

FRED ISAAC BAKER

Witnessed concentration camp liberation, helped Jews resettle

By **JOE SIMNACHER**
Staff Writer

Fred Isaac Baker witnessed the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp in 1945. After the war, he helped many Bulgarian Jews resettle in Israel.

He married his Bulgarian translator, whom he helped move to Israel. They later settled in Dallas, where she was prominent in the visual arts community and he was a regional administrator with the federal government.

Mr. Baker, 89, died Saturday of complications of Alzheimer's disease at Walnut Place.

Services will be at 3 p.m. today in the Lefkowitz Chapel at Temple Emanu-El. He will be buried in Hillcrest Memorial Park.

"He was always one who liked helping the underprivileged," said his daughter, Rini Andres of Dallas.

Mr. Baker's career with the federal government included political appointments by President Jimmy Carter to be regional administrator for the departments of Housing and Urban Development and Health, Education and Welfare in Dallas.

Mr. Baker often helped rebuild communities after a disaster, his daughter said.

"He would be part of the whole urbanization, the redevelopment," she said.



After a flood in St. Louis, he received the key to the city, his family said.

"Everybody loved him; he was just the sweetest guy," his daughter said. "He always had a smile. He was very humble, not materialistic. He was very intellectual."

Born and raised in Chicago, Mr. Baker received a bachelor's degree from the London School of Economics.

During World War II, he achieved the rank of major. He served with the Army Air Forces' special intelligence division, including the Office of Strategic Service, a forerunner to the CIA. He served as an aide to Gen. William H. Draper Jr.

In April 1945, Mr. Baker witnessed the liberation of Buchenwald in Germany.

He later joined the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and assumed the responsi-

bility for resettling Jews who survived the Nazi occupation of Bulgaria. Many of the displaced Jews resettled in Israel.

In early 1948, he met Edith Arie, a translator who was assigned to help him in Bulgaria. They married in Haifa, Israel, in 1949.

"He was very gentle, very intellectual," said his wife, Edith Baker of Dallas. "He had a brilliant mind in many, many ways."

The couple moved to America, where Mr. Baker received his master's degree in social work management from the University of Chicago.

In August 1951, they moved to Dallas, where Mr. Baker had taken a job with the American Jewish Committee. He retired in the mid-1970s and founded Frame Masters, a framing business. He was also a partner in his wife's business, the Edith Baker Gallery.

In addition to his wife and daughter, Mr. Baker is survived by a son, Jeff Baker of Three Bridges, N.J.; a brother, Dr. Paul Baker of Wilmette, Ill.; and one grandchild.

Memorials may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Dallas Chapter, 4144 N. Central Expressway, Suite 750, Dallas, Texas 75204, or to a charity of choice.

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