

An Historical Reunion

Dori Schmetterling



About a year ago, on 27 February 2007, the Catholic girl rescuer and the Jewish girl saved met again for the first time after over 60 years.

The heroism of the 15-year-old rescuer and her family was remarkable. For about ten months in 1943/4, at the height of the Holocaust in Kopyczynce near the former Lemberg/Lvov – now Lviv in the western Ukraine – they sheltered two Jewish families, a total of seven people, in a disused dovecote in the attic of a building opposite the headquarters of the Nazi police. It was a public building used for public entertainment, and the caretaker lived on the premises.

This family, the Traczs and the Chirs, devised ways of getting extra food and disposing of waste clandestinely. The girl, then fifteen and the youngest of the family, played the piano when visitors came to drown out any creaks and sounds of people moving in the attic.

They risked death every day and they have been named Righteous Among the Nations, with trees planted in their honour in the grounds of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

And so last year a meeting was organised at the Lauder Morasha Jewish School in Warsaw under the auspices of the Claims Conference to honour rescuers and reunite them with the rescued. About 60 rescuers came, but only one rescued.

It certainly caused a stir in the press, making the front page of Rzeczpospolita, the leading quality Polish newspaper and being reported in other Polish newspapers. Polish radio interviewed the rescued Jewish woman and, amazingly, articles appeared in many countries both in print and online. In the UK the Times, Independent and Jewish Chronicle among others ran the story.

The one rescued person who came was my mother. Three of the other Jews were my late father and his late parents.

NWE Youth Group's "Arctic Monkeys"!

Jonathan Matheson

Did you know that Sam Talalay is a wizard on two blades or that Elliott Bernie is Lewis Hamilton on ice?

The NWE Youth Group held a pre-Chanukah ice skating party at Queensway Ice Rink. Abbie Bernie, Lucy Morris and Rachel Skry played catch-me-if-you-can round the rink while Mike Talalay coached Zak Skry for the NWE Canadian ice hockey team! Exhilarated and famished, we finally hung up our skates and enjoyed one of Anne Shisler's special Chanukah teas - jammy doughnuts and all!



After the success of last year's Youth Shabbat, the NWE Youth Group will be holding a second Youth Shabbat soon - this time with an Explanatory Service - to be followed by a Special Brunch for the Youth Group and their families. Later in the spring, we are planning a ten-pin bowling event at a local bowling alley. It's all go for the NWE Youth Group so, if you're in the 12+ age group and would like to join us for these events, please contact the NWE Office or email nwes@newwestend.org.uk for further information.