

News from Canada by [Belle Jarniewski](#)
Executive Director
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Dear David,

.... I am pleased to report on recent developments from the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada. As was the case in many countries, the survivors who came to Canada applied for reparations payments from the German government. 85 boxes of archival materials containing the files of these individuals have been entrusted to our archive. We are going through all the files to compile a list of the survivors, where they came from, where they were during the Holocaust and when they arrived here. Oddly enough, such a list did not exist.

Our website jhcwc.org has an extensive database which covers the history of our community, including artefacts, newspapers and more which also include the topics of antisemitism and the Holocaust.

In the area of education on the Holocaust and antisemitism, we have developed three virtual modules, so that we can continue to work with teachers despite the limitations of the pandemics. These include one module focusing on the Holocaust which can be presented along with a survivor or a member of the Second Generation. The second module focuses on the history of antisemitism and the third more specifically on antisemitism in Canada, a subject which unfortunately is rarely addressed in the schools.

We recently organized Holocaust Education Week – with several virtual programs. All the programs were recorded and are available on our [YouTube channel](#).

The programs included: 1) the launch of a new book for young people by well-known author Carol Matas (entitled *A Struggle for Hope*) in conversation with Belle Jarniewski (me).

2) An interview of Jamie Michaels, who wrote a graphic novel which tells the story of the Christie Pits Riot of 1931, the largest riot in Canadian history, when Jewish and Italian youth squared off against pro-Nazi thugs.

3) Local high school educator, Kelly Hiebert presented on how to speak to and teach adolescents about the Shoah.

4) For our Kristallnacht commemoration, we screened a film about the use of ground penetrating radar in Vilna and the subsequent discovery of an escape tunnel. Calgary-based geo-physicist Paul Baumann who was a member of the expeditionary team, spoke about the experience in Vilna and further work in Sobibor.

We are organizing a summer institute for teachers, which was originally planned for 2020. It will look at best practices and resources. We are partnering with the department of Education (provincial) and the Azrieli Foundation.

Finally, we are completely renovating our Holocaust museum and education centre (the Freeman Foundation Holocaust Education Centre). The centre is unique in Canada at least in that all the artefacts belong to survivors who eventually settled here. We are looking at an entirely new “narrative” which begins with the diverse pre-war lives of our survivors. We will also feature a section which highlights the contributions of our survivors to our community. As the size of the museum is small, we will be introducing technology such as projection and an interactive table. Our goal is to finish the project by the summer.

Thank you for reaching out and wishing you all the best,

Belle