

**Inge Woolf QSO, United Nations International Holocaust Remembrance Day  
27 January 2019**

Honoured Guests, especially those few Survivors left amongst us,

Today we remember those who were cruelly murdered in the Holocaust, the largest and most industrialised genocide the world has ever known. We remember especially the innocent children in memory of whom we have just launched a travelling Memorial which I urge you to visit while it is at the National Library in Wellington.

We are also remembering those Righteous who at great risk to their own lives and that of their families harboured and hid Jewish people in an effort to save them from certain death. It did not always end well.

The families of some of those Righteous live amongst us and I want to tell you the story, never before told, of one such family who hid a young Jewish girl named Suze Goudsmid.

Dirk Ubbels and Jannetje Ubbels-Kruze lived with their 5 children in the countryside north of Amsterdam. Life was difficult enough for them anyway but they agreed to shelter Suze and hid her in their attic by day and she was only able to get out of her cramped quarters by night. However one spring day she craved sunlight and believing everyone to be at work, sat for a brief while among the vines in the garden. To her horror she saw a neighbour glance over the fence and see her. Many questions followed as to her identity and believing she was no longer safe there she asked the family to find her somewhere else to hide. This was no easy task but sanctuary was eventually found with another close relative Jacob Kruze in Amsterdam. Unbeknown to the rest of the family, Jacob was already involved in resistance activities but he undertook this extra risk in order to save Suze. Unfortunately after three months she was seen by a visiting church elder who was subsequently rounded up by the Nazis for work camp in Germany and offered release in return for information about anyone harbouring Jews. So on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1943 the house was raided and Jacob and Suze were arrested.

The family never saw them again. Suze was transported to Camp Westerbork and no one knows exactly how her short life ended.

Jacob was held in the notorious Schevenigen Prison where in spite of being tortured he did not give up any information about others he was involved with.

In deteriorating health he was moved around several prisons and eventually died on 6<sup>th</sup> October 1944 aged 39.

Dirk Ubbels, who originally hid Suze realised the Nazis were after him and fled into hiding. But in an unrelated round up the Nazis mistakenly identified his cousin also called Dirk Ubbels and shot him at his front door with his young son in his arms.

This tragic and difficult family history belongs to the designer of the moving Children's Holocaust Memorial, Matthijs Siljee, and it informed his thoughtful and reverent design.

I am grateful to him for his research and allowing me to tell you this story, always spoken about in sadness and with much survivor guilt among his family when they were together, but now with their agreement, able to be recorded among the stories of the Righteous that the Holocaust Centre holds.

As Matthijs himself has said "Life, survival and relationships did become ever so much more complex. Most people faced difficult moral and practical decisions. It can be seen that reality is more complex than a clear cut 'good versus evil' "

Matthijs, I salute you and your family. Truly Righteous then and now.