

## Majercik, Michal

Janka-Hetty Fisch of Bratislava was seven years old in 1939 when Slovakia became an “independent” state under the patronage of Nazi Germany. A series of anti-Jewish decrees were imposed on the Jewish community. Her family was evicted from their apartment, all of their belongings were looted.. In the summer of 1943, the lives of Bratislava Jews became unbearable, and Janka-Hetty’s father sent her to her aunt’s home in the city of Zilina. In late August 1944, the Gestapo began rounding up the Jews in Zilina. They came to the apartment building that Janka-Hetty Fisch was staying in. As Janka-Hetty descended the stairs of her apartment to the Gestapo officers waiting below, a man opened the door of his apartment and pulled her inside. The man was Dr. Michal Majercik. Janka-Hetty was quickly hidden under a mattress in their baby cradle. When Janka-Hetty failed to appear at the entrance to the building, the Gestapo entered the building to search for her. They came to the apartment of the Majercik family and turned the entire home upside down in their search, and warned the Majercik family that the penalty for hiding Jewish children is execution of the entire family. The couple denied any connection to the girl. The Gestapo men left the apartment after having found nothing, but returned a number of times to search for Hetty. The couple, Anna and Michal Majercik raised Hetty as one of their children. They even took care to continue her education to the extent this was possible. In their effort to remove all possible risks, they cut themselves off from any social life, and Anna even gave up her position in order to remain with the hidden girl. The Majerciks remained with Hetty even during bombings, rather than going down to the bomb shelters. Hetty remained with them until the end of the war. After the war, Hetty’s relatives came to take her. They offered the couple a monetary reward, but the Majerciks declined the offer. Years later, when she was asked what it was that had motivated the Majerciks to behave so courageously, Hetty answered “love”.