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Library
April 8, 2002

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Charleston County Public Library Unveils

Shoah Foundation Visual History Collection of Holocaust Testimonies

Charleston, SC ; April 8, 2002 – Today the Charleston County Public Library unveiled the first regional collection of Shoah Foundation testimonies available for viewing at a public library in the United States. Twenty-eight Holocaust survivors and witnesses gave testimony in South Carolina between 1994 and 1998. Their interviews comprise the Shoah Foundation Visual History Collection at the library. The Shoah Foundation's archive of more than 50,000 eyewitness testimonies is the largest collection of videotaped Holocaust testimonies in the world.

At a press conference held this morning at the library to announce the opening of the Collection, Dr. Douglas Greenberg, president and CEO of the Shoah Foundation, remarked, "The Shoah Foundation's new mission, with its emphasis on worldwide education, relies upon collaborative relationships like the one we have established with the Charleston County Public Library. This first regional collection of visual history testimonies at a public library in the United States signals a shift in focus for both the Shoah Foundation and the future of tolerance education, and the Charleston County Public Library has led the way."

The event, held in recognition of Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, was attended by The Honorable Joseph P. Riley, Jr., mayor of the city of Charleston; Dr. Douglas Greenberg, president and CEO, Shoah Foundation; Jan Buvinger, director, Charleston County Public Library; Garry Barnette, Social Studies teacher at Fort Dorchester High School; Jennifer Henriques Phillips, development chair, Holocaust Memorial Committee; Jerry and Anita Zucker, donors providing funding for the Collection. The program included a six-minute video presentation, incorporating portions of testimonies available for viewing at the library. Several survivors were also on hand to speak to the media about the importance of personal eyewitness testimonies in the study of history and the impact such personal connections will have on future generations.

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The opening of the Shoah Foundation Visual History Collection at the Charleston County Public Library marks a milestone in the effort to bring Holocaust education to the region. Starting in 1994, a survivor-led group of citizens, headed by Joe Engel, Pincus Kolender, Charles Markowitz and Sam Greene, spearheaded a community-wide effort leading to the establishment of the Holocaust Memorial Committee and the subsequent construction of a Holocaust memorial in Marion Square, one of the city's landmarks.

In 1996, the committee, under the guidance of David Popowski, chair, and Jennifer Henriques Phillips, development chair, forged an educational link between the memorial and the Charleston County Public Library with the establishment of the Jerry and Anita Zucker Holocaust Memorial Collection, named to honor the Zucker family's contribution to the memorial, at the Charleston County Main Library. This special collection holds reference and lending materials that serve as a resource for teachers, students, and the public. To further the educational mandate and to bring the faces and voices of the survivors to the community, Ms. Phillips, a former interviewer for the Shoah Foundation, initiated a partnership between the Foundation and the Library to bring a regional collection of Holocaust eyewitness testimonies here for public viewing. The Shoah Foundation Visual History Collection at the Charleston County Library will form the basis for community-wide educational support for Holocaust studies within the public school and library systems.

Since Steven Spielberg established Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation in 1994, the Foundation has videotaped the testimonies of more than 50,000 Holocaust survivors and witnesses in 57 countries in 32 languages. Today, the Shoah Foundation endeavors to overcome prejudice, intolerance, and bigotry—and the suffering they cause—through the educational use of the Foundation's visual history testimonies. To this end, the Foundation preserves and provides access to the archive; builds and supports educational programs; and develops educational products based on the testimonies. These products include two CD-ROMs, *Survivors: Testimonies of the Holocaust* (English-language); and *Erinnern für Gegenwart und Zukunft / Remembering for the Present and the Future* (German-language). The Foundation has also produced eight documentary films; three in English, including the 1998 Academy Award-winning *The Last Days*; and five foreign-language documentaries, known collectively as *Broken Silence*, for international television broadcast in Poland, Argentina, Russia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Individuals interested in supporting the Shoah Foundation are encouraged to call 818/777-4673 or write to PO Box 3168, Los Angeles, California, 90078-3168. For more information, visit the Foundation's homepage at www.vhf.org.

To learn more about what is happening at the Charleston County Public Library call 843-805-6930 or visit www.ccpl.org.

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