

The Holocaust Historiography Project

Remarkable Nonsense about the Holocaust

No pimples allowed at Auschwitz

Glimpse into Holocaust shared through eyes of survivor

By Diane C. Beaudoin
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ASHBY -- Fourth-graders at the Ashby Elementary School heard first-hand from a Holocaust survivor what it was like living and working in the German concentration camps.

Barbara Mand, 85, is the mother of Townsend resident Laura Shifrin and grandmother to Pam and Brian Shifrin.

She was visiting the Townsend area from Rochester, N.Y., and for the first time she spoke publicly about her life during World War II, when Hitler came into power.

[...]

Shifrin helped her mother explain what the concentration camps were used for.

"Hitler wanted to eliminate the Jewish people," she said. "If you were not what was considered pure in the eyes of Hitler, you were killed. If you wore glasses, or had anything wrong with you, chances are you did not survive."

[...]

[...] "Unless you were perfect, and you could entertain them, they killed you."

Mand recalled a day in Auschwitz she considers the day her sister saved her from the gas chamber.

"I always had nice skin, and one morning I had a pimple on my face," she said. "That same day, the German guards came and took most of us young girls out of the area we were in. They had us take off our clothes to examine us to see if there was anything wrong with us. My sister was very afraid they would take me away because of that pimple.

"That was in Auschwitz where the gas chamber was," she continued. **"When they would burn the people, white pieces of cloth would come out of the smoke stack. A piece that looked like a handkerchief was floating, and it seemed like it came out of the sky. My sister grabbed it and squeezed my pimple until all the white came out. She wiped it off, so when the soldiers came by to look at us, the pimple was just white, and they didn't notice it.**

"She saved my life with that piece of cloth," she added.

On that particular day, Mand said, several hundred girls were sent to their death in the gas chamber.

Shifrin said the gas chamber was "like a big shower."

"But instead of water coming out of the shower heads, Hitler had gas coming out," she said. "The people at first thought they were being sent for a shower, when instead they were being killed."

[...]

Webmaster note: However, you were perfectly safe if you [were a saboteur](#).

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