

HOLOCAUST

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HUMANITY

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Pete Metzelaar

Video Transcripts

Video 1: Surviving

Hi my name is Peter Metzelaar – Born in Amsterdam, Holland. When the rest of the family got arrested, the last of which was my father, it was 1942 when I was 7 years old and we went into hiding.

One of the most memorable times that I do remember is waking up in the quiet of the night – when the trucks came by. And the German soldiers loudly yelling: “Alles Juden Raus!” which was a very scary situation. They hadn’t come to our door as yet. But the result of which was the next day, all my buddies were gone, what happened to them?

When everybody started to disappear – family as well as friends – mom got hold of the resistance – uh people that just felt that an injustice was being done. Who are these people coming across our borders arresting our people? So she got hold of the underground who somehow got in touch with a middle-aged couple – Klaus and Rufina Post who were willing to give us shelter on their small farm in the province of Friesland

Video 2: Hiding

Those raids I mentioned where they came out to the apartment started to happen on the farm.

So one day at dusk and I emphasize at dusk because I was never able to come out during daylight hours from fear that someone from this area would recognize and say hey – who are those people on that farm that were never there. So at dusk, Klaus told me to get a wheelbarrow and a shovel. Uh there was just a hundred feet or so away, a small forest. And we started to dig in the rise. After a day and a half we ended up with a three by three by six feet hole a cave if you will.

Klaus cut down some trees out of the area – made a roof over the top. Made like a trap door with twigs of the area so you could stand in front of it and never actually know where you were. And so now when the trucks came, mom and I would run out the back of the farm, crawl into this particular hole – this cave – and it was a very scary experience that I remember very well for a number of reasons:

One- on numerous occasions, dirt came trickling down the side. And I was always afraid that the thing would cave in. But more importantly – more importantly: since Klaus made this door in the front made out of twigs, I could not see out. The cave being only about a hundred feet from the farm, we could hear the soldiers ransacking the farm.

And knowing that I was being hunted. I didn't know if it was this time that they were gonna come get me. I didn't know if they were coming or not. Fortunately, all the times we were in there, they never did come out to the forest.

Video 3: Fleeing

We were petrified that they were gonna turn us in.

One night I wake up. Mom is sitting at a table with some sheets and a candle light sewing. After she sewed a while, she made a skirt. After a little while longer, she ended up with a top and a hat. I had no idea what that was all about? But sometime after midnight in the mid-winter mom bundled me up – bundled herself up – wrapped her clothes around herself and we tippy-toed out.'

I had no idea where we going. By this time, I'm almost nine years old. And we were hiding from alley to alley. Who goes out in the middle of the winter let alone who we were one of THEM.

A short time afterwards, I recognized the fact where we were going. There was one street –one highway connecting the city of The Hague and Amsterdam. And the underground got us a small room back in Amsterdam. But how do you get there? There was only one highway connecting the two but it was only used by the Nazi forces. As daylight came up, I recognized where we were going which scared scared the holy heck outta me. "Mom – we're not going to this highway? Those are the guys trying to kill us!" "Don't speak Peter. Just come with me."

As we got to the highway – now I know what she did – the do-do was gonna really hit the fan and she put up her thumb signaling hitchhiking.

I said Mom what are you doing? These people are trying to murder us!"

'Do not talk Peter. Be quiet'. It wasn't very long till a big flat-bed truck stopped. A SS officer got out and started to read my mother – to my mother the riot act. 'What are you doing here? With the child?! This is for the Fatherland. No civilians allowed!'

For whatever reason, for whatever reason, this Nazi officer let mom explain. And her explanation was 'You know about those British who are coming over to try and wipe out the V2 rocket?' "'Ja Ja I know that! So? Well, the other day, a bomb went astray from the British and hit the apartment house where the boy here was living – pointing at me – and it killed both of his parents. As you can see, I work for the International Red Cross. I'm a nurse. I'm taking him to an orphanage in Amsterdam.'

'Ah so! Kommen sie mit mier! Come with me!' He guided mom to the cab of the truck – lifted her up and she sat next to the driver. He came back to me and lifted me up to the back part of the truck into the snow.

He went back to the cab. Mom sat between the two Nazi officers. I sat in the snow in the back. And thank you very much they took us to Amsterdam.