



## Alfred Koppel

September 13, 1926 - January 27, 2013

Al Koppel was born on September 13, 1926 in Hamburg, Germany. He died in Fort Collins, Colorado, on January 27, 2013. In between he lived a life of wonder.

Al was a child of the Holocaust. In June, 1941, he, age 14, and his brother, Walter, 13, escaped Nazi Germany. They were two of the last Jews who were able to do so. They traveled to Brooklyn, New York, to reunite with their father who, after having been in a concentration camp, had been driven out of Germany the year before.

The day after his arrival, Al was hospitalized. He was diagnosed with tuberculosis and sent alone to the National Jewish Hospital in Denver. He would spend the next three years there. He was cured of his illness, learned English, completed high school, and won a scholarship to the University of Colorado in Boulder.

In that same year, his mother, two brothers and two sisters were murdered by the Nazis. So traumatic was this for him that he could not speak of it for over 50 years.

In college, Al met Jean Herbert and his new life began. They married and created a family with their five children, Karla, Morgan, Katie, Craig and

Mitchell. At the time of his passing he had seven grandchildren, one step grandchild, and two great grandchildren. Jean, Morgan, and Katie preceded him in death.

Al spent his professional career with Samsonite Corporation and in that capacity he traveled the world. Still, he never had a place he thought of as his home. Family was his home. He found that place when he and Jean moved to Fort Collins in 1993.

Al had always been a talented painter. He became a true artist. His greatest art was his life and how he lived it. Here he began to confront the horror of his youth and set out to discover what exactly had happened to his mother and siblings.

His journey took him on successive trips to Germany and, finally, to Lithuania. He stood there, at a desolate place called the Ninth Fort, looking into the ravine where his murdered family, grasping each other, had fallen.

Al published his book, *My Heroic Mother: Voices From the Holocaust* in 2010. With this book he honored his father, mother, his brothers and sisters, his wife and children. He brought them all together. He brought honor to them and he brought them to us.

Honor was his habit. He was a just man. That was his path through life and we were all elevated on the journey. So downtrodden in youth, so uplifting in age. He brightened the lives of so many because his spirit soared. He made us better people.

A memorial service to honor Al Koppel will be held at Congregation Har Shalom, 725 West Drake Road, Fort Collins, on Sunday, March 3, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. Donations may be made to National Jewish Hospital, Denver, Colorado, or the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C. in Al's memory.



# Previous Events

## Graveside Service

JAN 29. 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (MT)

Roselawn Cemetery  
2718 East Mulberry Street  
Fort Collins, CO 80524  
<http://www.fcgov.com/parks/roselawn.php>

## Service

MAR 3. 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM (MT)

Congregation Har Shalom  
725 W Drake Road  
Fort Collins, CO

# Tribute Wall



“ *Al, I know you're long gone, but I think of you so often. It was an honor to care for you when you were here. It's funny, sometimes I think of what's happening now in America, and I'm relieved that you don't have to see fascism here. It just wouldn't be fair. You lived through so much, may your enlightened soul be at peace, and may you be with your heroic mother.*

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**Monica** - November 11, 2025 at 11:22 AM



“ *Alfred Koppel*

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October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM