

FOR HALLI SIGAL, IT ISN'T JUST A PROJECT, IT IS A MISSION



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Suly Chenkin (left), 65, is a subject in Halli Sigal's (right) documentary about Holocaust survivors. The effort earned Sigal, 18, a Girl Scout Gold Award. Chenkin was 3 when her parents, Riva and Solomon Baicovitz, were sent to concentration camps. Her parents had placed her with another family for safety.

A time when horror reigned

Teen's documentary on Holocaust survivors earns Scouting award

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Halli Sigal wants people to know victims' names and survivors' faces from the Holocaust. And she wants people to care.

She recently filmed a DVD of Holocaust survivors in Charlotte. The teen says her generation is one of the last to hear, firsthand, stories of concentration camps, gas chambers and the anguish of families separated and the triumphs of families reunited.

Audiences will meet survivors such as Suly Chenkin, an only child who was separated from her parents for more than two years.

Behind 'The Holocaust, A Communal Preservation'

Halli Sigal started her Gold Award project last September and completed it in March. She logged 54 hours, 27 minutes with the Girl Scout Council, working on the movie.

She will attend N.C. State this fall.

Sigal originally wanted to work with animals for her project. She wants to become a veterinarian and currently works with the Humane Society. Still, she plans to further her Holocaust research "if not for other people, for myself."

Sigal says she gained perspective, tying the Holocaust to Charlotte. It made the world smaller, more accessible; Chenkin lives just minutes away. "I realized I have the potential to be connected to the rest of the world."

Sigal says her film is relevant, not just for preserving these stories, but because of current African genocide in Darfur and Rwanda.

Her passion was ignited two summers ago when she visited Poland and Israel with the United Synagogue Youth. The group saw the remains of concentration camps.

For Sigal, now 18, the voyage was life-changing. It made the

Holocaust real.

That fall, she entered her junior year at East Mecklenburg High and began her senior exit project, examining the portrayal of the Holocaust in films.

Sigal expanded her efforts with her documentary, "The Holocaust, A Communal Preservation," for the Girl Scout Gold Award she recently received.

She interviewed friends of friends and members of Temple

Israel, her synagogue. And she used, with permission, segments of "Ripples in Time" and Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation interviews.

Chenkin shares Sigal's desire to educate more people about the Holocaust and to remind them such violence still exists. She appears in "The Holocaust, A Communal Preservation" and gives her account.

Chenkin, who recently turned

65, was just 6 months old when Nazis invaded her home country, Lithuania. She was 3 when her parents made "the ultimate sacrifice" and gave her to Miriam Schulman, an Orthodox Jew who Chenkin says saved her life and the lives of 30 other children.

Sigal calls Chenkin's story amazing:

In 1944, Riva and Solomon Baicovitz put their daughter, Suly, in a potato sack and tossed her over the barbed-wire fence surrounding their ghetto. Schulman, who was on the other side, caught the sack and spirited the girl away. Suly's parents were sent to separate camps shortly after.

Chenkin says she was miraculously reunited with her parents a couple of years later.

"As the years go by, it seems less and less real. But it's still happening. Look what's happening in Africa," Chenkin said, mirror-

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