



# NEWSLETTER SPRING 2023

As we reach the mid-point of the academic year, it seems like a good time to bring our friends and supporters up to date with developments and progress at Holocaust Learning UK. What a half year it's been!

With the new academic year came a host of exciting developments: a new website, a new process for mailings to schools and a new film.

**Out of the Darkness: Steven's Story** tells the story of Holocaust Survivor Steven Frank, BEM, who shares his experiences of growing up in Pre-War Holland and the dark days of Nazi occupation. Narrated by Jason Isaacs, and using our trademark combination of student actors

and rarely seen archive footage, the film also explores the story of Anne Frank. It offers insight into the uniquely Dutch War-time struggle between rescuers and resistance fighters and the ruthless bounty hunters who made fortunes capturing hidden Jewish adults and children. It explores the moral dilemmas facing normal people and examines antisemitism and racism then and now, providing a powerful and thought-provoking challenge for students.



## PREMIERE AT JW3 OUT OF THE DARKNESS: STEVEN'S STORY

**Steven's Story** had its Premiere at JW3 in Hampstead where over 200 people gathered to watch the film and listen to a Q&A with Steven and the film's Producer, Suzanne Friend, Director Richard Hill and Shelley Miller, Holocaust Learning UK's Executive Producer. A number of the cast were also present.

Holocaust Learning UK's Honorary President the Right Honourable the Lord Ian Austin wrapped up the evening with some concluding words. The Premiere was the first 'in-person' event we'd been able to host since the pandemic – it was thrilling and heart-warming to see both the impact the film had upon the audience and their eagerness to engage with Steven during the Q&A. His responses were, as ever, moving and illuminating.

We started to market **Steven's Story** to schools across the UK alongside **Out of the Darkness: Janine's Story** and **Out of the Darkness: Assembly Film** at the beginning of November. We are delighted to report that, at the time of going to press, around 300,000 students have been registered by 350 schools to view the films, an exponential increase on our figures from last year and we're only half way through the academic year! Our schools this year have even included a handful of schools in the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. From the feedback we are receiving from students and teachers, we know that our films are having a very real impact.



## AND WE'VE BEEN ON THE ROAD WITH IN-PERSON SCREENINGS

JW3 wasn't our only in-person event this year. **Steven's Story** was screened at Kinloss United Synagogue, once again with a Q&A with Steven, and also at the Ark Synagogue in an event combined with Northwood United Synagogue members. We were invited to attend a Holocaust Memorial Day Event at Three Rivers Council where our Assembly Film was screened to local MPs,

mayors and chairs from across Hertfordshire and Hillingdon, headteachers and senior staff from local secondary schools, as well as district and county councillors. Holocaust Learning UK Chair Barbara Cohen gave a speech alongside Dr Dave Rich, Director of Policy, Community Security Trust and Robert Voss CBE CStJ, Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire.



## FILMING MORE OF OUR SURVIVORS

We've been doing some further filming of Survivors, this time in the more relaxed settings of their homes, in order to supplement the excellent studio-based testimonies in readiness for a new raft of films to be made over the next few years.

Our first film on the new slate will be a short film about Kindertransport for school assemblies, featuring Ann Kirk, BEM, Bob Kirk, BEM and Vera Schaufeld, MBE.

So it's been a busy time!



But there is so much more to do as a recent national study by the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education has revealed [here](#).

Having spoken to or questioned more than 1,200 secondary school teachers from across England who have responsibility for teaching about the Nazi genocide, they report that nearly four in ten teachers reported encountering antisemitism among their students, often driven by the rise of online conspiracy theories.

In addition, the report also found that approximately 1 in 6 teachers (15 per cent) said they encountered students voicing Holocaust denial either 'occasionally' or 'often', and a very troubling 74.9 per cent had encountered students who repeated mistruths about the Holocaust that they had read online.

Our aim is that Holocaust Learning UK films will enable students to understand not just the historical significance of the Holocaust but also its contemporary relevance, such that they will resist and challenge all forms of racism and antisemitism today.

## INTERESTED IN BEING INVOLVED?

Holocaust Learning UK is funded entirely by donations and run by a small band of volunteers. We are always looking for people to help us either on the Committee or perhaps in a particular capacity or working on a specific project. Those with teaching experience, particularly secondary school history teachers, and people with good IT or financial skills would be most welcome at this time. If you would like to get more involved, whether regularly or occasionally, or to find out more about us, do please get in touch at [chair@holocaustlearninguk.org](mailto:chair@holocaustlearninguk.org).

## PLEASE DONATE

You can donate by visiting our website at [www.holocaustlearninguk.org](http://www.holocaustlearninguk.org) or by scanning the QR code with your smart phone here.



## WATCH OUR TRAILERS

Please take a look at our website [www.holocaustlearninguk.org](http://www.holocaustlearninguk.org) and watch our fantastic trailers for **Janine's Story** [here](#), the **Assembly Film** [here](#) and **Steven's Story** [here](#). You can register to view any or all of the films [here](#).