



Wirral welcomes Rudi Oppenheimer, Holocaust Survivor, for Wirral's annual Holocaust Commemoration Event

On Wednesday 1 February 2017, students of History, Religious Education and Citizenship from secondary schools across Wirral will travel to the Floral Pavilion Theatre, New Brighton to hear testimony from Holocaust survivor, Rudi Oppenheimer, as part of a visit organised by the Holocaust Educational Trust (HET).

The commemoration event will be opened by the Mayor of Wirral, Councillor Pat Hackett, who will welcome back Rudi Oppenheimer, who last addressed Wirral's commemoration event in 2015. The Mayor will be accompanied by the Mayoress, Mrs Elaine Hackett. The event will include a presentation from Wirral students, who have recently visited Auschwitz. Other Wirral school students will make the statement of Commitment, whilst the Yahrzeit candles are lit.

Rudi was born in 1931 in Berlin and lived there with his parents and his older brother Paul until he was four years old. Before the family moved to Holland in 1936, Rudi spent six months in Britain with his mother and brother, and it was here that his sister Eve was born. In 1940, when German troops invaded Holland, Rudi's family were not, at first, deported. However, in 1943, when Rudi was just twelve years old, the family were sent to the transit camp of Westerbork and then on to Bergen-Belsen, where both his parents died. Following their liberation in April 1945, Paul and Rudi Oppenheimer made their way back to Holland.

The Mayor of Wirral is delighted that Wirral is again able to hold its commemoration of the Holocaust. He said:

"It is a privilege for us to welcome Rudi Oppenheimer to Wirral and his testimony will remain a powerful reminder of the horrors so many experienced. We are grateful to the Holocaust Educational Trust for co-ordinating the visit and we hope that by hearing Rudi's testimony, it will encourage our students to learn from the lessons of the Holocaust and make a positive difference in their own lives."

Karen Pollock MBE, Chief Executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust added:

"The Holocaust Educational Trust educates and engages students from across the UK, from all communities about the Holocaust and there can be no better way than through the first-hand testimony of a survivor. Rudi's story is one of tremendous courage during horrific circumstances and

by hearing his testimony, students will have the opportunity to learn where prejudice and racism can ultimately lead.”

In the light of recent events, this year’s HET theme “How can Life Go On” is particularly relevant.

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