

Record Number of Teachers Attend SJM Training Session

24.08.15 Eighty High School and Primary teachers from across the country will complete a free two day training program at the Sydney Jewish Museum this week.

The Professional Development Seminars are designed to address the mandatory Holocaust Education component of the newly developed National Curriculum, and play a vital role in the Museum's efforts to equip educators with the skills and knowledge to bring Holocaust Education to classrooms.

"Teaching Holocaust History demands a high level of sensitivity and a keen awareness of the complexity of the subject matter" says Yotam Weiner, Education Manager at the Sydney Jewish Museum. "We try to address the pitfalls of Holocaust education, like the dangers of reducing people to statistics and the importance of communicating the nuances of this period in history."

Since the introduction of the program in 2013, the Museum has trained 270 teachers from schools across Australia, with an additional 280 taking part in the Studies of Religion Program.

"With hate crimes on the rise globally, it is increasingly important that students learn from the failings of society at that time" says Norman Seligman, CEO of the Sydney Jewish Museum. "Holocaust studies highlight how tenuous the choices made by individuals, organisations and governments can be, and showcases the danger of indifference and a lack of empathy."

As well as hearing the testimony of a Holocaust Survivor, participants will attending a series of lectures by its Educators, Curators and Resident Historian Professor Konrad Kwiet.

Topics covered include 'Why the Holocaust happened – and other frequently asked questions', 'Holocaust Testimony in classrooms – Uses, Potential and Limitations', and 'Teaching Fact Through Fiction.' Once the participants completed the program, they receive teaching materials for classroom use.

The Sydney Jewish Museum was founded in 1992 by a number of Holocaust Survivors who wished to ensure that the victims of the Holocaust and the universal lessons of the tragedy did not fade from individual memory.

The Museum runs two training courses each year, the next of which will take place in March 2015. Teachers from rural NSW or interstate are encouraged to apply for assistance in travel costs.

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