Sisters to share parents' survivor stories

By Nanette Light
Transcript Staff Writer

Two sisters have traveled from Israel to recount tonight the story of how their parents skirted a deathly end during the Holocaust — a portion of which is documented in Steven Spielberg's movie "Schindler's List."

Sisters Clila and Hadasa Bau will chronicle the story of their parent's survival 7 tonight at the Pegasus Theater at the University of Central Oklahoma.

The presentation — organized by the Jewish Federation of Greater Oklahoma City and financed by a grant from Chesapeake Energy — is one of several times the sisters have retold the survival story of their parents, Joseph and Rebecca Bau, in the Oklahoma City area in the last several days, according to a news release.

The sisters also plan to give several private lectures this week at the University of Oklahoma and area public and private schools.

"What they will tell us will certainly explain why it's important for us to remember [the Holocaust] today," said Carsten Schapkow, assistant professor of modern Jewish history at the University of Oklahoma, of tonight's presentation and another later this week to his class, which is not open to the public.

The couple met in the Plazow Concentration camp and were secretly married in the camp barracks, a scene pictured in Spielberg's "Schindler's List," according to a news release.

The release states that Rebecca Bau placed her husband's name on Oskar Schinder's list of Jewish workers to save his life. She also used her cosmetology skills to make other women appear healthier and avoid the gas chambers.

The release states that Joseph Bau, an artist, saved hundreds of fellow Jewish prisoners' lives by forging more than 400 documents and work certificates for camp inmates.

Joseph's talent as a graphic artist and draftsman also spared him from death, as the Nazis guards forced him to paint signs in Hebrew and create maps for the German army, according to the release.

Rebecca Bau was eventually deployed to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, where she talked her way out of being sent to the gas chambers three times, according to the release.

Nanette Light
366-3541
nlight@normantranscript.com