



Nathan Shapell

March 6, 1922 to March 22, 2007

Nathan Shapell

Acclaimed Home Builder and Philanthropist



Nathan Shapell was a man of integrity and principle, a builder of lives who dedicated his life to helping others less fortunate. A survivor of the Holocaust, he was determined to not only rebuild his own life, but to help others rebuild theirs.

As Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Shapell Industries, Nathan Shapell personified the word “entrepreneur.” Along with brother, David, and brother-in-law, Max Webb, Nathan Shapell built one of the most successful real estate development companies in California that is recognized today as an industry leader. In recognition of his accomplishments, the Building Industry of California inducted him into the Builder’s Hall of Fame in 2001. Mr. Shapell’s philosophy was based upon the high priority he placed on family, community, and home...the very things that Hitler and the Nazis stole from him at a very early age.

Born in Poland, Nathan Shapell spent World War II as a prisoner of the infamous Buchenwald and Auschwitz Concentration Camps where most of his family members, including his mother, were executed. After Hitler’s reign of terror ended, Shapell emerged from Hitler’s living hell and devoted himself to helping thousands of bewildered and angry Holocaust survivors. His efforts landed him in Munchberg, Germany, in charge of building housing complexes for the displaced war survivors, and representing them before American military panels responsible for ruling on requests to immigrate to America. It was there that he met a young female translator, Lilly Schreiber, who would become his wife and partner in life. In 1952, Nathan and Lilly Shapell, along with their daughter Vera, immigrated to the United States to start a new life. Mrs. Lilly Shapell, his wife of 48 years, passed away in 1994. Mr. Shapell chronicled the early years of his life in his autobiography, *Witness to the Truth*.

Mr. Shapell dedicated a major portion of his life to public service. He was a past President and Executive Board Member of the American Academy of Achievement and served as a Member of President Reagan’s Private Sector Survey on Cost Control. He founded and Co-Chaired Building a Better Los Angeles, a one-time project which raised over \$1 million for the homeless. In 1987, he accepted the position of President of D.A.R.E. America, a renowned drug abuse resistance education program. In 1992, California Governor Pete Wilson appointed him to serve as a member of the California Competitiveness Council and develop recommendations to revitalize California’s economy. In 1998, Senate President Pro-Tem Bill Lockyer appointed him to a special blue ribbon commission to help alleviate California’s overcrowding of prisons.

Mr. Shapell’s greatest public contributions may have been made through his 29 years of service on California’s “Little Hoover Commission.” As Chairman for an unprecedented 18 years of this one-of-a-kind Commission, he was the longest, continuously serving chairman of a state commission in the 20th century. During his long tenure, he helped save taxpayers literally billions of dollars and improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of Californians in areas that included nursing home operations, children’s services, property management, transportation, the Medi-Cal program, and public education.

Nathan Shapell’s commitment to service on behalf of the public was recognized in 1986 when the University of Santa Clara bestowed upon him an honorary Doctorate of Public Service degree. In 1987, Tel Aviv University awarded Mr. Shapell a Doctor Philosophiae Honoris Causa.

One of Mr. Shapell’s greatest honors occurred in 1994 when he was one of only six Holocaust survivors in the world to be chosen to light a candle at the first ever official Vatican commemoration of the Holocaust held by Pope John Paul II.

Mr. Shapell was a major philanthropist here in America, as well as in Israel. He was a Founder of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and was appointed by President George H. W. Bush and reappointed twice by President William Jefferson Clinton to its governing council. He was also a major donor to Yad Vashem,

Israel's official Holocaust museum and memorial. Mr. Shapell served as president of Temple Beth Am for three years. He recognized the vital importance of education and was a major donor to the University of Santa Clara, USC, as well as Tel Aviv University and Bar-Ilan University in Israel. He supported numerous charities for children and healthcare including the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, the D.A.R.E. program, Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services, and a variety of education initiatives.

As a result of Mr. Shapell's survival of the Holocaust, he was extremely dedicated to the State of Israel. He traveled to the front lines to provide moral support for IDF soldiers during the Sinai War, Six Day War, and Yom Kippur War, and was frequently consulted by the country's leaders. He built parks, schools and facilities for children and university students, as well as for the well-being of Israel's soldiers.

Mr. Shapell is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Vera and Paul Guerin; grand-children, Lisa, Dana, and Michael; and three great-grandchildren, as well as his brother David Shapell and brother-in-law Max Webb.

Program



Officiating

Rabbi Jacob Pressman

Cantor Nathan Lamm

Max Webb

Brother-in-Law

Richard Mahan

Friend

Dr. Lisa Guerin

Granddaughter

Dana Guerin Frohlich

Granddaughter

Michael Guerin, Esq.

Grandson

Pallbearers

Mr. Paul Guerin
Mr. Michael Guerin, Esq.
Mr. Timothy Ryan
Mr. Eric Frohlich
Mr. Benjamin Shapell
Mr. Irvin Shapell
Mr. Steven Bryan



Honorary Pallbearers

Mr. Max Webb
Mr. Stanley Black
Mr. Stanley Diller
Mr. Irving Feintech
Mr. Jona Goldrich
Mr. Joe Komet
Mr. Izak Tanz
Cantor Herschel Walfish

*Following the service, the family is receiving at
1169 Hillcrest Road, Beverly Hills*



Shiva and Minyan

Shiva and Minyan will take place at the residence on the
following days and times

Tuesday Evening 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday Evening 6:30 p.m.
Thursday Evening 6:30 p.m.
Sunday Evening 6:30 p.m.

Donations in Nathan Shapell's Memory



The family wishes to express its deep appreciation to all the friends and colleagues who have expressed their heartfelt sympathies.

In response to those who wish to make a donation in Nathan Shapell's memory, the family requests they be made to

Friends of the Israel Defense Forces

4640 Admiralty Way, Suite 406
Marina del Rey, California 90292

or

Women's Guild of Cedars-Sinai Medical Center Pulmonary Diseases Program

P.O. Box 48750
Room 2416
Los Angeles, California 90048-0750