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Ingeborg Woolf (nee Ponger) QSO z"l 1934 - 2021

It is with great sadness that we, at the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand (HCNZ), inform you of the passing of our Founding Director, Inge Woolf z"l. Her memory is a blessing unto us all.

Inge, born in Vienna, Austria in 1934, was the daughter of Evzen and Grete Ponger. She was only four years old when the Nazis marched into Austria during the Anschluss. She remembered vividly her neighbours happily putting out the Nazi swastika flag to welcome Hitler's troops as they marched down their street, and the fear she felt. This memory forever shaped her life and her mission of combating hate and antisemitism.

Inge, along with her mother and father, left Austria and moved to Czechoslovakia in 1938, seeking refugee status in the United Kingdom in 1939. They were able to leave Czechoslovakia for the United Kingdom after going through a conversion to Christianity, but her family always remained committed to their roots.

Inge and her family would make the decision to emigrate to New Zealand in 1957 and begin rebuilding their lives. It was here in New Zealand that Inge met her future husband, the late Ronald Woolf, and with whom she helped set up the successful Wellington photography business "Woolf Photography."

Inge was instrumental in establishing the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand, becoming Founding Director and Board Member. Inge's passion was educating students on the lessons of the Holocaust. Throughout the years since, she has been an active volunteer and educator at HCNZ. Inge was a living embodiment of the HCNZ mission to educate all students in Aotearoa New Zealand and to ensure that we Witness, Remember, Educate, and Act.

Inge was the proud mother to Deborah Hart, current Chair of the Board of HCNZ, and Simon Woolf, current Wellington City Councillor. She was an adored grandmother to Nathan, Neta, Jason, Sam, Noah, Lily-Jane, and great-grandmother to Hadar.

Loved and respected by many, Inge's legacy lives on in the thousands that have heard her speak and give her testimony. She was a bulwark against hatred and antisemitism, challenging students, and adults alike to not be bystanders when hatred rears its ugly head.

"Today the lessons of the Holocaust are poignant to combat increasing intolerance and racism, to teach the value of human rights and the celebration of diversity." (2019)

The Holocaust Centre of New Zealand would like to express our deepest condolences to Inge's family. We wish them all long life.



RNZ

Woolf Photography

Inge Woolf QSO z"l May 18, 1934 - February 26, 2021