

# THE WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING



A TRAVELING EXHIBITION FROM ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM & EDUCATION CENTER



## ABOUT THE EXHIBITION:

How was one ghetto able to organize the largest single revolt by Jewish people during WWII?

How were Jewish resistance fighters inside the Warsaw ghetto able to fight the Germans, who greatly outnumbered them in terms of manpower and weaponry, for nearly a month?

**The Warsaw ghetto uprising was the largest, and symbolically the most important Jewish uprising in German-occupied Europe. The fighters knew they were bound to lose, but at stake was the honor of the Jewish people.**

They chose to die fighting.

This exhibition tells the stories of the incredibly courageous leaders of the Warsaw ghetto uprising as well as accounts of Chicago area survivors who lived through the uprising. Through photographs, inspiring quotes from uprising participants, biographies of the courageous uprising leaders, a timeline, and map of the ghetto, the powerful story of individuals resisting against overwhelming odds comes to life.

## ABOUT THE WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING:

Following the German occupation of Poland in 1939, German authorities began forcibly concentrating Poland's Jews into ghettos. The Jews of Warsaw, over 350,000 people, along with masses of others from nearby towns, were sealed off from the rest of the city on November 16, 1940. Life in the ghetto was a constant struggle for survival and more than 80,000 inhabitants died from disease. Beginning in the summer of 1942, Germans authorities aimed to decrease the population of the ghetto and began mass deportations of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto to the



17 year old David Figman (left) fought with the ZOB resistance organization, Rotz, Germany, September 9, 1945.



Treblinka killing center, where they were murdered upon arrival in the gas chambers.

In response to these actions, the ZOB (Zydowska Organizacja Bojowa, the Jewish Combat Organization) and the ZZW (Zydowski Zwiazek Wojskowy, the Jewish Military Union) were formed and, with smuggled weaponry from the Polish resistance, prepared for an armed uprising should the Germans attempt to deport the 55,000 Jews who remained in the ghetto.

German SS and police units planned the final deportation to begin on April 19, 1943, and to be completed within three days. Yet when they entered the ghetto, the streets were deserted. The fighting groups and ghetto inhabitants had barricaded themselves into bunkers. On the first day of fighting the ZOB fighters stunned the Germans and forced them to retreat outside the ghetto wall. By the third day, German commander SS General Jürgen Stroop instructed his forces to burn down the ghetto, building by building, to force the Jews out. Resistance fighters continued to make sporadic raids, but systematically the ghetto was reduced to rubble. On May 8, German forces attacked the ZOB command bunker at 18 Mila Street and killed ZOB leader Mordechai Anielewicz and those with him. The uprising was suppressed on May 16.

## CONTENTS:

### Exhibition Components:

- 24 panels including an introduction panel, map of the ghetto, 11 photographs with quotes of Warsaw ghetto uprising participants, and 10 biographies on the leaders of the uprising

### Exhibition Size:

Approximately 50 running feet

### Security Requirements: Low

### Exhibition Fee:

Digital - \$750 rental fee

Non-digital - \$1,250 rental fee + shipping

## ABOUT ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM & EDUCATION CENTER:

Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center is located in Skokie, Illinois. The mission of IHMEC is expressed in its founding principle: *Remember the Past, Transform the Future*. The Museum is dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Holocaust by honoring the memories of those who were lost and by teaching universal lessons that combat hatred, prejudice, and indifference. The Museum fulfills its mission through the exhibition, preservation, and interpretation of its collections and through education programs and initiatives that foster the promotion of human rights and the elimination of genocide.

## PLEASE DIRECT ALL INQUIRIES TO:

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“What I’m very proud of, and I want history to remember, is this little Warsaw ghetto fought against the Nazis longer than any country in Europe.”

*Barbara Steiner,  
Warsaw ghetto uprising survivor*



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