



Centre for Holocaust Education and Scholarship (CHES)

Newsletter, Vol. 5, No. 3, July 2025



Breaking News!

Warmest congratulations to **Pinchas Gutter**, seen here with **Governor-General Mary Simon** on June 24th, who was awarded the Order of Canada for his tireless work in Holocaust Education. A renowned Holocaust survivor and dedicated educator, Pinchas is the first Holocaust survivor to be featured in the groundbreaking virtual initiative, [Dimensions in Testimony](#). A dear friend, Pinchas is a member of the CHES Advisory Board.

Words from Chair Mina Cohn



As I write, a ceasefire between Israel and Iran has been declared. For the past 12 days, Israel engaged in a pre-emptive war with Iran, aiming to destroy its nuclear capabilities and weapons build-up. While Israel expanded its assault to include Iran's oil and gas industry, Iranian missile attacks targeted innocent civilians in many cities in Israel and caused much destruction and loss of life. [Read more](#)

CHES Chair Mina Cohn

IWalk App Launch Affirms Commitment to Holocaust Education and Combatting Antisemitism

By Mina Cohn and Marilyn Sinclair

The National Holocaust Monument (NHM) IWalk App Launch Event, held on June 12th at the Canadian War Museum, was a resounding success. This launch marked the culmination of 2.5 years of dedicated effort between CHES, Liberation75, and the USC Shoah Foundation. [Read more](#)



Overview of audience at the Canadian War Museum using the IWalk App

CHES Introduces NHM IWalk App at Holocaust Education Conference



(L to R): Alyssa Novick and Mina Cohn discuss Holocaust Education with moderator Millie Jasper.

By Mina Cohn and Alyssa Novick

Dr. Kori Street, a board member of the Organization of Holocaust Associations (OHA), invited CHES to deliver a presentation about the new National Holocaust Memorial (NHM) IWalk app at the recent OHA conference in Toronto. CHES was honoured to participate. [Read more](#)

Active Upstander, *Train the Trainer* City of Ottawa Initiative

By Esther Schvan,
Member, *Through Their Eyes*

Over 40 professionals and community leaders from various sectors participated in a two-day, in-person training session entitled Active Upstander Facilitator Training, the focus being learning to respond to hate as a Upstander instead of as a Bystander. [Read more](#)



Participants in the City of Ottawa's Train the Trainer session.

Nova Exhibit A Profoundly Moving Experience



View of a burnt ambulance near the site of the Nova festival massacre in southern Israel, Oct. 12, 2023. Photo by Chaim Goldberg/Flash90.

By CHES Member Shirley Siegel

Very early in the morning of May 25th my husband, Syd Bernstein, and I boarded the bus that would take us and 22 other members of the Ottawa Jewish community to experience the Nova Festival Exhibit in Toronto. [Read more](#)

Walking with Witnesses: Enhancing Holocaust Education with the IWalk App

By Ian Middleton and Alyssa Novick

On May 2nd, 120 Ashbury students and eight faculty members visited the National Holocaust Monument (NHM) as part of our Holocaust unit. This meaningful field trip was anchored by a special address from **German Ambassador Tjorven Bellmann**. [Read more](#)



Ashbury students visit the National Holocaust Museum. Photo by Chris Miedema

Learning Session Promotes *Ottawa Stops Hate Together* Campaign



Artur Wilczynski addresses City of Ottawa staff during Jewish Heritage Month.

By CHES Director Artur Wilczynski

CHES Chair Mina Cohn, Jodi Green from the JFO, and I attended a learning session for approximately 40 city staff hosted by the City of Ottawa. The session was organized in recognition of Jewish Heritage Month and was part of CHES' and JFO's participation in the Ottawa Stops Hate Together campaign that is supported by the Province of Ontario. [Read more](#)

80 Years Ago: WWII Victory and Liberation of Auschwitz



An attentive audience listens to the panellists.

By Robert Chaloux and Mina Cohn

Known as VE Day, May 8th marks the formal unconditional surrender of the Nazis to the Allied Forces in 1945 and the end of World War II in Europe, bringing relief and joy to millions who had endured years of conflict and hardship. [Read more](#)

Remembering Lillian Freiman: A Remarkable "Person of National Historic Significance"



Lillian Freiman and her granddaughter, Betsy Rigal

By Betsy Rigal, Lillian's granddaughter

Lillian Freiman was born in Mattawa, Ontario, in 1885 to **Moses** and **Pauline Bilsky**, the fifth of 11 children. She was brought up in a religious home where her parents participated in many philanthropic undertakings. [Read more](#)

World War II and its Lessons for Today

By CHES Chair Mina Cohn

On May 7th, CHES was pleased to participate in a panel discussion marking 80 years since the capitulation of Nazi Germany in 1945, a pivotal moment that brought an end to World War II in Europe and the Shoah. [Read more](#)



(L to R) CHES Chair Mina Cohn, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Israel Nira Staretz, and H.E Matthias Lüttenberg

Demand for CHES Speakers Proliferates

By CHES Secretary Marion Silver

The Holocaust is becoming more and more relegated to the fog of history and fewer and fewer individuals are aware of its grim reality. Ontario has taken the positive initiative of adding mandatory education on the Holocaust to the curriculum in Grades 6 and 10. [Read more](#)

Chère Mme Coulter
Thank you for sharing your
mum's story. You are very brave
for sharing your mum's
story. I would have broke down
in tears if I had to share
that story. Your Grandma,
Grandpa, Aunt and your Mum
are some of the bravest people
I'll ever know. - Ariq ha

Ottawa's Zikaron BaSalon Expands



Harry Cohn tells his family's story at Tamara Taub's home.

By CHES Chair Mina Cohn

This year, on April 27th and in partnership with the Embassy of Israel, our Zikaron BaSalon featured five salons and six presenters, most of whom are members of Through Their Eyes (TTE), CHES' Next Generation. [Read more](#)

Post-Trauma: Erez Tadmor's 'SODA' Explored Holocaust Survivors' Stories

By CHES Member Shirley Siegel

In her opening remarks, **CHES Chair Mina Cohn**, pointed out how this award-winning film focused on the economic and social realities Holocaust survivors faced in Israel, shortly after the country's formation. [Read more](#)



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CHES now offers a Legacy Program.

Please visit the [CHES Legacy program for more information](#).



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