

MEDIA RELEASE

Hetty

A TRUE STORY
HETTY VERHOLME

Winner, Fellowship of Australian Writers
Christina Stead Award, 2000

About the book

Hetty was just twelve years old in 1943 when her family was torn apart following the German invasion of the Netherlands.

Rounded up by the Nazis and then separated from their parents, Hetty and her brothers were sent to the Children's House, within Belsen concentration camp. Hetty became the 'Little Mother' of the camp, helping to care for the other children.

This is one of the remarkable, largely untold, stories of the Holocaust – the extraordinary struggle and survival of this group of children through those terrible years.

The *Australian* said the adult version of this book was a "powerful and chilling account" of the holocaust. The *Australian Book Review* called it "profoundly moving" and an "uplifting story".

About the author

Hetty Verolme was born in Belgium in 1930 and moved with her family moved to the Netherlands in 1931. In 1943 Hetty and her family were sent to the Nazi concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen. After surviving the war and working for a time in the fashion industry, she emigrated to Australia in 1954. In 1972, Hetty was presented with the 'Most Successful Migrant' award. In 1977 she was appointed to the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council, and for many years she was actively involved in a wide range of community and charity organisations.

Key points

- The adult version of this book, *The Children's House of Belsen*, was first published by Fremantle Press in 2000.
- It has sold over 15,000 copies in Australia and has been published in Germany, France, the Netherlands, Italy and the United Kingdom.
- This abridged version of the original is designed specifically for secondary school children.
- Unlike many holocaust stories this is one of survival, written by an Australian who lived through it.
- Free teaching notes are available from Fremantle Press, www.fremantlepress.com.au.



SCHOOLS EDITION

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