

Temple Shalom, Villages Old Time Radio Club partner in haunting remembrance of Kristallnacht

By Angela Love November 10, 2013



Phyllis Kalter and Susan Sirmai Feinberg

Temple Shalom offered a riveting program commemorating Kristallnacht featuring an old time radio presentation and guest speaker Lisl Shick, a Holocaust survivor from Austria. The program *Kristallnacht – the Beginning of the Holocaust*, held on Wednesday, Nov. 9 the same date as the actual event in 1938, served to remind and teach people about the event often referred to as the “Night of Broken Glass.” Kristallnacht owes its name to the shards of shattered glass from the windows of synagogues, homes and Jewish-owned businesses that lined German streets after being plundered and destroyed during the violence.



Bob Gold as Walter Winchell

This is the second year co-chairs Susan Sirmai Feinberg and Phyllis Kalter have presented a Kristallnacht program. Kalter wrote the script for the old time radio presentation. The program intended to show how Americans would have received the news in 1938 had newscasters interrupted regular programming with updates. Working with the Villages Old Time Radio Club, Kalter developed a realistic program with Walter

Winchell and Edward R. Murrow interrupting the Benny Goodman Orchestra performing in the Rainbow Room to report what was happening in Germany.



Old Time Radio Presentation Director Ed Williams and script writer Phyllis Kalter.

Kalter thanked Ed Williams, member of the Old Time Radio Players and show director for the authenticity of the program.

Actual commercials for Lucky Stripes and other products of the day were interspersed in the program as was Kate Smith introducing her brand new song *God Bless America*.

Following the radio show format, Feinberg brought it up to modern day and interviewed Holocaust survivor Lisl Schick. In the aftermath of Kristallnacht, Schick described memories that still haunt her today. She remembers stepping outside and seeing hundreds of Jewish men on their knees cleaning up glass while being guarded by the SS. A young girl that lived with Lisl's family working as an au pair had become like a sister to Lisl. The young girl was taken from the home because she was not Jewish. She remembers going to school and the same Christian children that had been her friends the week before now called her a "dirty Jew" and would not associate with her.

Lisl Schick

In 1939 Lisl, then 11, and her seven year-old brother were fortunate enough to be put on the Kindertransport. She and her brother lived in England for six years. She is thankful they were never separated. She calls hers a happy story because she was ultimately reunited with her parents in America when she was 17.

Now a board member of the Florida Holocaust Museum, Schick speaks to many student groups. She talks to them about bullying and warns them not to be a bystander. Her remarks received a standing ovation.

A very powerful moment in the program was the silence at the end. By request the audience remained silent while leaving the program until they were outside.

