

# YAD VASHEM

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“Do No Harm”

Medicine and the Holocaust ([4-23](#))

# NEW BENEFACTOR: HANNIE BIWOTT

**Hannie Biwott recently decided to generously support the academic journal of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research, *Yad Vashem Studies*.**

The deportations of Dutch Jews to the death camps started in the summer of 1942. Over the following year, Jews throughout the Netherlands were arrested, rounded up, incarcerated and deported. Jewish institutions, among them hospitals, were surveilled by the Germans. On the night between 21 and 22 January 1943, all patients and staff of a Jewish psychiatric institution

in Apeldoorn were arrested and deported directly to Auschwitz. The news of this barbarous act spread immediately and reverberated throughout the remaining Jewish community in the country.

Hannie Biwott (née ter Laare)'s mother was due to give birth in the Jewish hospital of Amsterdam on that same day, 22 January. However, while experiencing contractions, in fear of arrest she escaped through

the back of the hospital as Germans entered the front doors. Hannie was born on 8 February in the same hospital.

In August 1943, the bulk of the remaining Jews were deported from Amsterdam. As Hannie's mother stood in her doorway to be collected, a neighbor, risking his life, argued with the soldiers that there were no Jews in the building. The exhausted soldiers crossed Hannie and her mother's names off the list, declaring them dead. That is how they survived, not, as may have been thought, because Hannie's blonde hair belied her Jewish identity.

From September 1944, trains into Amsterdam were halted, and the "Hunger Winter" began. Food was strictly rationed and the population



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intends to continue bringing a group of Kenyan teachers twice a year to Israel, not as pilgrims, but to learn about the Land of Israel, its people, its achievements, its culture, its history and its religion.

Hannie Biwott recently decided to generously support the academic journal of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research, [Yad Vashem Studies](#). This ongoing philanthropic gesture will ensure that Yad Vashem is able to continue to publish wide-ranging Holocaust-based research. In her own words, Hannie says: "I wish to support Yad Vashem's mission partly to remember the past, and partly in the hope that with time it will bring this message to the world: Intolerance leads to injustice, the consequences of which cannot be foreseen."

teetered on starvation. Risking her life, Hannie's mother would sneak out of Amsterdam at four o'clock in the morning despite the curfew and without her yellow star and her pass marked with a "J" — an act strictly forbidden to Jews and punishable by death. She traded in all she possessed and begged for a little milk to keep Hannie alive. By doing so they survived the following harsh months until liberation.

In 1957, Hannie's family immigrated to Australia. In 1965, as a qualified secondary teacher, Hannie resigned from teaching in Australia and, forgoing her dream of migrating to Israel, followed her

Kenyan husband and moved to his homeland, where she started a new life. During the 54 years she lived in Kenya, teaching and running a perfumery business and bringing up her two mixed-race children, Hannie encountered both full acceptance from a variety of Kenyans, as well as racism, tribalism, intolerance and rejection from others, inside and outside of the country.

With her children and her grandchildren clearly on the road to success, Hannie is dedicating the remainder of her life, in Israel, to educating others to lead a life of tolerance with an understanding of other races and religions. She