

Peter Metzelaar

Amsterdam, Holland

1935-



1942:

When Peter was 7, the Nazis arrested his father and grandparents. They were sent to a transit camp, Westerbork, and then deported to Auschwitz, where they were murdered. The Dutch Underground, a resistance group that fought against the Nazis in Holland, found a farm in the countryside where Peter and his mother Elli, could hide. The farm was owned by an elderly couple, Klaas and Roefina Post. Most of the time Peter and his mother had to stay inside. Peter remembers the Posts as being kind. When the Nazis began to raid farms looking for Jews, staying inside the house became too dangerous. Klaas dug them a cave in the woods near the farm where they could hide when soldiers came looking.



Klaas and Roefina Post, who hid Peter and his mother on their farm.

1944:

The frequent searches made it too difficult for Peter and his mother to stay at the farm. The Underground moved them to an apartment in The Hague. The apartment was owned by two women who agreed to hide Peter and Elli. After about eight months his mother found out the women were going to turn them in to the German authorities. One night, Elli sewed a Red Cross uniform for herself. Disguised in the uniform, Peter and Elli escaped, deceiving the Nazis and hitchhiking with a Nazi convoy to Amsterdam.

1945-1949:

Peter and his mother obtained false identity papers and stayed in Amsterdam. Peter returned to school under a false name, "Peter Pelt." On May 5, 1945, Holland was liberated. Only Peter, Elli, and Elli's aunt had survived of their family. After several years Peter and his mother immigrated to the United States, eventually settling in Southern California. Peter moved to Seattle in 1997.

*Klaas and Roefina Post have been recognized as "Righteous Among the Nations" - an honorary title used by the State of Israel to recognize non-Jews who risked their lives during the Holocaust to save Jews. Over 25,000 individuals have been recognized as "Righteous Among the Nations."

The artifacts on display were donated by local survivors and their families.

Explore the Holocaust Center for Humanity's artifact collection to learn more about Peter's experience.

- Pre-war photo of Peter and his father
- Peter's class photograph
- Photograph of the Post farm
- Photograph of Klaas and Roefina Post

Learn more about Peter and other survivors who came to the Pacific Northwest at:

HolocaustCenterSeattle.org/Survivor-Encyclopedia

Peter's memoir *Impact: A Hidden Child of the Holocaust Tells his Story*, is available in the Holocaust Center for Humanity book store.

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