

My item is a butterfly pin from my great grandma who passed it down to my grandmother. This pin was brought all the way from Poland during a tragic historical event, The Holocaust. Who knew such a small, copper, jewel encrusted pin could hold so much family history. Before the catastrophic events of WW2, my grandma was able to escape the genocide and inhumane treatment of Jews. My grandma grew up in a village called Nvod Dvor which was located in Poland. She grew up there for 9 years until she emigrated to Boston, Massachusetts. Learning about my family history I was able to learn more about my family and what really happened when my great grandmother and her family migrated to the U.S. This artifact is important to my family because it shows how far back our family history goes and what happened during that time period. This information that I learned I will treasure and always be proud of.

During the wartime in Poland there was discrimination, anti-semitism and exclusion from German civilization against the Jewish population. Throughout Germany there were social and economic issues occurring and Jews were being blamed for those issues ([Jewish Life in Europe Before the Holocaust](#)). Nazis wanted to portray Jews as inferior beings and wanted the public to turn against them. They were excluded from German society and looked upon negatively. This connects to my family because my grandma had family members who were not able to get out of Poland soon enough and were sent to concentration camps. Many Jewish families were not aware that anti-semitism could turn into genocide. This connects to a theme of society because European societies were being torn apart and destroyed. Neighbors, friends, teachers, turned against each other all because they were convinced Jews were the reason for Germany's issues. Politics became a huge part of this issue when America got involved in the war as it started to become more intense. America's biggest contribution was money and weapons ([World War 2](#)).

As hundreds of thousands of refugees came to America during the 1920s-30s, many lives were changed in both negative and positive ways. Helpless families from Europe did everything they could to get them and their families out before it was too late. Some would send the father off to America to look for work and send money back for the rest of his family. In that case, that's what happened to my grandma. Her father, Isador, went to America to get work and thankfully was able to save enough money to send her, her two sisters and mother to America. This strongly connects to a theme of family because my great grandfather loved my great grandma enough to not forget her and save up for many years before they were reunited. However, in some cases the husband would move on and start a whole new life, forgetting about his family back in Europe. After the war started it was harder to emigrate to the U.S. since so many other families wanted to get out as well. There were waitlists and that could take years, before being too late ([How Many Refugees Came to the U.S?](#)). Since many European families came to America, jobs became scarce and very limited. There was more competition and many were poor families. For America, however, it increased their economic conditions and they were stronger than ever economically. Jewish communities came together and created their own lives. They celebrated, shared, and supported each other in any way they could.

The biggest takeaway from working with my artifact is I was able to find out new information about WW2 that I didn't know before this project. I was able to learn more about my family history and could talk about it over the phone with my grandma who means a lot to me. This artifact connects to family history and immigration. I feel more knowledgeable about my family history and it means a lot to me that I'm able to speak to my 93 grandma about her life experience.