



B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL

THE GLOBAL VOICE OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT ON: Jewish Rescuer Citation

Perhaps one of the least told stories of the Holocaust is the story of Jews who rescued fellow Jews. Jewish rescuers put their own lives in jeopardy to help other Jews escape the Nazi killing machine.

The B'nai B'rith World Center-Jerusalem and the Committee to Recognize the Heroism of Jewish Rescuers During the Holocaust (JRJ) created the Jewish Rescuer Citation in 2011 to pay honor and respect to Jewish rescue of other Jews. B'nai B'rith had been involved in promoting the recognition of Jewish rescuers in other ways long before the citation's creation.

The citation is also meant to show a side of Jewish reality during the Holocaust not often discussed in conversations about the Holocaust: that of Jewish resistance.

B'nai B'rith and JRJ have recognized some 175 rescuers who operated in France, Hungary, Greece, Germany, Slovakia, Yugoslavia, Russia, Poland, the Netherlands and Lithuania.

Thousands of Jews were saved by other Jews across Europe during the Holocaust. Many of these rescuers, rather than flee to ensure their own safety, chose to help other Jews escape. Forgery, smuggling and concealment were all called into play by scores of rescuers in their efforts to save fellow Jews.

The stories of bravery have been remarkable. But many end with a version of this sentiment and gratitude: "I



Via JID: Meir with Berta on the occasion of her 90th birthday.

am standing here only because of you, Berta." Those were the words spoken by a now-70-something citizen of Israel to Berta Davidovitz Rubinsztein, who, in her early 20s, saved Jewish children in Budapest from certain death. At the ceremony in her honor in 2014, one of the children Berta rescued, Meir Brand, said he was hiding under a bridge in Budapest, barely alive, when Berta found him and became like a mother to him when he was just seven years old.

B'nai B'rith World Center-Jerusalem Director Alan Schneider wrote movingly about these heroes in a blog post: bnaibrith.org/expert-analysis/jrj-blog

To see the list of Jewish Rescuer Citation recipients, visit: bnaibrith.org/jrj



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