



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY TRUST

Learning from genocide -
for a better future

BOURTON PARK



BUCKINGHAM

**HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL
DAY**

TUESDAY 27TH JANUARY 2026 @ 11AM



**BUCKINGHAM
TOWN COUNCIL**

Buckingham Holocaust Memorial Day

Tuesday 27th January 2026

Welcome (Buckingham Town Mayor, Cllr. Davies)

Statement (Cllr. Davies)

On Holocaust Memorial Day, we remember the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust, and the millions of people killed under Nazi persecution of other groups, and in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur.

- We recognise that the Holocaust shook the foundations of modern civilisation. Its unprecedented character and horror will always hold universal meaning.
- We believe the Holocaust must have a permanent place in our nations and community's collective memory. We honour the survivors still with us and reaffirm our shared goals of mutual understanding and justice.
- We must make sure that future generations understand the causes of the Holocaust and reflect upon its consequences. We vow to remember the victims of Nazi persecution and of all genocides.
- We value the sacrifices of those who have risked their lives to protect or rescue victims, as a touchstone of the human capacity for good in the face of evil.
- We recognise that humanity is still scarred by the belief that race, religion, disability or sexuality make some people's lives worth less than others. Genocide, antisemitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination still continue. We have a shared responsibility to fight these evils.
- We pledge to strengthen our efforts to promote education and research about the Holocaust and other genocides. We will do

our utmost to make sure that the lessons of such events are fully learnt.

- We will continue to encourage Holocaust remembrance by organising an activity to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day. We condemn the evils of prejudice, discrimination and racism. We value a free, respectful, and democratic society.
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Reading

Mr Stan Cohen, Milton Keynes & District Reform Synagogue

“The Butterfly” by **Pavel Friedmann**

Introduction by Mr Cohen:

This poem I am about to read was discovered at Theresienstadt after the concentration camp was liberated in 1945. It was one of many poems and paintings that the children who had been imprisoned there wrote and painted while they awaited their inevitable fate of being sent to the Nazi death camps.

Three years ago, I travelled to the Czech Republic to visit one of the towns where the Jewish population of just a few hundred- families, parents and children- had been rounded up and escorted to Theresienstadt. These people were ordinary citizens- shopkeepers, teachers, craftsmen, musicians and housewives and the children were just like children everywhere.

You have to imagine how they responded to being swept away from their unextraordinary lives and placed in an

overcrowded barracks with little food, and no hope of escape, before they met their inevitable fate- transportation and death at places like Auschwitz. Their parents thought it best to distract the children from their fate by getting them busy with painting, drama and the writing of poetry and stories. When liberated, the soldiers entering the camp found poems like this one on the walls and in the desks.

Why were these children fated to be such tragic victims?

Simply, because they were born into one ethnic group that another ethnic group had decided to hate and kill. If this happened to you, would you be able to make any sense of the situation? Would you be one of the haters or one of the hated?

The Butterfly

The last, the very last, so richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.

Perhaps, if the sun`s tears would sing against a white stone....

Such a yellow is carried lightly way up high.

It went away I`m sure because it wished to kiss the world goodbye.

For seven weeks I`ve lived in here, penned up inside this Ghetto.

But I have found my people here.

The dandelions call to me and the white chestnut candles in the court.

Only I never saw another butterfly.

The butterfly was the last one.

Butterflies don't live here in the Ghetto

Reading

Student from the Royal Latin Leadership Team

'I Kept on Walking' – by **Mark Hayward** (HMD 2012 winning poem)

I kept on walking as she threw a stone

For it was not thrown at me

I kept on walking past the man who groaned

As he was hit behind the knee

I kept on walking past the run-down homes

I had somewhere else to be

I kept on walking as I clutched my phone

And pretended not to see

I kept on walking as the words were thrown
Every insult, every plea
The wounds they inflicted were not my own
And nothing to do with me
I kept on walking when the rage had grown
'Til the bodies filled the streets
I kept on walking over skulls and bones
Ash and blood beneath my feet
I'll keep on walking from the things I've known
But refused to really see
I'll keep on walking but I'm not alone
You're keeping step with me

Candle Lighting (Cllr. Davies)

Two-minute silence (All)

Reading

Reverend Tim Edworthy, Well Street United Church

Reading from Lamentations 3:17-26 & 31-32

17 I have been deprived of peace;
I have forgotten what prosperity is.

18 So I say, 'My splendour is gone
and all that I had hoped from the Lord.'

19 I remember my affliction and my wandering,
the bitterness and the gall.

20 I well remember them,
and my soul is downcast within me.

21 Yet this I call to mind
and therefore I have hope:

22 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.

23 They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.

24 I say to myself, 'The Lord is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him.'

25 The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him,
to the one who seeks him;

26 it is good to wait quietly
for the salvation of the Lord.

31 For no one is cast off
by the Lord for ever.

32 Though he brings grief, he will show compassion,
so great is his unfailing love.

Reading

**Pro Vice-Chancellor, Prof Harriet Dunbar-Morris,
University of Buckingham**

Life Story of Eva Clarke BEM

Eva Clarke BEM was born under unimaginably harrowing circumstances in the final days of World War II. Her birth, on 29 April 1945, just outside the gates of the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria, came just one day after the Nazis had run out of gas for the chambers and less than a week before liberation by the US Army.

She was one of only three babies born in Mauthausen who survived the Holocaust. Today, Eva is a tireless advocate for Holocaust remembrance and education, lending her voice to the ongoing fight against antisemitism and any form of racial prejudice.

To understand more about Eva, we begin in 1933, the year Adolf Hitler rose to power in Germany. As the Nazi regime began persecuting Jews, her father, Bernd Nathan – an architect – fled Hamburg for Prague. There, he met Anka Kauderova, a university law student. They married on 15 May 1940 in Czechoslovakia, which was already under Nazi occupation; their time together would be painfully short.

In December 1941, the couple were deported to Terezín (Theresienstadt), a transit and concentration camp in Czechoslovakia – solely because they were Jewish. For three years, they witnessed the deportation to Nazi death camps of the elderly, the sick, the pregnant, mothers with young children

and people with disabilities. Bernd and Anka – young and healthy – were forced into hard labour. Anka managed to secure a job distributing food, enabling her to steal small scraps for 14 family members also imprisoned in the camp.

Tragically, all 14, including Eva's father, three grandparents, her two sisters and eight-year-old nephew Peter – were later murdered at Auschwitz.

Despite the strict separation of men and women at Terezín, Eva's parents managed brief, secret meetings – acts of love and defiance in a place built to dehumanise. During one of these times, Anka became pregnant. Eva's brother Jiri (George) was born in February 1944 but died two months later of pneumonia. Eva often reflects on the irony that had Jiri lived, she would not have been born: Anka arriving at Auschwitz with a baby would have meant death for both.

Instead, Anka arrived alone. Though pregnant again – this time with Eva – the signs did not yet show, and she was selected for forced labour, deported to an armaments factory in Freiberg, near Dresden. There, she endured six months of hard labour, growing weaker as her pregnancy advanced. Years later, a curious 12-year-old Eva asked her mother how she had conceived in such conditions. "It was very dangerous", Anka replied. "But your father and I got together secretly as and when we could – and to hell with the consequences, end of story". But it had very serious consequences

When the Nazis discovered my mother's pregnancy, they made my parents sign a document saying the baby would have to be handed over to be euthanised/killed.

In October 1944, Bernd was deported to Auschwitz before Anka could share the news of her pregnancy. In desperation, she volunteered to follow him, unaware of where he had gone. They never saw each other again. Anka later learned Bernd had been shot on a death march on 18 January 1945 – just days before Auschwitz’s liberation.

In April 1945, as the Nazi regime collapsed, Anka – nine months pregnant – was forced onto a coal truck with thousands of other prisoners. She endured a 17-day journey without food and barely any water. Weighing only 35kg, she described herself as a ‘pregnant skeleton.’ At one stop, a local farmer offered her a glass of milk – a gesture she believed saved both her and her unborn child and this was in defiance of the Nazi officer brandishing a whip. When the train reached Mauthausen, Anka went into labour – likely triggered by recognising the name of the camp. Unlike Auschwitz, which she had not known before, Mauthausen’s brutal reputation was well-known. Pulling herself off the train and onto a cart, she gave birth to Eva, who weighed just three pounds (1.3kg).



Anka with Eva

After the war, Eva and her mother returned to Czechoslovakia and lived with Anka’s cousin, Olga, another survivor, for three years. Learning of Bernd’s death soon after the war, Anka

remarried in 1948 to Karel Bergman. The family soon emigrated to the United Kingdom, settling in Cardiff, where Eva began a new life far from the horrors of her mother's wartime experiences.

One day, returning from school, Eva noticed that one of her mother's bags bore the initials 'AN' – Anka Nathan – whereas Eva's surname was Bergman. Curious, she asked about it. That simple question opened the door to a painful truth: her biological father had been murdered during the Holocaust. From then on, her mother spoke openly, always in a way Eva could understand. Eva treasures her mother's honesty, believing it gave her the strength to later share their history with others.

After finishing school in Cardiff, Eva moved to London. She had first met her husband, Malcolm, as a teenager in Cardiff. The couple later married and settled in Cambridge, raising two children. In 2000, Eva began publicly sharing her mother's experiences. A strong supporter of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, she is driven by the belief that the lessons of the Holocaust must never be forgotten.

In 2019, Eva was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for her dedication to Holocaust education. Her birth certificate, a testament to life born amid atrocity, is displayed at the Holocaust Galleries of the Imperial War Museum in London – reminding all who see it that even in the darkest times, life endured.

Commitment (Cllr. Davies) We must commit to learning from the Holocaust and from genocides for a better future.

Conclusion (Cllr. Davies)

Finish

To learn more about Holocaust Memorial Day and discover more poetry featuring a variety of experiences of the Holocaust, Nazi persecution and subsequent genocides please visit the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust online www.HMD.org.uk

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