

80 Years On, Mauthausen Survivor Unites with Eisenhower Family in Powerful Tribute to Liberation & Holocaust Remembrance

Eva Clarke, liberated as an infant by American army, met Eisenhower's great-grandson at event held by the International March of the Living & Eisenhower family

WASHINGTON , DC, UNITED STATES, February 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In an emotional tribute to liberation and Holocaust remembrance, Holocaust survivor Eva Clarke today met President Dwight D. Eisenhower's great-grandson for the first time, at a March of the Living Washington event to personally thank him for the role that the Americans troops had in liberating her and other survivors. The event marked the new collaboration between the International March of the Living Holocaust education organization and the Eisenhower family.

This landmark partnership will see Merrill Eisenhower joining the 2025 March of the Living on Holocaust Remembrance Day from Auschwitz to Birkenau death camps, walking alongside Holocaust survivors and thousands of participants from around the world to honor the memory of the victims and the heroism of the liberators and the survivors. The



From left to right: Phyllis Greenberg Heideman, Merrill and Nicole Eisenhower, Josh Harris, Eva Clarke, Marjorie Harris and Greg Masel Credit: Yossi May



Eva Clarke

collaboration underscores the continued commitment of the Eisenhower family and March of the Living to ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust are preserved for future generations.

Monday's event was attended by prominent figures from both the Jewish community and beyond, including Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Yechiel Leiter, who addressed the event.

Eva Clarke, who was born in the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria in 1945, one week before the camp's official liberation by U.S. Army forces under General Eisenhower, said upon meeting Eisenhower: "I am the infant your great grandfather and the American soldiers saved. Had he and his soldiers not arrived in time, I would not be standing here today. General Eisenhower wasn't just a military man, but a visionary leader. He saw the dangers of Holocaust denial the moment he witnessed the atrocities committed by the Nazis. He fought against this – and you, Merrill, by participating in the March of the Living, continue his legacy and fight against it today. It is a great honor for me to march together with you on the Jewish Holocaust Remembrance Day."

Merrill Eisenhower responded, saying, "There is no greater privilege than continuing the legacy of my great-grandfather, who not only led the liberation of thousands of Jews from a cruel fate but also ensured the world bore witness to the horrors of the Holocaust by ordering everything to be documented. To march in the March of the Living alongside survivors, whose lives were saved thanks to him, is a solemn duty. We must keep telling their stories, stand against Holocaust denial, and fight antisemitism and intolerance in all of its manifestations wherever it appears. I thank the March of the Living organizers for the honor of marching in his footsteps and continuing his legacy."

This year's March of the Living, set to take place on Holocaust Remembrance Day, April 24, 2025, will commemorate the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the death camps in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. Thousands of participants from around the world will honor Holocaust survivors and the Allied forces, led by General Eisenhower, who ended Nazi tyranny and brought freedom to millions.

As Clarke and Eisenhower walk side by side at Auschwitz, their presence will reaffirm a shared commitment: to remember, to educate, and to stand against antisemitism and Holocaust denial, ensuring that history's darkest chapter is never repeated.



Merrill Eisenhower and Holocaust Survivor Eva Clarke (Yossi May)

Phyllis Greenberg Heideman, President of the March of the Living, told the participants: "The March of the Living stands as a living testimony to the triumph of memory over forgetfulness. The march of Eva and Merrill, alongside other survivors, is a powerful reminder of why we must continue this fight against denial and distortion. The fact that the great-grandson of the Supreme Commander who liberated Europe will march with us in the 80th year of the liberation is not just symbolic—it continues the legacy of a leader who never forgot what he saw in the Nazi death camps."

Prominent philanthropists Josh and Marjorie Harris, who co-hosted the event, said: "We are deeply proud to stand with the March of the Living and the Eisenhower family in this vital mission of remembrance and education. General Eisenhower understood the impact of bearing witness, and that remembering the past is the key to safeguarding the future. At a time when antisemitism is on the rise, that responsibility is more urgent than ever. It is a privilege to lend our voices to this cause, to honor the survivors and liberators, and to ensure that their stories continue to be heard for generations to come."

Eva Clarke's Story: A Testament to Survival

Born on April 29, 1945, at the gates of Mauthausen concentration camp, Eva Clarke's survival was a miracle. Her mother, Anka Kauderova, endured unimaginable hardships: deported from the Theresienstadt ghetto to Auschwitz while pregnant, she lost her husband, Bernd, to the gas chambers. Transferred to a forced labor camp and then Mauthausen, Anka gave birth while weighing just 32 kilograms, with Eva born at only 1.3 kilograms. Had Eva been born just a day earlier, both mother and child would have been sent to the gas chambers—but the gas had run out.

American forces arrived days later, providing life-saving care to the mother and newborn. Today, Eva is one of only three babies known to have survived being born in Mauthausen. Her story is chronicled in the book *Born Survivors*, and she continues to share her experiences to ensure the world never forgets.

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