



Video testimonies as a part of the museum educational projects – experience of the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia

Audiovisual Archive of the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia

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The Museum of the Occupation of Latvia

(MOL)

- Largest and oldest private museum in Latvia, located in Riga
- Founded in 1993
- New exhibition available to public from June 2022



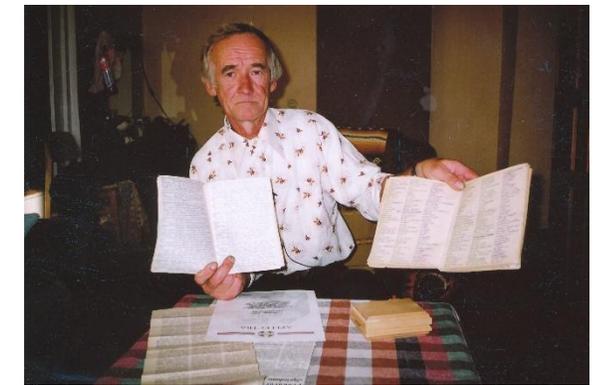
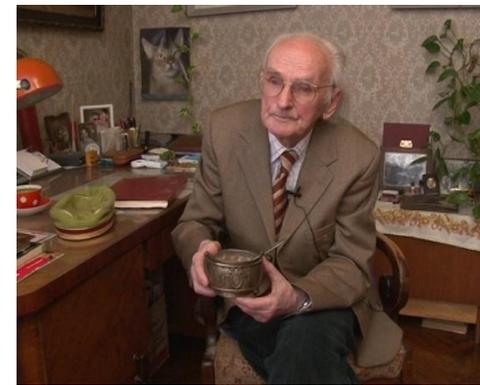
Audiovisual Archive of the MOL I

- Since 1996 recorded **2443** video testimonies.
- Video testimony as a source is narrative/life story of a person whose life was dramatically influenced by the Soviet (1940-1941; 1944/45-1991) and/or Nazi Germany (1941-1944/45) occupation policies.
- Main topics covered: mass deportations of 1941 and 1949; Holocaust, National resistance movement, survivors of GULAG, Latvians in exile, Latvians in WW2 (Red Army and Nazi Germany troops), eyewitnesses and other topics.



Audiovisual Archive of the MOL II

- Video testimonies are recorded not only in Latvian, but also in Russian, German and English;
- Video testimonies represent people of different nationalities – Latvians, Russians, Germans, Jews, etc.
- Video testimonies were recorded not only in Latvia, but also in USA, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Russia.



Usage of the video testimony collection – examples

- Exhibitions: Latvijas Gadsimts, Salaspils Camp memorial.
- Online exhibitions: National Archives of Latvia: BATUN: for Freedom and Independence of Baltic States (<http://www.archiv.org.lv/diaspora/batun/>) and Life of Latvian soldiers in the Allied POW camps in the West (<http://diaspora.arhivi.lv/karagustekni/>)
- TV series, theater plays, documentaries, research, ...

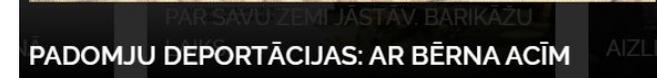
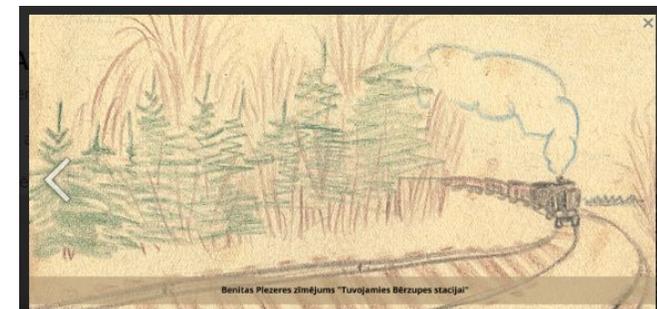


Usage of the video testimony collection for educational projects within MOL I

- Cooperation with Educational department of the MOL:
- Definition of the topic of the project;
- Selection of the possible video testimonies which could be used for the projects, considering different aspects (length of fragment, usage of language, representation of topic chosen for project, environment, possible restrictions of the usage of video testimony, inner «censorship»);
- Presentation of the chosen material to the Educational department and its implementation in the final project;
- Opening new part of the collection by recording people, whose childhood was around the time the Third National Awakening took place
- If needed – repeated and additional selection of the video testimonies.

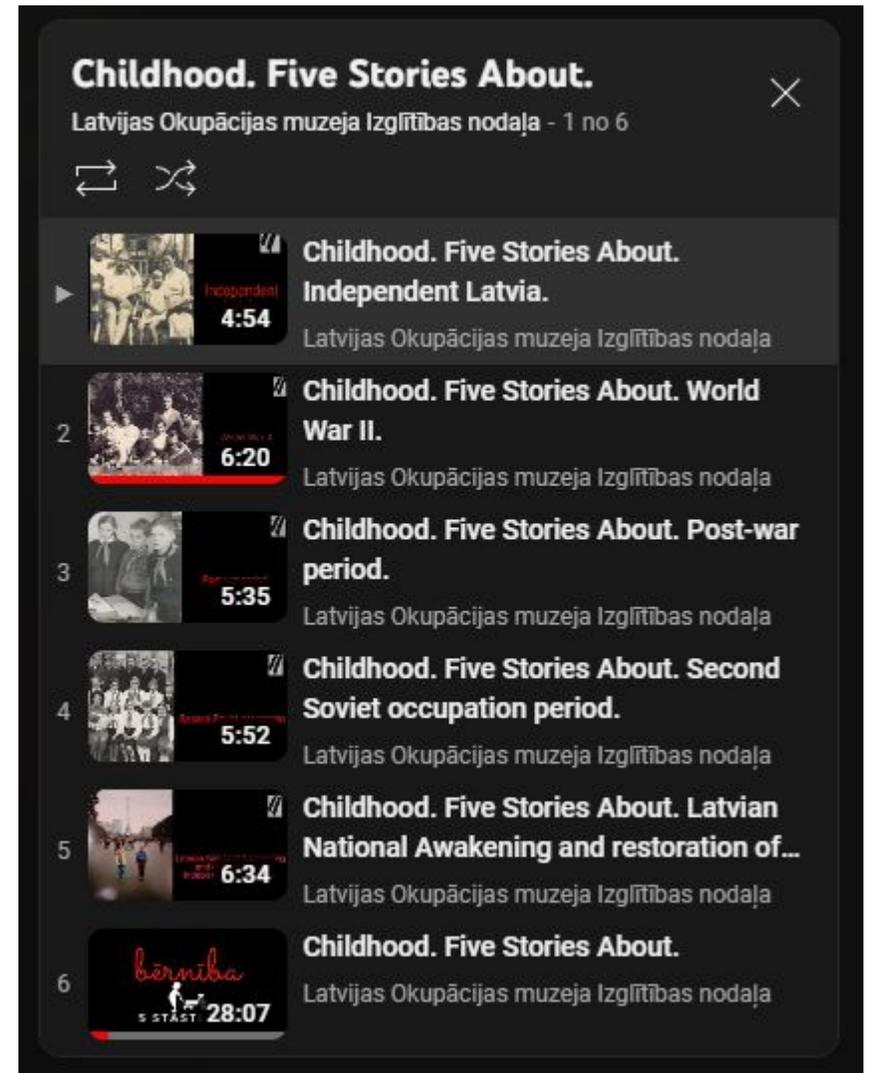
Usage of the video testimony collection for educational projects within MOL II

- Realised projects (lessons for school children) so far:
- Soviet deportations: through the eyes of a child.
- Soviet deportations. Stories of families.
- Forbidden 18th of November (= *Independence day*).
- Barricades. We need to stand for our land.



Usage of the video testimony collection for educational projects within MOL III

- Example of video series **Childhood. Five Stories About.**
- History of 20th century divided into five periods, where they are seen through the eyes of the children – Independent Latvia, World War II, Post-war period, Second Soviet occupation period, Latvian National Awakening and restoration of independence.
- Fragments include personal experiences of people during the Second World War and postwar period with its consequences - the things forgotten or not widely spoken in society, for example easy access of ammunition and guns in the post war period, holocaust and violence as seen through the eyes of children.



WW2 (Holocaust)

Valentīns Kalniņš (1933) Holocaust in the Biķernieki forest, Riga

And then they started to chase us.

One time we were in the forest with
our mother,

where we collected cones,

well, anything that we could get.

And we were already coming out,
and suddenly they surrounded us
and screamed “Juden, Juden!”.

We said that we are Latvians
and we live here.

“Where do you live?” We
showed the house.

Then they came to make sure
that we lived there,

set us free. Otherwise, they
thought

that we are also escapees from
that pit.

It was summer, we were
wearing sports trousers
and shirts, and that is it.

We had a dark tan, our mother
had black hair. Well, Juden.



Valentīns Kalniņš OMF2300/3402e

WWII (Cruelty of the Red Army soldiers)

- **Lidija Ruta Bormane (1931-2012)**

Once it was a terrible incident, an awful incident. Through the window I saw that in the garden a gray chain was crawling. It was a chain of Russian soldiers.

I said: "Mommy, mommy, it is something terrible". But mommy was in the cattle-shed.

[..]

And they surrounded the house by crawling on their stomachs. Instantly they made me stand on the porch and one soldier said:

"Stand and don't move!" What happened next, I cannot tell you, because I didn't see it, But I know there was a noise in the room.

I understood that something bad is happening in there.

But I didn't hear sounds or screams, or anything else, only noise. It turned out they locked my mom in there,

undressed her and beat her. Then they knocked her down and raped her.

It was all done while I was standing and trembling on the porch.

I could not move at all. I was not allowed to move; I was probably 13 years old then.



Lidija Ruta Bormane OMF 2300/180, 181.

Post-war period

Juris Jenerts (1945) Playing with ammunition, Riga

Germans had warehouses here, next to Rātsupe.

There you could find what you wanted.

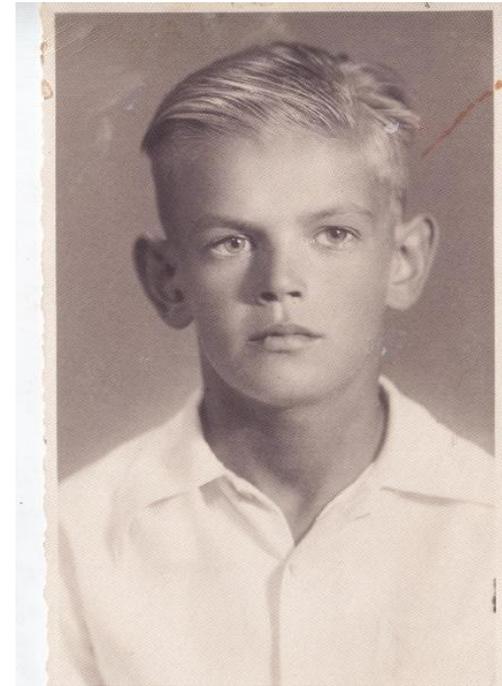
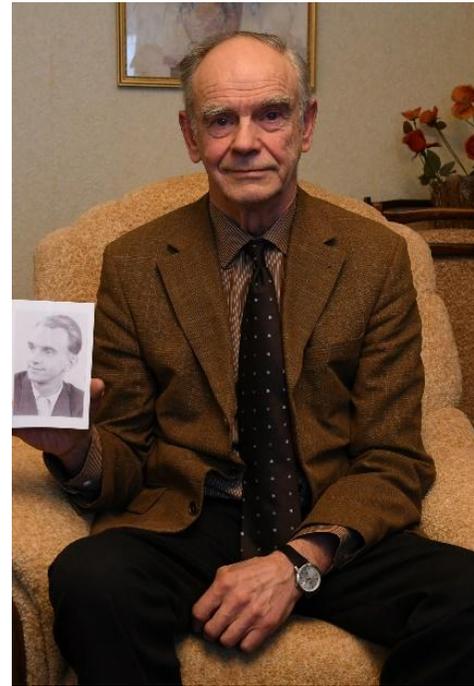
There was a river next to the aerodrome,
which was full of boxes with ammunition.

Had to dive to get them.

**Once, there was a crazy situation. All his intestines
were torn apart,**

and he said - don't tell mom.

**Everything here [showing his stomach] - torn apart.
There is nothing more.**



Juris Jenerts OMF2300/3407e

Thank you for your attention!