham was paired with a little girl named Emily Weinberg. The Bat Mitzvah was last week in Parkland on Saturday Sept 5th.

I was able to find Inge Auerbacher.

She is still alive and living in NY. When I told her about the project she was amazed, flattered and sent this message to Emily.
One last amazing postscript:

Emily’s mother Bonnie’s maiden name was unusual; BARATZ. BUT, not unusual for me because that is also my mother-in-law’s maiden name.

It turns out completely unbeknownst to all of us that Bonnie and my wife, Sharon are second cousins and the whole time this was really all in the family.
Thank you!

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