

# Students receive unique look at Holocaust

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WINNIPEG – Ten marks (equivalent to \$5 today) and a train ticket were all 9-year-old Benno and his 12-year-old brother Heinz had as they began their treacherous journey alone from Berlin, in Nazi Germany in 1939, fleeing the hate, brutality and certain death that awaited anyone who was Jewish.

Susy Goldstein, co-author of the book *10 Marks and a Train Ticket – Benno's Escape to Freedom*, a book sponsored by B'nai Brith's Holocaust & Hope Testimonial Series: Children of the Kindertransport, along with her husband Brian, gave a moving presentation to 200 Grade 5 to Grade 12 students at Lord Selkirk's Regional Comprehensive Secondary School last Friday.

The book, with about 7,000 copies in print, tells of the harrowing escape of her father Benno – a journey that, over the course of the year, would be shared by 9,600 other unaccompanied Jewish children to safety in England. At the end of the war they, along with their companions, would discover they were orphans – having lost their entire families to the Holocaust.

"Writing the book was a very emotional journey for us," said Goldstein who co-authored the book with her two sisters, Gina Hamilton and Wendy Share, from a draft copy their dad had written at the age of 16.

"Our goal in writing the book, which is distributed free of charge, was that the unique lessons of the Holocaust would never be forgotten. We must learn the dangers of staying silent when confronted by antisemitism, racism or bigotry of any kind."

When asked by one student why the Germans hated the Jews, Alan Yusim, B'nai Brith's mid-western regional director, said that it was as simple as someone hating another because their eyes, hair, skin, body shape or size, or gender or whatever it might be, is different from another's. "This kind of hate, when left unchecked, can lead to millions of people being murdered as seen from the Holocaust," he said.

Sharon Moolchan, the division's lead Social Studies teacher, indicated that many grade levels introduce and study the Holocaust as part of the English Language Arts or Social Studies classes.

"The book brought a very unique look at the history of the Holocaust that not many of us are aware of. The donation of 90 books will allow us to place a book in every library in each of our division's schools and have copies on hand to loan to classes," said Moolchan.

Teachers Matt Nickarz and Rhonda Aarson said, "The students were extremely impressed by the presentation Friday afternoon. It really gave the students a concrete idea of what life was like in Germany just before World War II. They could not believe that those kinds of things actually happened to people, simply because they were Jewish. The students also could not believe that so many families were split up and that they had to send their young children off on their own. It really made them realize how lucky they are."

Nickarz was thankful for the opportunity to see this presentation. "It is important our students are aware of events like the Holocaust so we can make sure they are never allowed to happen again."

A student in the audience indicated that his grandfather was a part of the Holland resistance, which would have played a part in assisting the children as they crossed the border from Germany into Holland.