



Anne Senchall (front row, second from left) with her Jewish school friends.

Down memory lane

As Wendy Daunt said when introducing the *Storytelling in BSL* on the Friday evening at Leeds, older Deaf people are like "living thick books" with so many stories to tell.

BDN reporter **John Hay** met some of these older members of the BDA and here we present some of their stories:

Anne flees from horrors of war

It was 12th July, 1939 when, at the age of 10, I, with my brother and another seven German Jewish children, arrived safely at the Jewish Residential School for Deaf Children in Wandsworth Common. We were fleeing from the growing menace of Nazism in my homeland Germany.

I still remember, and **shall never forget**, those soldiers marching about, and the brutal beatings and blood everywhere in the roads around my East Berlin home and the Jewish School for the Deaf and Dumb in Berlin.

Last April, accompanied by Ruth and Maurice Lawrence, my husband and I went to Berlin for 9 days. My brother took us to see my old school. At first I was not sure if the building my brother pointed out was actually the school I attended. He insisted it was, so we went inside. Yes, I knew it was the actual school after I saw the path leading to the field - something I remembered well. Unfortunately, the synagogue which used to stand next door to the school is no longer there - it was pulled to the ground by Nazis.

I began to remember how much we fought for our lives. One day, a group of 7 Deaf Nazi children rushed in, ready to beat us. Quickly we signed "we are Christians" by putting our forefingers up, crossing them together and moving them to and fro from our necks.

To commemorate the Jewish school, there is a plaque mounted on the wall. It mentions the fact that 146 Deaf Jewish children from that school were murdered. The school itself does not cater for Deaf Jews any more. It is for disabled children.

Anne Senchal, Bristol