

## Richard Shand

Wartime Experience: Sent to England on a Kindertransport

I was born in Breslau, Germany (at that time) on August 26 1929 -the only child of Erwin and Gerta Schohan. My name at birth was Ludwig-Willi Schohari. My father was a salesman (traveling) and was away a great deal. His mother, who I visited occasionally lived in Gleiwitz. My maternal grandmother, Alma Hannes lived in Breslau and I saw her frequently. She had an only brother who owned a pharmacy and lived in Berlin; I visited "Onkel Hardy" from time to time. I remember very little of my early life in Breslau -- I do recall that I went to school there. I have a vivid memory of "Krystallnacht" when I saw the Synagogue in flames and many store fronts smashed and looted -- this was at the end of 1938. Shortly thereafter I recall that we had to sell a lot of our possessions and move to Berlin; I have no memory of where we lived there nor if I went to school at that time.

On May 3 1939 I left Berlin on the "Kindertransport" to England. My legal guardian was the "Hospitality Committee" who placed me with a family, who lived in London. They had 2 boys -- one older and one younger than me; the boys were the sons of the father from a previous marriage. For a short time I went to a boarding school near London, but when the war started and the family moved to Guildford, I was placed in a boarding school in Haslemere in the south of England. Soon thereafter my "foster parents" deemed me to be beyond control and I had to spend all my vacations at the boarding school. I did not mind that in the least since the person who had charge of me "Sergeant" was the Scoutmaster, P.E. instructor and all round disciplinarian, whom I respected, liked and admired and I learned a great deal from him. Also a "dayboy" who lived in Haslemere often came up to the school and since he was also an only child and bored at home during the vacations prevailed on his Mother to let me come and stay with him on several occasions. The only thing that I recall about the war was that numerous aircraft were shot down near our school and we were evacuated from our dormitory to the library basement and had to sleep on mattresses on the floor. Also I learned during 1941 or 1942 that my grandmother Alma had died. Subsequently I heard that she had committed suicide.

In 1943 I was sent to a Public (private) School also in the south of England. I remained there until the end of the war. During that time, I heard that both my parents had perished in Auschwitz. Also, "Onkel Hardy" who had escaped to England in 1938 traced me and took over my care from the "foster parents". He paid for my education to become a pharmacist and I stayed with him during the vacations in London. I took my pharmacy training in Birmingham and graduated in 1951; before I could get certified I needed a year of postgraduate work during which time my uncle suffered a stroke and subsequently died. I worked in various pharmacies and later was manager of several until 1956 when I had a job opportunity in Bermuda (Retail Pharmacy) where I remained until 1959 when I emigrated to the United States. I joined a large Pharmaceutical Company with whom I remained for 25 years until I took an early retirement at age 55. I lived in an apartment in San Francisco until 1965 and later bought a home in Mill

Valley and moved to Marin County. In 1967 I met my wife' on a hike on Mount Tamalpais and we were married in 1968.

Soon after my retirement, I became bored and decided to start a second career. Took advanced driver training and became a school bus driver – first with a large company who leased their buses to schools and later with a School District in San Rafael. In the summer of 1985 I applied for the job of Summer Camp driver at the Marin Jewish Community Center. I held this job for 4 years after which I became Transportation Coordinator (the Center had not yet been built). With the completion of the Center my duties and responsibilities increased greatly -- and my association with them has been a very positive influence in my life.

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