



Richard Schifter

BIRTHPLACE: Vienna, Austria

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Army, ASP (Army Specialized Program),
Ritchie Boy

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

HONORED BY: The Eisenhower Foundation

BIOGRAPHY

Richard Schifter was born in 1923 in Austria. On March 11, 1938 he remembers hearing a radio broadcast from the Chancellor of Austria. The Chancellor spoke of being notified by the Germans to surrender or they would be at war. Richard's father knew what this meant for them, Jewish people. Richard was able to get a passport and passage to the United States but his parents were from Poland and could not get papers to leave. They ultimately were taken to a concentration camp and died there. On December 15, 1938, Richard arrived in the United States and lived with a great uncle. He attended college until he was drafted. He was placed in ASP "Army Specialized Program" which was for college students or graduates. But when he was training, because of his background, they switched him and he was sent to Camp Ritchie. He became a Ritchie Boy. The Ritchie Boys consisted of approximately 20,000 servicemen, and 200 Women's Army Corps members, who were trained for U.S. Army Intelligence during WWII at the secret Camp Ritchie training facility. Most of the men sent to Camp Ritchie for training were assigned there because of fluency in German, French, Italian, Polish, or other languages needed by the US Army during WWII. They had been drafted into or volunteered to join the United States Army and when their ability to speak the language of an enemy was discovered were sent to Camp Ritchie on secret orders. They were trained at the Military Intelligence Training Center at Camp Ritchie in Maryland, later officially known as Fort Ritchie. During war time interrogations, he often used the threat of sending the German prisoner to Russia if they would not talk. It always worked! After the war, Richard returned home and went to Law School and later worked for the United Nations. He also founded and was Director of the American Jewish International Relations Institute (AJIRI) Richard passed in 2020. Courtesy of American Veterans Center and Wikipedia.com.