

piece of chocolate."

Meanwhile, coal, wood, gasoline also became scarce as time passed, he continued.

"There was no electricity. I remember the only light we had was a little floating wick. We had sawed off a bit of wood and put a wick through it and placed it in a little glass that had a bit of oil in it. You know, these were modern apartments we lived in, the same as the one I'm living in here. After we'd eaten, we'd talk and then we went off to bed. You couldn't go outside anyway because of the curfew between 7 p.m. till the next morning. And if you were caught you were shot."

Heijdens remembered watching with awe as the allies flew their planes over Rotterdam when the battle for Holland began.

"You'd see hundreds of them flying at the same time. The Germans would fire at them and the shrapnel from their shells would come raining back down and as kids we would run and pick them up and some of us got burned because they were hot," he said.

Heijdens was with his family attending church service when the minister of the church announced that the Germans had surrendered. Few weeks earlier, he recalled that the food drops had started to come in.

"Oh the taste of real butter...oh that butter was just beautiful. The bread that we first got came from Sweden. It was gorgeous. I remember my mother cutting up the slices and putting the butter on them and we sat on the steps and ate it. We'd never had anything like it for years," he said.

The Liberation of Holland had started with the Americans supported by the British troops on September 13, 1944. Failure of the airborne assault on Arnhem on September 17, 1944 prevented the liberation of the rest of Holland. In November of that year the Canadian troops took over the battle for the liberation of Holland on May 5 the following year the hostilities finally stopped.

240,000 Dutch people, 106,000 of whom were Jews, were killed during the Nazi occupation of the country.

Heijdens was 11 years old when he finally saw his father again. When he turned 16, his family immigrated to Canada in 1951. The family made Toronto their home and Heijdens moved to Belleville 32 years ago.

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