

# BIRTHDAY ON "BIRTHDAY OF THE TREES"

On that Jewish springtime festival  
more than 100 years ago for the newborn  
Schultz Zoltán began a hopeful life ...



The gifted young musician's career quickly took him  
from Szombathely to the *'Budapest Academy of Music'*,  
Hungary's most prestigious conservatory.

By the age of 22, the violin virtuoso and conductor  
already belonged to the elite of the country.

By that time nearly all across Europe right-wing populist  
governments had come to power.

The situation for Jews became increasingly menacing.

In 1939 Zoltán's sister Edith emigrated to the USA. The  
young artist, on the other hand, lived so dedicated to the  
beauty of classical music that he could not begin to imagine  
that horrors such as the Holocaust could possibly become  
a reality for him.

But it happened!

In 1944 - like tens of thousands other Jews - Zoltán was forcefully compelled to unarmed  
military service in a *'forced labor battalion'* (*'Munkaszolálat'*).

His sensitive artist hands were misused to dig antitank ditches; at first in the north of  
Budapest and later, during the winter of 1944-45 under even more cruel conditions, on the  
so called *'South-East-Wall'* in Styria.

After the war the only thing his sister heard of Zoltán was  
a phone call of a relative who reported that Zoltán was  
last seen alive in April 1945 in a *'deathmarch'* column  
toward the Mauthausen concentration camp.

Thereafter his tracks went cold.

Edith's further research (even in Europe  
by personally consulting many archives and  
institutions in Europe) remained unsuccessful –  
for 70 years!

Only Zoltán's violin was found in Budapest after the  
war. Zoltán's nephew, Paul, in the USA, still takes care  
of this family treasure – awakening its sound in honor of  
the *'unfinished'* melody of his uncle's life ...



But then suddenly the almost unbelievable happened: On the eve of the ‚4th Iyyar‘ on Jewish calendars (that correlates to our 23.04.2015) Zoltán’s sister Edith in the USA gathered with her whole family. Just a few hours earlier, the family had learned from a surprise phone call from Europe when and where her missing brother was murdered and where he was buried. According to the Jewish worship rules they were at long last able to pray the ‚Kaddish‘ for their ‚Zoli‘ first time on his ‚Yahrzeit‘ (the date of death) – exactly at Zoltán’s 70th anniversary of death according to the ‚Jewish Year‘!

(The ‚Kaddish‘ is an ancient, awesome, consoling, hopeful prayer in G-d’s covenant people of Israel). What a most profoundly ‚holy‘ moment in that sorely afflicted family history – after seven decades of painful uncertainty!!

Six months later, in October 2015, Zoltán’s niece and nephews, each as a couple, visited the graves of their ancestors at the Jewish cemetery of Szombathely, on behalf of their mother Edith. Afterwards, they explored the distinctive squares and landscapes along the - now traceable - last miles of Zoltán’s path as a forced laborer in the East Styria. Then they started to follow the footsteps of their uncle’s last 10 days in the ‚Todesmarsch‘ (deathmarch column) from Graz via three mountain passes (Gaberl, Hohe Tauern, Pyhrnpass) to St. Pankraz in Upper Austria.

There they were shown the three places where victims of the so-called ‚Judentreiben‘ (‚driving Jews like cattle‘) were shot and buried on 17<sup>th</sup> of April, 1945.



On one of these, during the first exhumation and the reburial in the local cemetery of St. Pankraz on Mai 22nd 1945, had been discovered a little package with documents of Zoltán Schultz as well as photos and letters in Hungarian language.

Unfortunately, it was not noted in the police report, in which one of the three graves these last personal belongings were found. At least they were not thrown away ...,

... only stored and forgotten between old lever arch files in a cellar room.

At all three former graves Zoltán’s relatives prayed the ‚Kaddish‘ with equal intensity – at least dedicated to one of ‚Zoli’s‘ still nameless fellows in suffering!





Mrs. Anita Skolnik and her brethren Peter and Paul Bodnar

The following day in Kirchdorf an der Krems, the district capital, an official ceremony of remembrance was dedicated to the restitution of the original documents from the tomb of Zoltán Schultz into the hands of his family by the ‚Chief District Commander‘ Dr. Goppold.

In that very moving moment assisted him his attentive secretary, Mrs. Eglauer, who - just at the right moment - had rediscovered the envelope with the precious treasures in the archives of the district authority.

This event invites to remember the six previous months like in a ‚time-lapse film‘:

16th of April: On the day before the unveiling of a ‚death march‘- memorial near St. Pankraz, Mrs. Eglauer shows her strange discovery to the responsible ‚EINHALT‘- team.

“Could there be a connection between those documents and your event tomorrow?” she asks.

17th of April 2015: In the presence of representatives of politics, schools and churches the name ‚Schultz Zoltán‘ can be publicly mentioned for the first time – exactly on the 70th anniversary of his death according our calendar. One doubtless documented Jewish name of over 1000 others!

His profession: ‚violin virtuoso and conductor‘.

His age at the time of death by violence: ‚28 years‘.

The following Internet search action undertaken by the ‚EINHALT‘- team is successful. But everywhere the name ‚Schultz Zoltan‘ is mentioned, he is regarded as ‚missing‘ since the last days of the war. However, at Yad VaShem there is a ‚Page of Testimony‘, a questionnaire filled out 1990 in London by Zoltán’s sister Edith with married name ‚Bodnar‘. But her address in USA is out-of-date.

Nonetheless the miracle happens to reach Edith’s relatives by telephone and to give them the exact information about the date and place of his death, which the family needs for convoking an ‘fully valid’ and very personal ‚Kaddish‘ prayer meeting for her ‚Zoli‘ first time ever - accurate on the 70th Yahrzeit according the Jewish calendar!

Back to the official meeting with his family in Austria:



Dr. Paul Bodnar transmitted greetings and a message from his mother Edith. After these heartfelt words of gratitude, reconciliation and hope for a future in friendship, that moving journey of Zoltán’s family continued.

The last destination was the cemetery in the ‘Mauthausen Memorial’ where (after 2 exhumations) Zoltán received his



final, dignified, permanent resting place in the silent yard for Jewish victims of the Shoah.



The sympathetic approach of Mrs. Mag. Blohberger and Team in Mauthausen paved the way for the unveiling of a memorial plaque that fulfilled all wishes of Zoltán's sister Edith:



The Hebrew inscription points up that the birthday on 7th Feb. in 1917 was the Jewish holiday: *, Tu bí-Shvát' = , Birthday of the trees'*  
In 2017 celebrated on 11th of February.

This suggests to regard the **olive tree** as a symbol for G-d's people of Israel: Its roots supply it with inexhaustible vitality, allowing it to green again and again and to bring new fruit - in spite of all **attacks** and injuries.



*How true! For we got the sad message from 'KKL\_JNF' that the trees, which had been planted in 2017 into the southern Israeli 'Be'eri-Forest' in honor of Zoltán's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, last year have been vandalized in such **attacks** by the 'Burning Kites' from Gaza. But we hope that soon we will be able to let plant even more new trees than before in Zoltán's name – as signs of unwavering hope.*



**For more details: [www.einhalt.at](http://www.einhalt.at) >> Zoltán Schultz (EN) >> Trees for Israel – set a mark! Get in personal contact to Wolfgang Baaske or Joachim Stoebis in the ,EINHALT'- team via: [wbaaske@aon.at](mailto:wbaaske@aon.at)**