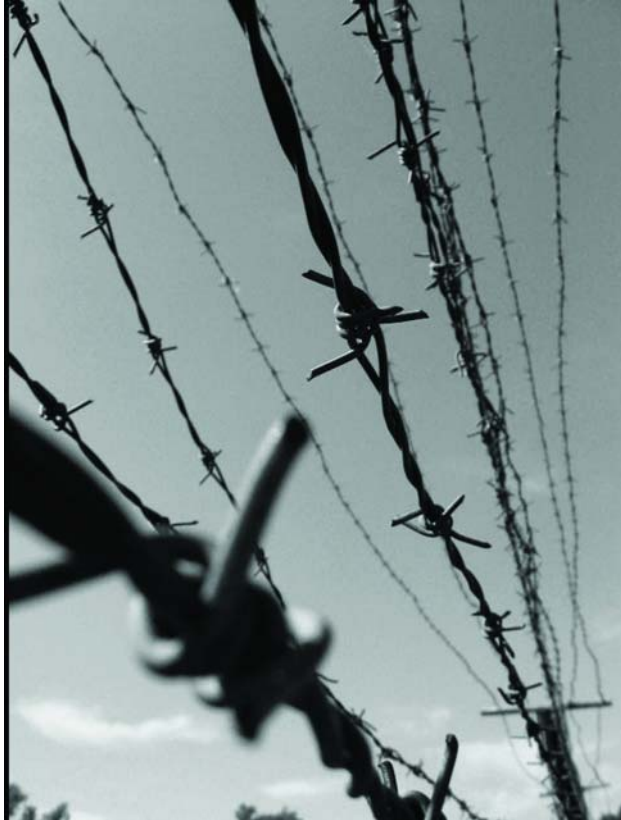


## For Immediate Release –

Presented by the Friends of Ethnic Germans & Rosina T. Schmidt

**The Forgotten Genocide;** A feature length documentary on the suffering put upon Ethnic Germans living behind the Iron Curtain



When one hears the word 'genocide' one automatically thinks on the persecution of the Jewish people by the Nazis, yet there was an even larger expulsion, a horrific experience for some 15 million ethnic Germans living in Eastern Europe, whom the victors of World War II (the Americans, British, French and Russians) ejected from their ancestral homelands. Of those 15 million ethnic German civilians, almost 5 million perished as a result, which does not include the military losses.

This ethnic cleansing of the Germans involved both the German citizens, living in the areas of Germany, which was separated from the German Reich after WWII, as well as the Volksdeutsche (ethnic Germans) whose ancestors lived outside of the German borders for centuries and who were actually citizen of the countries they were born and raised in.

It was the largest forced mass migration of modern times. However it received hardly any attention in the history books, especially not in North America.

Towards the end of WWII some 15 million of ethnic Germans were forced from their homelands in the east. Many fled the advancing Russian front, while others who were not able to flee were deported to the Soviet Union as prisoners of the war, even though they were civilians. The war ended in May of 1945 but the expulsion lasted until 1950. Those

civilians who were too young or too old to be shipped to the slave labour camps in the Soviet Union were -especially in Tito's Yugoslavia- imprisoned in the starvation camps, where large percentage of the inmates perished from hunger, illnesses and brutality.

There are many books and memoirs written by the survivors about their horrific experiences, mostly in the German language, with some works translated also into English. There are a few English books also, like "Voices of Loss and Courage" (Picton Press), "A Pebble in My Shoe" by Katharine Hoeger Flotz, "The Innocent Must Pay" by Maria Horwath Tenz and others, and now there is the first North American filmed documentary on that subject: "**The Forgotten Genocide**".

It deals with the memories of a painful secret held for over fifty years, which are now finally brought to light. "The Forgotten Genocide" is an in depth, feature length documentary that examines the suffering put upon ethnic Germans living behind the Iron Curtain. Through interviews with survivors and examination of relics of the era, the students of St. Louis Community college-Meramec aimed to preserve the memory of this sad period in human history.

"The Forgotten Genocide" documentary will have its 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian debut on **6th of May 2010 at 7 p.m.** at the **Nanaimo District Museum** at 100 Museum Way, Nanaimo. Rosina T. Schmidt, one of those refugees and whose ancestors lived for 300 years on the Plains of the Danube, (which are now divided on to Hungary, Croatia, Serbia and Romania), and who co worked on the script, will have the honour to present the film.

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