



SYDNEY JEWISH MUSEUM

On Friday 14 June, Year 12 students from two Modern History classes went on an excursion to the Sydney Jewish Museum in Darlinghurst. The program was designed to complement their studies on the rise of Nazi Germany and the regime's brutal treatment of minorities.

The day began with a deeply moving testimony from Holocaust survivor Egon Sonnenschein, who shared his harrowing experiences as a child fleeing Nazi persecution. Egon, born in Ptuj, Yugoslavia in 1930, recounted his journey starting from when Germany attacked Yugoslavia in April 1941. At just ten years old, he and his family fled to his grandparents in Croatia, then under the brutal Ustashi regime. They survived thanks to the generosity of the town Mayor, a former student of Egon's grandfather, who saved over 300 Jews and Serbs. The family's desperate escape continued through Italian-occupied Slovenia, where they were imprisoned briefly before finally finding refuge in Switzerland. Egon's heartfelt narrative resonated with many students, especially those with family origins in the regions he traversed.

Following the testimony, students participated in a source skills workshop. This session was invaluable in teaching them how to assess the value and limitations of historical sources, linking directly to their syllabus. They learnt to account for the perspectives of different sources, enhancing their analytical skills.

The excursion concluded with guided tours of the museum. In small groups, students explored fascinating exhibits and artefacts that vividly told the story of Jewish persecution in Germany,

including the Holocaust and its aftermath. The guided tours provided a poignant and comprehensive understanding of the historical context they have been studying.

The Year 12 students found the excursion to be a profoundly educational experience, gaining not only historical knowledge but also a deepened empathy and understanding of the human stories behind the historical events.



Mr Samuel Mills

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