

Questions to Consider When Viewing Video

1. Where was Betty Potash Gold born? What was unusual about this town as compared to others around it?
2. Why didn't the people in her town believe the reports of Nazi killings in other towns and cities?
3. In what ways did Betty's father prepare for the possible coming of the Nazis to their town?
4. What were some of the issues that Betty's family faced behind the fake wall? What was Betty's cousin forced to do to keep everyone else safe?
5. Where was the second place Betty and her family hid?
6. What was life like in this second hiding place and what special job was Betty given and why?
7. Describe two of the three miracles to which Betty attributes the family's survival.
8. How and by whom were Betty and her family liberated?
9. What kind of life did Betty's family have after being liberated and before coming to the United States?
10. How was it possible for Betty and her family to come to the United States and in particular, to Cleveland, Ohio?

Holocaust Survivor

Betty Potash Gold

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"We are not born with hatred. It is not in our genes. We learn it. But it can be unlearned."

- Betty Gold

Face to Face
A Holocaust Education Program at
Congregation Shaarey Tikvah
Beachwood, Ohio

Betty Potash Gold grew up in the small town of Trochenbrod, Poland, which was almost entirely Jewish. Rumors came to their town that the Nazis were killing Jews in western Poland, but most Jews did not believe it would happen to them. However, her father and his cousin built a series of hiding places for the family -- just in case.

Betty was nine years old when the Nazis came to her town. All the Jews were ordered to the center of town with only what they could carry. Betty went with her grandmother but couldn't see the rest of her family. Betty escaped the Nazi roundup and found the rest of her family in one of the prepared hiding spots. They had to be very quiet to escape the Nazi searches; Betty's cousin's wife was forced to strangle her own baby so that any crying would not endanger the lives of the rest of the family. The Nazis shot all the Jews in the town center, including Betty's grandmother.

Betty and her family spent the entire war hiding in the woods. Betty was in charge of stealing and scrounging food for her family. One day the family heard that some Jews were still alive, working for the Nazis in town. Driven by hunger, they decided to go back to town, but before they reached it, they heard the sounds of the Jews still in town being murdered. Betty's family had escaped a second massacre.

A Christian friend of the family knew of their hiding spot and would occasionally bring food and information. Once he warned the family that their

hiding spot had been discovered. They went to another cave, where another group of Jews was hiding, but there was no room for more people there. Betty's family, with no other options, was forced to go back to their own cave. The next day they found out that their friend had been misinformed. It was the other cave which had been found, and the Jews in that cave had been killed.

Betty's family was now so close to starvation that they were forced to go back to town, hoping to work for the Nazis in return for a cup of weak soup every day. However, the Nazis used the holy day of Yom Kippur (the Jewish Day of Atonement), to attempt to massacre all the remaining Jews. Betty and her family ran through a shower of bullets to escape back to the woods. After that, the family found safety living in a swamp.

One day the family was caught by soldiers and thought that their time had come; however, these soldiers were Russian partisans, not Nazis. Her family worked for the Russian partisans until the end of the war, and her older brother died in the Russian Army.

After the war, her family stayed in a Displaced Persons (DP) camp in Austria until they came to the United States in 1946.