

Roman Makar (1914-2004)



Engineer, chief draftsman in oil industry.

Son of Ivan and Anna Makar. The father Ivan was also an engineer and during the occupation time Ukrainian mayor of Boryslaw.

The Makar family was a wealthy family before World War II, Greek Catholic, and in favour of an independent Ukrainian state.

When the liquidation of the forced labor camp Mrasznica was foreseeable, the Jewish doctor Elkan Harmelin asked his close friend mayor Ivan Makar for help. Ivan replied: "I can't, but I'll tell my son to hide you."

Under the floor of their house in Boryslaw, Roman Makar and his wife Anna built a hiding place for seven people. Thirteen persons came.

Each day after work, Roman opened the trap door and joined the people in hiding. He brought them German, Polish and English newspapers, all censored. But everyone could read between the lines.

For four and a half months they lived in the hiding place: Dr. Harmelin, Elkan; Harmelin, Regina; Harmelin, Raoul; Brauner, Rita; Brunnengraber, Anna; Prof. Rotenberg, Anna; Rotenberg, Jurek; Dr. Kupferberg; sister of Dr Kupferberg; nephew of Dr Kupferberg, Nunek; Backenroth, Samek; wife of Backenroth, Samek; Wilf, David.

On 28.07.2015 Roman and Anna Makar were honoured by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations

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»It was the time of decision and truth, the game of the cat and mouse was started... Those were the pre-conditions of the bizarre situation in which the couple Makar decided and had to act by their own will. If they failed the inevitable consequence was all of us shot dead including (the Makars and) their two children, the house plundered and burnt down. Mr Makar was well aware of this when he decided to embark on the risky endeavour without hesitation. Here is the magnanimity as I see it, and of his character as well.«

Jurek Rotenberg, survivor

Sources: Private archive and informations from Karen Bijkersma, Yad Vashem rescuer database