



The Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center opened a new facility on April 19, 2009. Located on the main floor is the Zev and Shifra Karkomi Permanent Exhibition, with more than 500 artifacts, documents and photographs. Included is an artifacts exhibit on loan courtesy of Simone Arnold Liebster and the Arnold-Liebster Foundation.

Born in 1930 in Alsace, France, Simone and her family became Jehovah's Witnesses in 1938. The Arnolds carried on their religious activities in secret until they were all arrested. Simone's father, Adolphe, survived four concentration camps, and her mother, Emma, survived two camps. The family was reunited in 1945.

As you walk through the Permanent Exhibition, you'll see many items of interest to readers of the Hebrew Scriptures. Midway through the exhibition are artifacts that testify to the spiritual resistance of Adolphe Arnold.

SECRET MESSAGES

Eugenie Walter, Adolphe Arnold's sister-in-law, smuggled secret messages called cookie texts in food parcels to Adolphe. At the time Adolphe's wife, Emma, was also in a camp. To make a cookie text, excerpts from the Watchtower (a religious magazine) were written in very small letters on fine paper. The text was rolled up and put between two cookies glued together with Ersatz honey.

ENVELOPE FROM DACHAU

Adolphe Arnold was incarcerated in Dachau Concentration Camp for refusing to denounce his beliefs as a Jehovah's Witness. Thereafter he was transferred to Mauthausen. Both the envelope and the cookie text date to the earliest period of Adolphe Arnold's camp incarceration, December 5, 1941 – August 17, 1944.

HIDDEN POUCH

Adolphe Arnold made this pouch and sewed it into his concentration camp uniform. In it he kept the cookie texts and letters from his daughter, Simone. After his return home he resealed the pouch into a jacket he wore when he was first arrested by the Gestapo. It was not discovered until after Adolphe's death when the jacket was taken to a dry cleaner.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN EUROPE (1933-1945)

Jehovah's Witnesses, a Christian community of 35,000 in Germany and occupied lands, refused to conform to the Nazi ideology of hate. They suffered severely for their belief in nonviolence and their utter rejection of racism. Thrown into Nazi camps, they became eyewitnesses of Nazi genocide and were the only group offered a way out of the camps.

Banned – June 1933

Arrested – 12,500

Killed – 2,000

Executed – 370

Children taken away – 500

THE ARNOLD-LIEBSTER FOUNDATION

The Arnold-Liebster Foundation was established by Holocaust-era survivors Max Liebster and Simone Arnold Liebster in January 2002 to educate future generations in the lessons of history. The foundation supports historical research, teacher training, educational seminars, scholarly publications, museum exhibitions, and similar projects. Through these activities, the foundation especially aims to help young people to repudiate racism, xenophobic nationalism, and violence, and to learn to listen to the voice of conscience. See www.alst.org for more information and resources, including Adolphe Arnold's biography.

Additional Resources at Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center

Legacy Shop (Books)

- Facing the Lion: Memoirs of a Young Girl in Nazi Europe by Simone Arnold Liebster
- Crucible of Terror: A Story of Survival Through the Nazi Storm by Max Liebster

Brill Resource Center (Library)

- Facing the Lion: Memoirs of a Young Girl in Nazi Europe by Simone Arnold Liebster in English, Spanish, Italian
- Crucible of Terror: A Story of Survival Through the Nazi Storm by Max Liebster in English, Spanish
- Jehovah's Witnesses Stand Firm Against Nazi Assault 28-minute Classroom Edition (DVD-English or VHS-Spanish) and Study Guide (English or Spanish)
- Jehovah's Witnesses Stand Firm Against Nazi Assault 57-minute DVD in English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese (Brazilian), Russian, Spanish
- Purple Triangles: The True Story of a German Family 25-minute DVD in English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese (Brazilian), Russian, Spanish