

DR. JANET BOND BRILL

Author • Holocaust Memoirist & WWII Historian • Professional Speaker

Author of *Little Edna's War* — Foreword by Dr. Michael Berenbaum

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Janet Bond Brill is the bestselling author of five books, including four health and nutrition titles published by Random House and Wiley with over 200,000 copies sold. After thirty years as a professional speaker on health and nutrition topics, she now devotes her platform to honoring her late mother-in-law's extraordinary story in *Little Edna's War*, her first Holocaust memoir.

Drawing on a thirty-seven-year relationship with her mother-in-law and over five hours of testimony archived with the USC Shoah Foundation — cross-referenced with archival and military records — Dr. Brill brings together the intimacy of family, the rigor of doctoral research, and the depth of a WWII historian's command of the era — from the Warsaw ghetto and uprising to the Polish Home Army, Nazi POW camps, and the post-war Jewish diaspora. Her presentations transform Holocaust history into an unforgettable personal encounter — one that resonates equally with educators, students, faith communities, and general audiences.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Little Edna's War tells the true story of Edna Stefania Brill, born at 18 Miła Street in Warsaw — the very building that would become the doomed command bunker of the Ghetto Uprising. At seven, she smuggled food through the Warsaw ghetto wall. After her brother Yakov took the names of two dead Catholic girls from a cemetery, Edna and her sister Miriam became Stefcia and Marysia Skolkowska, surviving on the Aryan side by singing, dancing, and never breaking character. At nine, under the code name Kajtek, she became the youngest soldier of the Polish Home Army, fighting in the Warsaw Uprising. She endured Stalag X-B Sandbostel and Stalag VI-C Oberlangen — the only all-female Nazi POW camp — and was later decorated by Pope Pius XII, who never knew he was honoring a Jewish child.

She studied at St. Mary's Convent School in Lowestoft, England, until Yakov absconded with her to Israel — to Kibbutz Lohamei HaGetaot, the Ghetto Fighters' Kibbutz he had co-founded with survivors of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. There she met and married Zvi (Harry) Brill, a fellow Holocaust survivor who had sailed on the Exodus 1947 and fought in Israel's War of Independence. Together, they eventually made their way to America.

With a foreword by Dr. Michael Berenbaum — founding director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Research Institute — the book has been recognized as essential historical testimony meeting the highest standards of Holocaust scholarship.

SIGNATURE TALKS & FORMATS

Dr. Brill's presentations are tailored to each venue and audience. Available formats include:

- Lectures (45–60 minutes) for synagogues, JCCs, churches, and libraries
- Book club appearances (30 minutes plus Q&A, in person or via Zoom)
- University and classroom talks for Holocaust studies, history, and women's studies
- Yom HaShoah and Holocaust Remembrance Day keynotes
- Corporate diversity, HR, and DEI presentations on courage, identity, and the cost of indifference
- Conference keynotes for academic, educational, and faith-based gatherings

IDEAL AUDIENCES

Edna's story crosses many worlds, making it uniquely resonant across diverse communities. Dr. Brill speaks to audiences including:

- Holocaust museums and education centers
- Jewish community centers, synagogues, sisterhoods, Hadassah chapters, and Jewish Federations
- Polish-American organizations, cultural clubs, and heritage societies
- Catholic reading groups, parish book clubs, and interfaith dialogue organizations
- Public library systems and community library author programs
- Independent and online book clubs (in person or via Zoom)
- Women's organizations and groups focused on women's history and leadership
- Universities — Holocaust studies, Jewish studies, history, women's studies, and Polish studies departments
- Veterans' organizations and military history societies
- Oral history and intergenerational testimony organizations
- Corporate and professional groups exploring DEI, courage, and the cost of indifference
- High school and middle school Holocaust education programs

SIGNATURE PRESENTATION

“Little Edna's War: A Story of Resistance and Hope”

Dr. Brill's primary presentation traces the full arc of Edna Stefania Brill's life — from her birth at 18 Miła Street in pre-war Warsaw, through the ghetto, life in disguise on the Aryan side, the Polish Home Army and Warsaw Uprising, two Nazi POW camps, post-war Italy and the papal audience, England, Israel and the Ghetto Fighters' Kibbutz, and her eventual journey to America. Built around rare historical photographs, archival footage, and a clip of Edna speaking in her own voice, the presentation is conversational, emotionally resonant, and historically rigorous. Audiences leave understanding not only what Edna survived, but what her survival demands of those who hear her story now. Ideal for 45–75 minute formats with Q&A.

THEMED VARIATIONS

For programs seeking a focused angle, Dr. Brill also adapts Edna's story around the following themes:

- "Children of the Holocaust: A Hidden Identity, A Decorated Soldier"
- "Women of the Polish Home Army: Resistance, Risk, and Remembrance"
- "From Testimony to Truth: Researching and Writing a Holocaust Memoir"
- "The Cost of Indifference: Why Edna's Story Matters Now"
- "The Promise: A Daughter-in-Law's Mission to Tell Her Mother-in-Law's Story"

PRAISE FOR DR. BRILL'S PRESENTATIONS

"This is not just any Holocaust story, and Janet is not just any author. The way she told over Edna's story — selecting highlights to describe her survival and her family's tribulations — moved the audience to tears and inspired those who had not yet purchased the book to do so that day."

— **Laura Kurcfeld, Director, The Center for Jewish Life & Learning, JCC Memphis**

"Dr. Janet Brill is a wonderful author, speaker, and professor who will inspire any congregation. Her book, Little Edna's War, is brilliant, interesting, and both tragic and inspiring — all in one."

— **Rabbi Jon Haddon, Congregation Beth David, Amenia, NY**

"Janet Brill captivated us with the harrowing story of her heroic mother-in-law."

— **Paula Star, Co-President, NCJW Bergen County Section**

CREDENTIALS & MEDIA EXPERIENCE

- Ph.D. — thirty years of professional speaking experience
- Bestselling author with 200,000+ copies sold across previous titles
- Featured speaker, Powell-Heller Conference for Holocaust Education, Pacific Lutheran University — at the invitation of Conference Chair Dr. Rebecca Hamlin
- Webinar guest with Dr. Michael Berenbaum
- Television, radio, and podcast experience including NPR affiliate KUOW (Seattle)
- Five hours of source testimony cross-referenced with archival and military records

BOOKING INQUIRIES

To book Dr. Brill for a speaking engagement, please contact:

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"She was destined to survive. Among 400,000 souls — she was one of the few."

— Edna Stefania Brill