

Spring 2010

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SAVE THE DATE

YOM HASHOAH

COMMEMORATIVE EVENING

7:30 pm | Sunday, April 11, 2010

WOSK AUDITORIUM | JCCGV

Featuring

DAVID EHRLICH

Holocaust Survivor

&

Claire Klein Osipov Connie Gitlin Cantor Michael Zoosman

ARTISTIC PRODUCERS WENDY BROSS STUART AND RON STUART | WRS PRODUCTIONS











VANCOUVER HOLOCAUST EDUCATION CENTRE

Editor: Frieda Miller Design: Kazuko Kusumoto

Editor No Longer Alone: Lillian Boraks Nemetz Copy Editing: Rome Fox & Andrea Tuele



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Front cover: Memorial Candle



The year 2010 marks the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. For some, this passage of time may make the Holocaust seem all the more remote. Yet for survivors, the Holocaust remains ever-present. At a time when so many survivors have already been lost to us, and with them their memories and their voices, it becomes increasingly imperative that we stand alongside them on Yom Hashoah to remember and to reflect.

As every year, we are invited to remember those who suffered, those who fought and those who perished. We will reflect on the families that were decimated and communities destroyed when six million Jews were murdered along with thousands of other victims including Roma & Sinti, the mentally and physically disabled, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals and political dissidents.

This year we will be privileged to hear from David Ehrlich, who was deported to Auschwitz as a young boy,

then force-marched to Mauthausen and Melk concentration camps, where he worked in an underground munitions factory. Six months after liberation, he escaped to Paris and came to Canada as a war orphan in 1947.

The Yom Hashoah commemorative evening is produced by Wendy & Ron Stuart (WRS Productions) and will feature Vancouver's Claire Klein Osipov, a consummate performer of Yiddish music. Osipov has performed in many concerts across Canada, directed children's choirs, sang on radio and television and has made numerous recordings. A central element of the program will be the candle lighting ceremony in memory of the six million who perished. Also on the program is Connie Gitlin, who has served as principal clarinet with the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra since 1984, a position which she held with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Canadian Chamber Orchestra, Santa Fe Opera Orchestra and Colorado Philharmonic. An avid performer of chamber music Ms Gitlin has performed recital works at the Einov Cultural Center in Tel Aviv in collaboration with musicians of the Israel Philharmonic. Chazzan Michael Zoosman, Congregation Beth Israel, also featured on the program received his Cantorial Investiture and Master's of Sacred Music from the H.L. Miller Cantorial School of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, where he studied as a Wexner Graduate Fellow. A number of talented local young people will be performing Yiddish and Hebrew songs.

Please join us for the Yom Hashoah Commemorative Evening at 7:30pm, Sunday, April 11, 2010 at the Wosk Auditorium of the JCC.

Supported by the Gail Feldman Heller Endowment Fund and the Sarah Rozenberg-Warm Memorial Endowment Fund of the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre, Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver, Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver with financial assistance from the Province of British Columbia.

YOM HASHOAH CEMETERY SERVICE 12 NOON | SUNDAY APRIL 11, 2010

Schara Tzedeck Cemetery 2345 SW Marine Drive, New Westminster

RUTH KRON SIGAL CHANGED MY LIFE

CEMETERY ADDRESS BY KEITH MORGAN, SEPTEMBER 2009



Ruth with her rescuer Ona Ragauskas in Siauliai (Shavl) Lithuania

I met Ruth Kron in 1997 when I was launching a column in The Province newspaper called Your Neighbours. It was about British Columbians who made a difference in the lives of others. Little did I know at the time that the subject of one my earliest features would so inspire me and make such a difference in my life.

I believe our meeting was no accident. I'd been waiting for Ruth to come into my life for more than 20 years! Let me explain: as an English Schoolboy born within 10 years of the end of the Second World War, I lapped up every war movie there was and attentively listened to teachers regale the class with tales about the Allies' "great victory."

There were two Jewish children in my class but the only thing I really knew about them that made them different was that they left the room when we had morning prayers. Away from school, I was aware that Jews were different or at least were treated differently. I heard all of the anti-Jewish remarks and jokes that were held to be truisms among many Brits during the 1960s and 70s. It was puzzling to my teenage brain at the time because the Brits had just fought a war against a maniac committed to wiping out Jews. I guess they figured it was wrong to kill Jews but okay to hold antisemitic views.

I never took a lot of notice to be honest but I was uncomfortable when I heard the occasional antisemitic remark by family members. The truth is, like most of my peers, I never learned anything of substance about the Holocaust at school. But I did five years later when I began my career as a newspaper reporter. I met and mingled with Jewish people while gathering news stories in the community. My newfound friends told a different war story.

Their passionate assertion was that the world should never forget how the systematic murder of 6 million Jews had occurred. It was a turning point for me. I vowed one day to write something of substance about the Holocaust, aimed at non-Jews such as myself. Turn the clock ahead many years to the turn of this century. When mutual friends here told me about Ruth it seemed that the time had come.

The Holocaust story of Meyer and Gita Kron and their daughters Ruta and Tamara, continued to haunt me long after its publication. One particular aspect of it really hit me hard: Ruth's terrifying separation from her younger sister Tamara during the Nazi-led Kinderaktion in the Shavl ghetto and her little sister's subsequent murder in Auschwitz.

In the spring of 2000, Ruth greeted my suggestion that "we do something of more substance" with an invitation to visit Ona Ragauskas, in Lithuania, the survivor of the couple that had risked death to take her into their home.

It was a humbling experience to talk to this soft spoken Lithuanian senior, who professed only to be doing the "right thing" when she took in Ruth, or Ruta as she was then known. We also walked the cobbles of what remained of the ghetto area of Shavl - Siauliai in Lithuanian – and we visited the mass graves of Jews shot by killer squads made up largely of Lithuanian collaborators under Nazi orders. These killing fields are on the edge of most Lithuanian towns.

After our return, The Province newspaper, in conjunction with the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre, published a four-part educational supplement aimed at high school students.

No, this too was still not that 'something of substance' I had committed to write all those years ago. Surely, it had to be a book written for the mass market, most of whom would know little or nothing about what happened in the Baltic States during the Holocaust. It had to be a book that told a story of courage, hope and faith. One that reminded us all that we must remember and strive to ensure such a tragedy does not happen again. Sadly, there is ample evidence today that we have a long way to go in that respect.

Ruth and her fellow survivors in Vancouver have done much to deliver that important message. I recall an address I witnessed in 2001 during which Ruth's words transfixed a room full of teenagers.

She revealed that more than 200,000 fellow Jews were killed leaving just four percent of Lithuania's pre-war population alive by the time the last shot of the war was fired.

Ruth told her rapt audience: "I'm sure you must think my story means nothing today but if you do, you would be wrong. I saw the sickening TV footage of the genocide in Rwanda and later in the Balkans," she explained. "Ethnic cleansing is the new phrase coined to describe the slaughter of one particular race or tribe of people. The term sounds a little too 'clean' for me. Let us call this form of cold-blooded mass murder by the dirty word it is - genocide."

A little more than a year later, the following news item convinced us both that we must stop just talking about writing a book.

Siauliai, Lithuania, April 20, 2002: On this anniversary of Hitler's birthday, swastikas were found painted on almost all of the gravestones of Jews in Siauliai cemetery.

Sadly, Ruth has now left us and we know that many of her contemporaries will follow in the next decade or so. The numbers of those with a firsthand knowledge of the Holocaust will naturally dwindle.

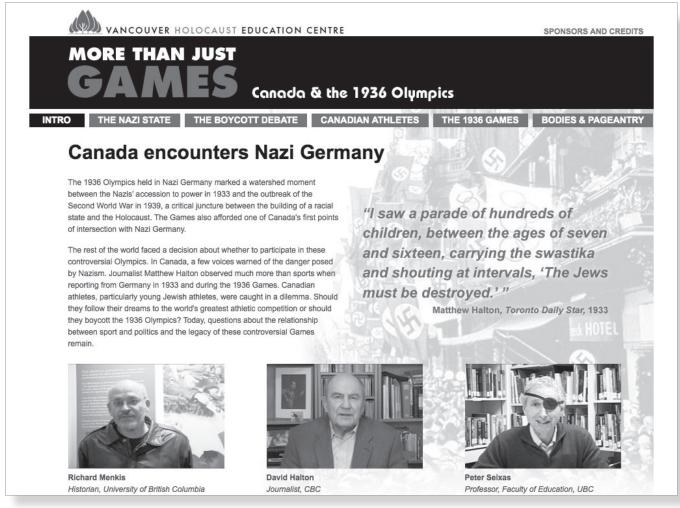
Ruth in cooperating with me in the recording of her family's story and that of the Shavl ghetto has ensured that her message will be received for many years to come. I give thanks for how Ruth entered my life and changed it forever. I know that her story will change many more lives before the final pages of Ruta's Closet are read for the last time.



Ruth standing by the ghetto memorial

MORE THAN JUST GAMES WEBSITE: A LEGACY FOR EDUCATORS

BY NINA KRIEGER



Website homepage

The 1936 Olympics held in Nazi Germany marked a watershed moment between the Nazis' accession to power in 1933 and the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, a critical juncture between the building of a racial state and the Holocaust. The Games also afforded one of Canada's first points of intersection with Nazi Germany.

To coincide with the significant "teaching moment" presented by the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and Paralympics, the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre developed two exhibits, on view at the VHEC through June 2010. More Than Just Games: Canada & the 1936 Olympics offers insights into the Nazis' antisemitic and exclusionary policies, their manipulation of the Olympics for propaganda purposes, Canada's response to the international boycott debate and the experiences of individual athletes. A complementary exhibit, Framing Bodies: Sport & Spectacle in Nazi Germany, explores the relationship between athletics, politics and visual culture during the 1936 Games.

Now, thanks to a partnership with 7th Floor Media (www.7thfloormedia.com) and support from The History Education Network/Histoire et Éducation en Réseau (www.thenhier.ca), the project has a remarkable legacy: a web-based version of the exhibits that brings their

pedagogical potential to the fore. The website brings the exhibits to a wider, online audience, framing them as an educational opportunity for students of Canadian history and as a model for developing historical thinking.

Featuring content adapted from research and writing by historians Richard Menkis (UBC) and Harold Troper (University of Toronto), PhD student Birga U. Meyer (UBC) and VHEC staff, the website makes learning a central focus. Educational material is presented directly alongside historical material in "Teach & Learn" sidebars, making the relationship between primary sources and classroom activities explicit and interconnected.

The architecture of the website and downloadable teacher's guide ensures flexibility and ease of use for educators. Five lessons, which can be grouped as a unit or taught individually, encourage students to critically examine the history of the 1936 Games and Canada's response to Nazism. Several activities facilitate student engagement with the dilemmas of individual Canadian athletes — Jewish, non-Jewish and Afro-Caribbean — and the stories of German athletes barred from competition because of Nazi racial ideology. The writings



of Matthew Halton, a Canadian journalist who wrote presciently of the danger of Nazism for the Toronto Daily Star in 1933 and 1936, are featured throughout the online resource.

Each lesson highlights links to "historical thinking concepts" identified by the Benchmarks of Historical Thinking Project (www.histori. ca/benchmarks/). According to this initiative, the study of history is comprised of complex, interrelated concepts such as the use of primary sources, the analysis of cause and consequence and a consideration of the ethical dimensions of history. Each lesson presents strategies for cultivating these aspects of historical thinking and can be adapted for students from grades 6 to 12.

Video interviews on the home page introduce the website from the perspectives of three individuals who offer insight into the historical and educational significance of the project. Richard Menkis speaks to the discovery of a little-known chapter of Canadian history through primary source research. Retired CBC journalist David Halton reflects on the pivotal role played by his father's reporting and states that it "reinforces the message of this exhibit: ...that a great institution, the Olympic Games, could so easily be exploited for the most cynical and evil of purposes." Peter Seixas from the Faculty of Education at UBC endorses the site as an exemplar of the promotion of historical thinking, suggesting that students who respond to the issues and questions raised in the teaching material "will come away with a different understanding of what history is."

Visit the More Than Just Games: Canada & the 1936 Olympics website: www.vhec.org/1936_olympics

HONOURING THE JUST

BY BEN FISHMAN. SON OF A HIDDEN CHILD



Recently, I travelled with my mother, Amalia Boe-van Kreveld, and my two brothers, to a ceremony in Holland where the family who hid my mother and her family during the war, was honoured by Yad Vashem.

She never really talked about it. All the years of my youth, all that my mother, Amalia van Kreveld, ever said about the war was, "I stayed with a very nice family." I had even met them, once in Holland when I was very young, as she had always maintained close contact with this family. They were her "foster family," but the truth was much more than that.

On November 25, 2009, Alie Spiekhout accepted a medal presented by the Ambassador of Israel and Yad Vashem at a ceremony in The Hague, in memory of what her parents did for my mother during the Nazi occupation. At her side, her nephew Dirk Jan accepted a certificate in memory of his father, who was quite active in the Dutch Underground, and responsible not only for saving my mother and her family, but many other Jews as well. I stood in a restored synagogue along with my mother, my two brothers and two hundred other people who were directly affected by the actions of six families who were recognized as Righteous Among the Nations.

For me, this day really started in 1993. I grew up in Coquitlam, with only a basic knowledge of the Holocaust and minimal knowledge of Judaism - even though I had had

an education and Bar Mitzvah at Temple Sholom. I decided to spend a year at a Yeshiva in Jerusalem, to have a crash course in the things I felt that I was missing from my heritage. Towards the end of my year, my mother decided to visit me, and together we attended the 2nd International Gathering of the Hidden Children, in Jerusalem. We spent a bit of time travelling, and talking about the years she had spent hidden. From there we went to Holland together, and explored her youth, visiting the areas she grew up in.

A dozen years passed before we spoke in such depth again. After a conversation with Alie, on one of her many visits home, my mother returned to ask me to help her contact Yad Vashem, to see if she could get her foster parents and brother honoured posthumously for what they had done. During their lifetimes, they were adamant against public recognition - but now it was for their memory, and for the next generation to know what happened.

It was not an easy process. Documents had to be gathered and photographs collected. However, more than two years later, we were able to stand together, and publicly announce that during the period of the Holocaust, there were good people too. People who stood up against injustice, who risked their lives for principles that they held dear, with no thought of honour or recognition. Future generations can learn more of what happened, of shining lights in a time of darkness. The hidden children are among those who are still here to tell their stories, and to be heard as the voices of the camp survivors are being stilled. The quiet voices of children who grew up, taught to be quiet and to hide can finally cry out, "We are still here, and our children and grandchildren surround us!"



The families of Spiekhout and van Kreveld

ESCAPE FROM PANNONIA: A TALE OF TWO SURVIVORS

By Steve Floris

REVIEWED BY GABRIELLA KLEIN



When reading about the Holocaust the idea of romance is not something that would ordinarily come to mind, but a love story is the undercurrent of Steve Floris' book Escape from Pannonia: A Tale of Two Survivors. Floris' straightforward storytelling style belies the extreme difficulties and courageous acts found in this compelling memoir.

Steve Floris began his life as the only son of a middle class Jewish family in Budapest, a city that was home to a sophisticated, often assimilated Jewish population. Born in 1920, the author came into manhood amidst the growing political strife of Europe. He carefully blends his own idyllic early years as a mischievous, bright student who learned to speak German under the tutelage of his Austrian nanny with some keen observations of the times.

The upheaval and horrors that eventually shaped the history of Hungary's Jews coincides with this coming of age story. Steve Floris met Eva on a blind date. "Eva smiled at me, put her arms in my arms and we walked ahead." And, they never looked back.

Conscripted into a Hungarian labour battalion Floris credits his quick thinking and fortitude mixed with a healthy dose of luck for his survival. The story of his escape and eventual reunion

with Eva is the stuff of film lore. The saga of their lives together continued after the war as the Floris' fled the Soviet occupation. In an Austrian DP camp they passed themselves off as Turks in order to remain within the British safe zone. Time and again, the couple displayed remarkable chutzpah in order to remain together during a time when many others were torn apart.

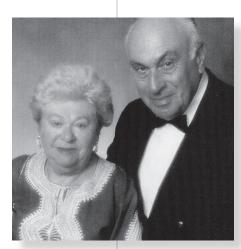
Steve and Eva finally came to Vancouver where they are fondly remembered for running the famous Ferguson Point Tea House in Stanley Park with their uniquely European style of hospitality. Their story is both an uplifting and poignant one. Though set in a time of hatred, this memoir is written from the heart as a true testament to courage, survival and love.

STEVE & EVA FLORIS

ENSURING THE FUTURE

The late Steve Floris fulfilled his life long passion for writing by chronicling his and Eva's lives in his memoir. Dedicated to Eva, who passed away in 2000, it is an expression of Steve's gratitude to Canada for providing them with "a second chance at life."

The couple also wanted to thank the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre in a special way by leaving a gift from their estate. In so doing they have left an enduring legacy in the form of the Steve and Eva Floris Endowment Fund to educate future generations. The Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre is most grateful to Steve and Eva Floris for their generosity and their vision.



Eva and Steve Floris

TRIBUTE CARDS

NOVEMBER 26, 2009 - February 1, 2010

GET WELL

Aggi Bergida, Best wishes for a speedy recovery. Odie Kaplan, Sheila & Norman Archeck

Rosa Marel, Best wishes for your recovery. Louise Stein Sorensen, Gloria, Gerri, & The VHEC Survivor Drop-In

Irving Goldenberg, Wishing you a speedy recovery. Gloria & Robbie Waisman, George & Frieda Wertman

Gerri London, Wishing you a speedy recovery. Ida Kaplan

Tibor & Aggi Bergida. Get Well. Lisa Kafka

Veronica Winkler, Wishing you an easy and speedy recovery. Gloria, Gerri, & The VHEC Survivor Drop-In

Barb Silber, Thinking of you. Jackie Buller

Dr. Mark Schonfeld, Wishing you a speedy recovery. Ida Kaplan

Birgit Westergaard, Speedy and healthy recovery. Ida Kaplan & Odie Kaplan

THANK YOU

Dr. Rhoda Friedrichs, Thank you. Iris Dayson

Mel Kaushansky, In appreciation. Marshall & Patricia Wilensky

Carla Dodek, Thank you. Gloria, Gerri, & the VHEC Survivor Drop-in Group

Stan Taviss, Thank-you. Ida Kaplan

MAZEL TOV

David Milton, Mazel tov on your Bar Mitzvah. The Greenwalds

Judy Remick, On your 6oth Birthday! Beth & Leon Bogner

Robbie Waisman, In your honour. Howard & Gail Feldman

Shannon LaBelle, In honour of your special birthday. Jordan & Erin Berard

Beth Bogner, On your Special Birthday. Jody & Harvey Dales, Linda, Marla Groberman

Alissa Horii & Bram Rogachevsky, On the arrival of your daughter. Harvey & Jody Dales, Phyllis Simon & Art Hister, Beth & Leon Bogner

Mel & Geri Davis, Mazel tov on the two engagements. Charlotte Berman & Danny Weinstein

Robert & Marilyn Krell, On the engagement of Michaela to Matthew. Charlotte Berman & Danny Weinstein, Gary & Sheila Romalis, Gloria SYMPATHY & Robbie Waisman

Paul Heller, Happy Birthday. Lillian Boraks Nemetz, Wanda Melamed

Harry Herman, Happy 90th Birthday! Sarah Mandelbaum, Mary Knopp

Doreen Horwitz, Happy Birthday! Shoshana, Moshe, Revi & Michael Fidelman

Judi Wener, On your special birthday. Joe and Karyn Gold & Family

Chaim Kornfeld, Wishing you a very Happy Birthday! Phillipa & Des Friedland & Family

Noni Mate, Happiest special birthday. Frieda Miller & Danny Shapiro

Linda Wener, On your special birthday. Joe and Karyn Gold & Family

Audrey Mehler, Wishing you the happiest of birthdays. Frieda Miller & Danny Shapiro

Yvonne Rosenberg, Happy Birthday. Shelley & Perry Seidelman, Joe & Karen Gold & Family

Herb & Barbara Silber, On the birth of your grandson, Charlie Silber. Susan & Joe Stein

Leslie Spiro, Wishing you many more healthy and happy birthdays. Stanley & Joycelaine Sunshine

Harold Yochlowitz, In honour of your 70th Birthday! Karen, Mark & Zachary Bichin, Thyrza, Matthew, Eva & Daniel, Cohen, Izzy Fraeme & Leonor Etkin

Danny Zack & Valerie Zack, On your special birthdays. Joe and Karyn Gold & Family

Rabbi Zev Solomon, On the loss of your brother, Jack. Rita & Marvin Weintraub

John Gale, On the loss of your Mother. Neri & Aron Tischler

Phyllis Moscovich, On the loss of your Mother. Joe and Karyn Gold & Family, Jackie & Joel Buller & Family

Bonnie Bauer & Family, On the loss of your mother & grandmother, Sarah. Neri & Aron Tischler, Les, Karen, Courtney, Bailee & Brayden Cohen, Debbie & Eddie Rozenberg

Harley Rothstein & Eleanor Boyle, On the passing of your Mother. Robert & Marilyn Krell

Daniella Givon, On the loss of your Mother. Neri & Aron Tischler

Linda Frimer, On the loss of your Mother, Anne. Louise Stein Sorensen, Lillian Boraks Nemetz, Marianne Rev & Tom Ross

Harvey Fruitman & Family, On your loss. Katie Freilich

Barb & Alan Glasser & Family, On the loss of your Father & Grandfather. Les & Karen Cohen & Family

Lawrence Halparin, On the loss of your Mother. Neri & Aron Tischler

Murray & Susie Isman, Carly & Adam, On the loss of your mother, mother-in-law, and grandmother, Marjorie. Les, Karen, Courtney, Bailee & Brayden Cohen

Michael & Pam Isman, On the loss of your mother & mother-in-law, Marjorie. Les, Karen, Courtney, Bailee & Brayden Cohen

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Laura Feldman & Pablo Stolowitz, In memory of Pablo's Grandmother & Uncle. Debbie, Eddie, Mira, Naomi & Aliya Rozenberg

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Tom Winkler & Caren Perel, Alexandra & Oliver, On the loss of your brother and uncle, Peter. Hymie & Rome Fox & Family

Salek Roth, On the loss of your wife, Eva. Gloria & Robbie Waisman

Vera Rozen, On the loss of your son, Peter. Aggi Bergida

Cecil Sigal, In memory of Ruth Kron Sigal. Keith Morgan

Barbara Silber, On the loss of your Mother, Jean. Susan & Joe Stein & Family, Jody & Harvey Dales

Jeffrey & Marci Simons & Family, On the loss of your mother & grandmother, Jean. Jody & Harvey Dales, Les & Karen Cohen & Family & Rose Lewin

Philip & Lianne Winkler, Tom & Caren Winkler, On the loss of your brother & uncle, Peter. Les & Karen Cohen & Family & Rose Lewin



A SINCERE THANK YOU

To VHEC volunteers

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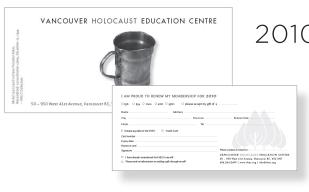
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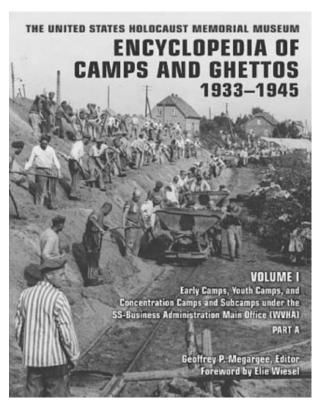
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OUR APOLOGIES FOR ANY OMISSIONS OR ERRORS



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Please renew your 2010 VHEC membership: 604.264.0499



Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos: 1933-1945

ON OUR LIBRARY'S WISH LIST

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933-1945

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