

Flora Singer

Submitted by Anonymous on Fri, Jul 06, 2012

Retired Teacher and

Scholar of the Montgomery County Public Schools

Ms. Flora Singer was born in Antwerp, Belgium in 1930 and came to the United States at the age of 16. Hers is a compelling story of her own courage and the courage of others who assisted her in evading Hitler's deadly plan for the Jews of Europe during World War II. Ms. Singer and her siblings were separated in Belgium shortly after the beginning of the war. Her father escaped to the U.S. and served in the U.S. Army. Ms. Singer and her two sisters were protected from annihilation in the concentration camps by a Benedictine monk, Father Bruno Reynders. He hid Ms. Singer and her sisters and placed them in convents where they were looked after for two years before they came to the United States with their mother to be finally reunited with their father.

Ms. Singer began her life in the United States in New York City. While living in cramped conditions and sharing one bathroom with four other families in the apartment building, she learned to read and write in English on her own at the public library. She supplemented the family income by sewing in a workshop at first, but then began to study stenography and obtained employment as a secretary and did translations. It was not until the age of 27 that she decided to resume her formal education and received her G.E.D. at Temple University in Philadelphia.

After marrying Jack Singer and having two children, Ms. Singer decided to return to school and earn her college degree. She attended the University of Maryland, College Park and received a Bachelor of Arts degree, Magna Cum Laude, in French and a Master of Arts degree, also in French. She was invited to complete the Ph.D. program at the University of Maryland as well as at Catholic University but did not accept either offer.

Instead, Ms. Singer began teaching in the Montgomery County Public Schools. She demonstrated wonderful teaching abilities and was constantly praised by her colleagues. It was while teaching that she learned about Dr. Alfred Butz of Northwestern University, who authored a book denying the existence of the Holocaust. This sparked Ms. Singer's anger and she began teaching her students about the Holocaust and its meaning. In doing so, she and two colleagues, Bob Hines and Sue Shotel, developed a class entitled, "The Holocaust: A History of Destruction, Resistance and Survival." This class teaches about truth, tolerance and survival.

Flora retired from the Montgomery County Public School System in 1993, but continues to spread her message to people of all ages.

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