

# Triumph Over Tragedy

By Mike Jacobs, edited by Ginger Jacobs

*When the tattooing was over, the SS man looked at me and said, “Do you know what this number is all about?”*

*“No, sir,” I answered.*

*“Now you are not human anymore. You are a number, and you better remember this number, because that’s what you will be called from now on.”*

*They put the same number on my shirt, and so I became B4990. But in my mind, I was still a free person.*

Founder of the Dallas Holocaust Memorial Center, Mike Jacobs was born (Mendel Jakubowicz) in 1925 near the German border in a small Polish town, Konin, about 120 miles from Warsaw, where the Jewish community dated from 1397. Jacobs was a teenager during WWII, and in his memoir he recounts his five years of confinement in ghettos and concentration camps and his current life’s work to maintain a memory of the Holocaust in the minds of further generations.

Renowned Jewish historian Simon Dubnow has been said to have challenged his fellow Holocaust survivors to “write and record,” a task Jacobs has seriously taken to heart. Jacobs has told his story many times to thousands of people, and he has recorded his testimony on video tape. He records his memoir for readers all over the world.

This powerful, moving story begins with four chapters on Jacobs’ early days in Konin, followed by 23 chapters on his war years and the post-war years in Germany. The remaining two chapters discuss how he came to live in Dallas and create the Dallas Holocaust Memorial Center.

In addition to explaining how he learned to survive under unbelievably intolerable conditions, Jacobs also teaches about community, helping others, and the peace that comes with time. It is a gripping story of how Jacobs survived the concentration camp, how he was able to maintain his self respect, and how he learned resistance whenever the opportunity arose. His commitment is to never let others forget the horrible truth that is the Jewish Holocaust.

Mike Jacobs was one of the 60,000 prisoners sent on a death march from

Auschwitz-Berkinau. Marching approximately 35 kilometers a day over a period of five days in the snow, many died of starvation while others were shot.

Mike was taken to Mauthausan-Gusen II where he worked as a machinist.

Mauthausan-Gusen II was liberated by the 11th Armored Division, the Thunderbolts, of the United States Army, May 5, 1945.

Rather than be placed in a Displaced Person's Camp, Mike walked into Linz.

After five and a half years of ghettos and camps, Mike Jacobs, at the age of 19 years, 6 months weighed only 70 pounds.

The youngest of six children, Mike lost over 80 members of his extended family in the Holocaust.

In 1951, Mike moved to Dallas, Texas, with the assistance of the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.

Mike married native Dallasite, Ginger Chesnick, in 1953. They have four children and are the proud grandparents of four granddaughters.

The Dallas Memorial Center for Holocaust Studies opened April 15, 1984, of which Mike is the founder.

(Mike's book, *Holocaust Survivor, Mike Jacobs' Triumph Over Tragedy*, is available from the author. Write, Mike Jacobs, 7060 Brookshire Dr., Dallas, TX 75230 or phone 214-363--8516. Paperback @ \$23 each Plus \$3 shipping and \$1.90 tax.. Hardcover @ \$32 each, plus \$3 shipping.)