



Sergio De Simone with his cousins Tatiana and Alessandra on his sixth birthday, 29 November 1943. The two girls were also deported with Sergio to Auschwitz in 1944.

THE 20 CHILDREN

Sergio De Simone

Sergio De Simone was born on 29 November 1937. He and his parents lived in Naples, Italy. His father Edoardo de Simone, a ship's officer, was a Catholic. His mother Gisella, née Pelow, was a Jew. Edoardo de Simone was taken to Dortmund as slave labor. Gisella and Sergio moved to relatives in Fiume, northern Italy in the summer of 1943, because bombing by Allied forces made the situation in Naples too dangerous. But on 21 March 1944, Sergio, his mother and seven other members of the family, including his cousins Alessandra and Tatiana, were arrested and brought to the San Sabba transit camp near Trieste; on 4 April 1944 they were deported to Auschwitz. Sergio was forced to work as a runner there, until he was brought to Neuengamme Concentration Camp to be used for medical experiments. He was murdered here in Bullenhuser Damm on 20 April 1945.

His mother Gisella de Simone was taken to Ravensbrück Concentration Camp in the spring of 1945; although she was sick, she survived and was liberated from there. It was not until November 1945 that she returned to Italy, where she was reunited with her husband. The parents searched for their son Sergio. By the end of the 1940s, they knew that Sergio had been taken from Auschwitz to a concentration camp to the west, but when Edoardo de Simone died in 1964 he was ignorant of his son's fate. Gisella de Simone found out about the criminal events at Bullenhuser Damm in 1983. On 20 April 1984 she took part in the remembrance ceremony at Bullenhuser Damm. But she refused to believe that Sergio was dead and, until she died, clung to the hope that he was still alive.