

## News story: Natasha Kaplinsky recognised in Queen's Birthday Honours for project to remember the Holocaust

The award recognises Natasha's incredible personal commitment to preserving the memory of the Holocaust for future generations, following her work to record the testimony of more than 100 British Holocaust survivors and Bergen Belsen liberators as part of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation's major national project.

Over a period of 15 months and on an entirely pro-bono basis, Natasha conducted 112 testimony interviews. The majority of these moving personal stories were recorded for the first time. The invaluable body of testimonies created by Natasha cover a wide range of experiences of Nazi persecution, including camp survivors, children in hiding, refugees who escaped to Britain – some of whom then served with the British Army – and children who arrived in Britain on the Kindertransport, an organised rescue effort for Jewish children in Germany and Nazi-occupied countries before the outbreak of war. The collection also includes Charedi survivors, a Roma survivor and recordings of British soldiers involved in the liberation and relief of Bergen Belsen Concentration Camp.

Natasha's work gave all these people the chance to record their history, preserving it so that their voices can be used to educate future generations about the lessons of the Holocaust and to challenge them to think about their own role in fighting hatred and prejudice in all its forms. The testimonies will have a permanent home in the new education centre that will accompany the National Memorial which is to be built next to Parliament in Westminster.

Natasha Kaplinsky said:

"Meeting the survivors and their families has been an incredible privilege. Their testimonies detail humanity's darkest hour. They are also stories of incredible strength, compassion, inspiration and forgiveness.

"Through their testimony they offer up challenges for us all to consider about our world and the way we treat each other, and to remind us of the constant need to stand up against hatred and prejudice in all its forms."

Natasha's empathetic, sensitive and personal style ensured that survivors felt comfortable sharing their experiences and the impact they had on their lives. Reflecting on their interview, one survivor commented:

"You handled me and my testimony with great sensitivity, which made it easier for me to talk about the painful events in my life. I cannot say I enjoyed the interview as it brought back so many painful memories, but at the end I was pleased to have done it... Future generations must know what happened."

The national project began after an independent, cross-party commission found there was an urgent need to record and preserve further testimony of British survivors and liberators. It has been led by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation.

Sir Peter Bazalgette, chair of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation, said:

“Natasha has undertaken an extraordinary project, single-handedly interviewing 112 British Holocaust survivors and liberators. Using her expertise, professionalism and compassionate approach, she was able to draw out stories sympathetically and sensitively, supporting survivors to recount their testimony.

“Natasha has helped to create an indelible record of the Holocaust, curating a particularly British story for future generations to learn from. This is something we can all be grateful for.”

The testimonies will be made available online so that they can be explored by individuals and educational projects around the UK. This new digital resource will add to the existing testimony available and form part of a rich network of recorded testimonies to aid remembrance and education.

[Watch an example of excerpts from the testimonies.](#)

## **About Natasha Kaplinsky**

Natasha Kaplinsky is one of the UK's leading broadcasters having worked for Sky News, BBC and ITV. Natasha is patron of a number of charities and an Ambassador for Save The Children. In 2014 she became a member of the Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission and in 2015 she was appointed by the Prime Minister to the board of the United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial Foundation.

## **About the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation**

The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation (UKHMF) was created to implement the recommendations of the Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission report in 2015, ensuring that the memory of the Holocaust and its lessons are preserved and remain current for future generations. Alongside the programme to record and preserve the testimony of Holocaust survivors, UKHMF is leading the creation of a new national Holocaust Memorial and accompanying education centre that will explain the facts of the Holocaust and challenge visitors to explore its lessons for society today. UKHMF has cross-party support and is chaired by Sir Peter Bazalgette.