

Established in 1986, the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem's (CSYV) mission is to disseminate the universal lessons of the Holocaust across Canada through commemorative and educational activities in partnership with multiple community organizations. We do this through sending Canadian educators to Yad Vashem in Israel to educate and equip themselves with the right academic tools to address and teach the Holocaust in their classrooms and their communities across Canada and when they return, we work in partnership with alumni of the seminar, with local school boards and with Canadian organizations to continue this important education across Canada. We recognize those heroes and their families who made Canada their post war home whom have been awarded the designation by the Israeli Government and Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations, and we commemorate Yom HaShoah and International Holocaust Remembrance Day with communities across Canada.

This year, 2025, marks 80 years since the liberation of Auschwitz. As we reflect on this extraordinary occasion signifying the end of the war, one nation did not take part in the general euphoria – the Jewish people. For them, victory had come too late. The day of liberation, the one for which Jews had longed throughout the years of the Holocaust, was for the most part a day of crisis and emptiness, a feeling of overwhelming loneliness as the sheer scale of the destruction was grasped, on both a personal and communal level.

With the advent of liberation, probing questions arose for the survivors: Where could they feel secure? Who had survived somehow from their families and communities? How would they be able to go back to living a "normal" life, to build homes and families – and where? On European soil or elsewhere? How should the legacy of the murdered be preserved and commemorated? How would the perpetrators of the heinous crimes be brought to justice? Were the survivors to seek vengeance, or to channel the intensity of their feelings into life-affirming endeavors?

Today, we recognize not only these sorrows, unknowns and realities of liberation, but more importantly, from the depths of despair, we honour the remarkable resilience of the Holocaust survivors who built beautiful lives and families around the globe following the war. Their stories and legacies permeate throughout the societies in which they live, thrive, and greatly contribute towards.

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