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Canadian students learn about the Holocaust

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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 managed 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 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 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.

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