



To the Highsted Community,

Today, Wednesday April 15th, marks 75 years since British troops liberated the Nazi concentration camp of Bergen Belsen, Germany.

As an ambassador for the Holocaust Educational Trust, it is my duty to ensure that our generation understand what Bergen Belsen was and why we remember it. Please join me in this goal.



Below, you will find hyperlinks to three videos. These are live testimonies from survivors of the camp: Susan Pollack, Mala Tribich and Rudi Oppenheimer. They were recorded over the last few years.

- Susan Pollack MBE - <https://vimeo.com/387973022>
- Mala Tribich MBE - <https://vimeo.com/201856270>
- Rudi Oppenheimer BEM - <https://vimeo.com/153496480>

I want to share this quote from Tracy-Ann Oberman, who conducts the first interview:

"you are the last generation to witness a testimony of someone who experienced those horrors... and by hearing her, it means that you become a witness yourself".

If you take an hour out of your day, you can bear witness. Please think about this.

Antisemitism and Holocaust denial continue to rise, and we must fight this with education and truth. Any step, even just taking time to read this email, is a step taken against prejudice and lies.

Bergen-Belsen has a complicated history. It is often misunderstood. Firstly, it was a camp for Prisoners of War; it then became a concentration camp, and after liberation in 1945, it became a Displaced Persons camp (where former inmates could find refuge). The history of Bergen-Belsen is also British history: it was British forces who liberated the camp on the 15th April 1945.



Between 1940 and 1945, 19,700 prisoners of war died at the POW camp housed at the site, while around 52,000 civilians – the vast majority of which were Jews – perished in the main camp between 1943 and 1945. Even after the camp was liberated by British forces on 15th April 1945, nearly 14,000 more succumbed to the effects of disease and malnutrition in the weeks and months after liberation.

Thank you for reading.
With best wishes,
Rebecca.