

## Activity 2: Kindertransport & Child Refugees in Wales: Part 2 - The Journey

### Robert Wasserberg - biography



*Robert Wasserberg in 1998.*

*Image from Robert Wasserberg's interview from the archive of the USC Shoah Foundation – The Institute for Visual History and Education, 1998. For more information: <http://stfi.usc.edu/>.*

Robert Wasserberg was born in Košice, in then Czechoslovakia (modern-day Slovakia) on 13 October 1928. His parents had three sons and Robert was the middle child. At home, Robert's family observed Orthodox Judaism.

When the Nazis annexed the Sudetenland, a border area of Czechoslovakia with a majority ethnic German population, in 1938, Robert was sent on a Kindertransport to the UK. He was sent to Llanwrtyd Wells, in Mid Wales, where he attended a Czech School. Due to Robert's Orthodox upbringing, he was taken for visits to London, to stay with an Orthodox family and attend the Synagogue. There he was miraculously reunited with his family, who had also managed to escape.

Robert went on to emigrate to Israel and served in the Israeli army. He married and had three children. He later became a tutor for children with additional needs in the UK.

# Activity 2: Kindertransport & Child Refugees in Wales: Part 2 - The Journey

## Llanwrtyd Wells and the Czech School



*Abernant Lake Hotel – The former Czech School, Llanwrtyd Wells.*

*Image courtesy of Natalie Evans.*

Llanwrtyd Wells is a small village located in Powys, Mid Wales. Between 1943 and 1945, a school for some 120 Czech child refugees was set up in the town, in what is now Abernant Lake Hotel. There, aided by the Czech government in exile, the refugee children were able to continue with their studies with the help of their Czech teachers. The townspeople welcomed the children who performed a concert for the locals, even singing the Welsh national anthem, 'Mae Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau'. Most of the children who attended the school lost their entire families in the Holocaust. The former pupils of the school formed close bonds with the town of Llanwrtyd Wells.

The town is twinned with the Czech town of Český Krumlov. There are numerous memorials in Llanwrtyd Wells and in the Czech Republic to commemorate the Kindertransport children and the town's welcoming spirit. In 1985, the former pupils bought the first solid gold link for the mayoral chain and presented it to the mayor Bryn Jones; all the children were given the Freedom of the Town.

## Source

Llanwrtyd & District Heritage and Arts Centre, *Children uprooted – Gadel cartref*, Information Plaque, Llanwrtyd & District Heritage and Arts Centre, Llanwrtyd Wells, Powys

