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HISTORY

## Holocaust survivor's story 'overwhelming' to Canadian student on U.S. museum tour

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POSTMEDIA NEWS

WASHINGTON — For Halina Peabody, 80, the Holocaust began when she was nine years old and German SS troops came to her Polish village, marched about 800 young Jews into the woods and shot them.

They had been told they were going to the forest to cover the trunks of young trees with burlap to protect them from the winter cold. Instead, the forest became their grave.

One victim was only wounded and was able to dig himself out. He escaped back to the village to warn the remaining Jews. That's when Peabody's harrowing story of survival began.

She told her story Monday at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington where more than 100 high school students from across Canada came to learn about one of the greatest tragedies in the history of mankind.

They are taking part in the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies



CAROLYN KASTER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum curator Susan Bachrach points out a 1942 photo of Ukrainian auxiliary police killing Jewish women under the supervision of German army personnel and in the presence of Hungarian troops. Victims are sharing their stories as part of the exhibit.

Program, which since 1997 has brought about 11,000 high school students from 118 schools across Canada to the Holocaust museum.

The visit is part of a program to teach Canadian high school students about human rights and the consequences of racism and intolerance.

This year the program has

1,100 participants from 36 schools in 16 cities and six provinces.

After touring the museum, they listened for an hour as Peabody described her life as a little girl hiding from Nazi killers.

Regan Greer, 15, a student at the Calgary French and International School, said she found

the museum "very powerful and overwhelming."

"There were just so many things that happened that you can't even process it."

The program, she said, has taught her "in our lives we really can't be bystanders to anything, because we're just as bad as the people doing bad things."