

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Hana Fuchs Krasa
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PREFACE

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HANA FUCHS KRASA

September 10, 2003

Q: Good morning, Hana.

A: Good morning.

Q: It's lovely to see you again. Hana, what was your name at birth?

A: My name was Hana Fuchsova, because the Czech have the o-v-a on the end.

Q: For the -- for women.

A: For women.

Q: So your father's name was?

A: Oskar Fuchs.

Q: Fuchs. So your mother was also Fuchsova?

A: Correct.

Q: And where --

A: But my mother was also born Krasova.

Q: Really?

A: Her maiden name was Krasova.

Q: So is there a relation?

A: We haven't found it yet, but th-there will be somewhere back in the centuries, because it was one clan.

Q: Right. So your name now is --

A: I shortened it to Krasa, soon as we emigrated from Czechoslovakia, I dropped the o-v-a.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Cause nowhere in the world it's used.

Q: Except --

A: Except in Czechoslovakia.

Q: Czechoslovakia. And where were you born?

A: I was born in Prague. I was born in downtown Prague, at home.

Q: At home?

A: At home. And it's a -- the house is there standing because it used to be an old palace. After World War I, there was a shortage of apartments, they converted some of the palaces into apartments, and in one of the part -- palaces, we had an apartment. So it was very interesting and it's still standing there, it's one of the old houses.

Q: Now, I know you don't like to give your birthdate, but I'm going to ask you if you'll give your birthdate, please?

A: I'll give it to you, because this is for posterity, and I'm not going to play around. I was born September 24, 1923.

Q: Right. Now, I'd like to get an idea about your family, and how you were living, so tell me something about your father, and then your mother. What was your father like, and what did he do for a living?

A: My father was a disciplinarian. We were very -- he was very strict with us. And he was a self man made. He came from a poor family. I don't know exactly what my grandfather did. I knew his parents, because both were living at that time when I was up to about s -- when I was about six, my grandfather died. My grandma died in Terezín. So I knew her very well. And he grew up in a little town called Votice, in a t -- 12 years, he went to Prague to go to a high school, to a -- that time it was called [indecipherable], which is for a s-scientist, like MIT or something like that. And from the age of 12, he was supporting himself, he paid for his studies, all his schools were private, and he supported his parents. And when he that to us, we had never really a knowledge what it meant until we were much older, and understood what he must have been, to come from a little village to a big town, and no money, and take care of himself. Because he said always, "You have it easy, I pay your school, you don't have to do anything." Which was true. My mother on the o -- other hand, came from a very well-to-do family, and the interesting thing is that I don't have a wedding picture of my parents. They got married in Prague, in a civil wedding, not a Jewish wedding. So I think she just went and married him, and maybe my grandfather was -- grandparents didn't even know about it when they did it, because she came from a well-to-do family, my g -- father was from a poor family. I don't know, they never spoke about it.

Q: So do you think that her family didn't approve?

A: She didn't have a mother, it was only her father at that time.

Q: I see.

A: But my aunt had a chur -- a synagogue wedding -- synagogue wedding in Votice, so -- and had a party there.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: So I don't know, my mother was a little rebel --

Q: Yes.

A: -- and very independent, and very ahead of her times in everything.

Q: Wer -- was your mother and father similar age, was there an --

A: Yes.

Q: There was?

A: Yes, three years difference, so that was a normal age difference. My father was three years younger -- ay -- older. My mother was three years younger.

Q: So how would you describe their relationship and their personality? They sound like very different people.

A: I think with our education in growing up, we were mostly guided by mother. Mother was the person who decided what we do, what we learn. For example, Mother was very -- decided from the first that I have to go to gimnasium, I have to study, because sh -- not every girl marries, and you have to be able to stand on your own feet. That was hers -- so that was very far ahead of those days.

Q: Absolutely.

A: And my father was concentrated on the prince, on the heir, my brother, who was older than I was. He was studying with him, he was checking what he learned -- math was very important, my father was an engineer.

Q: So he was focused on your brother?

A: More focused on my brother.

Q: And your brother's name?

Q: My brother's name in Czech is Yearje, which was pretty popular for that generation. In -- in English it's George, translated. And as I say, they were very -- he was always very

pushing -- very much pushing my brother, how he studies. He wasn't checking on me, but mother took care of that. And so my brother really jumped a grade. He went from fourth grade already to gymnasium.

Q: Really?

A: Where normally it was fifth grade, and that was good because in the end he still could matriculate with the last class, they matriculated before they closed schools in '39. He matriculated in June, '39.

Q: Right.

A: He wouldn't have if -- if he didn't jump the grade.

Q: So he was born in 1920?

A: '21.

Q: In '21, I thought three years.

A: No.

Q: So, I see.

A: No, no.

Q: Okay.

A: And --

Q: Were you jealous of the fact that your father focused on him?

A: No, not really. Not really, because on the other hand, if we fought, or if we did something, he always got it, and not me. He was the strong -- he was -- he was chubby, and I was skinny, and so I was the little girl, the princess who nothing should be done to, and he -- he got it. If we did break something, he got it, not me. So --

Q: Were you --

A: -- w-we were not jealous of each other, we had a very close relationship.

Q: So you were close?

A: Yes.

Q: And did you play a lot together?

- A: Yes. My -- my -- my brother was the older one, so he was schlepping me along sometimes.
- Q: Right.
- A: And I loved that, and -- and when we were older the girls liked me, because he was very good looking, and they tried to get near him. So I had good advantages of having an older brother --
- Q: Right.
- A: -- like my brother.
- Q: And what was the apartment like, since it was a -- i-inside of it --
- A: It was very huge because the rooms were very big, but they didn't have the amenities that a modern apartment had, and we did move i-in fifth grade, when I went to fifth grade, we moved to a more modern apartment, in different part of Prague. This was near the old square, these were the old houses, and they did have running water but they didn't have center heating or anything like that. You have the big stoves with tiles around them, and - - but this was very comfortable, it was big, and it -- it wasn't bad. You had to walk up, and there were no elevators, you know, it was a old, old house. People still live in these houses in Prague today.
- Q: Really? Would you have been considered upper middle class, middle class, or up --
- A: Upper middle class, I think, yeah.
- Q: So you're very comfortable?
- A: I don't remember that anything was ever not given to us because there wouldn't be enough or -- all it a -- had to be, wh-whether my father will allow it or not. And --
- Q: Not whether --
- A: -- we went on vacation, we traveled to Yugoslavia. I mean, there was never question. But my mother was still frugal, she did not like to throw around money, but I don't think there was any problem with money all our lives.
- Q: And y -- you traveled on vacation oh -- oh --
- A: Every vacations.
- Q: Did you --

- A: The next day after school we were for two months out of Prague, and my father would come on weekends, or spend the week with us, but we were with my mother, out the whole two months.
- Q: Really? The two months? And what -- where would you be, like would -- she would rent a house, or an apartment?
- A: Yeah, yeah. Th-Those were villas where people rented part of it, or something. That was done not just us, all our friends were living the same way, the company we had were living the same way. The girls -- not all the girls in school, because there were poor girls in school too, the -- were mixed. But the friends we had, the Jewish friends all lived the same way.
- Q: So did you often travel to the same place for those two months [indecipherable]
- A: For a few years we always did. I remember we -- there -- there were several places where we went in Czechoslovakia, then we were going to Austria for a couple years, or maybe three years. Then we went to Yugoslavia, and then Hitler stop it. And it started with the Sudeten, and then they didn't go after.
- Q: Yeah, right.
- A: '37 we were the last time on a vacation in Yugoslavia, and '37 in -- in -- over Christmas we were in Vienna, and then it stopped.
- Q: So, in the --
- A: We were every year in Vienna because my aunt lived in Vienna.
- Q: I see. And wh -- is there sort of a tradition for the more wealthy to leave Prague?
- A: Yes.
- Q: Two months seems like an awfully long time.
- A: Well, that was the school vacation.
- Q: Uh-huh.
- A: Yes. It was hot, and dusty, and it was the town so you were outside, and that's where we could play tennis and do things.
- Q: And what did your father do?
- A: My wa -- father was -- they called him director, it's th-the ravuss, the executive office, or whatever you call. There was a big factory called Odkolek. He didn't stop there, he

worked first with the [indecipherable] but I was too young at that time. That had about 80 stores in Prague, that -- had a lot of employees, big factory and -- outside of Prague. They had bread, they had chocolate, they had cakes, they had all the -- it was something like General Mills, or something, you know, but they didn't produce for others, only for their own shop.

Q: For their own stores?

A: Yeah.

Q: I see.

A: So he was a big shot at that time in our eyes, maybe there were some bigger ones. We did not own it, because the rich Jews owned the factories. This was owned by a board of directors. I mean it was -- what do you call? They had the shares of that, and they were mo -- a-all Jews. And the day Hitler came, my father lost his job and -- and they ran away, most of them [sneezes]

Q: Bless you.

A: Most of them emigrated to Canada, the di -- the board of directors.

Q: But your father stayed?

A: Unfortunately.

Q: Now, when you were growing up, what kind of a kid were you? Do you remember yourself as a kid?

A: Well, I remember myself as spoiled brat, I --

Q: What do you mean when you say that?

A: I could get out of my father anything I wanted.

Q: Really?

A: My m -- in my case my mother was the strict one. For example, we got our pocket money, and we had to manage our pock -- pocket money, but I wasn't a good manager. I'd spend it in the beginning, and I didn't have for the end of the week, and my brother wouldn't lend me, because he said you should have managed better. And I would go to my father, and hug him and kiss him, and get some money, so that my mother doesn't know. And I knew how to handle him, even though he was very strict.

Q: So even though he wasn't focused on you because you weren't the male heir --

A: He was there focus, but --

Q: He really was very focused on you.

A: -- he was focused, it wasn't that he didn't care.

Q: Yes.

A: We wouldn't dare to bring a bad mark from school, because that was punishable, we wouldn't get money, or something. We were always trying to get -- because we had -- we felt we had to, I don't know what would have happened if we didn't.

Q: Right.

A: I -- I remember one thing, I came home -- we were two -- this is more in the gymnasium, after the first -- five grades. I came -- there was one more girl -- Jewish girl in the class, some were maybe mixed, but they didn't declare themselves, we were two Jewish, full Jewish girls in the class, and she's still living, she survived the camp. We're still friends, she lives in New Jersey. And we knew -- we -- the two of us knew German, because my mother wanted us to learn languages, and I had to learn French and German. And I wasn't allowed to learn English. And we knew perfect -- we spoke -- for us it was a spoken language, you still had to learn the grammar, it's the -- like in any language, but we could communicate and we could talk. And the teacher was very nasty to the two of us, so of course we said she's an anti-Semite. So I came home and I told my mother, "I can't do anything with this teacher. She's not going to give me the right mark because she doesn't like me and Erika, we are -- because we are Jewish." And my mother just put me around, she says, "I don't care why she doesn't like you. You're going to find that many people don't like you in life. You have to be so good that even if she doesn't like you, she has to give you the good mark." And that was it, I could never tell her that teacher is against me, or anything because it wouldn't help. [indecipherable] perfect.

Q: And what happened with that teacher, did you end --

A: We had to study, we went together and didn't -- we did try to be better than the others.

Q: And were you?

A: Well, I got my good mark.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: We couldn't -- when we -- we lost her, you know, in -- every year they change.

Q: Uh-huh, right.

A: And that -- that's -- my mother had no pity over me.

Q: But she taught you a good lesson.

A: Yeah, in -- in [indecipherable] when we went into a store and we had to behave better, because people shouldn't say the Jews are loud, or something, you know? We grew up with that, that we are different, and we have to behave differently, too.

Q: Well tell me about that. Yo-You -- were you living in a -- in a -- were -- going to school with Jews and with Christians?

A: Yes. And -- and --

Q: You were? And it was okay?

A: -- we didn't feel any anti-Semitism openly, never. But our parents made us aware that there are people li -- that won't like us, and that we have to behave not to stand out. The Jews were always afraid not to stand out and that was the difference from the Israelis, who don't care what the other people think about you. The Jews were very caring what somebody else will say about you.

Q: So -- so there was a kind of fear --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- that even if you didn't see something overt, it could happen if you weren't careful.

A: Oh yeah.

Q: Were -- were you raised as a religious person, or not?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: No. We celebrated Jewish holidays, celebrated Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Passover. Hanukah we got gifts, but there was a little tree, because we had servants, we had maids, so for the maid had to be tree. And if a maid got a present, we got one too. But we celebrated Hanukah. When we didn't have maids any more, we never had a tree. And otherwise we celebrated the Jewish holidays, but not the little ones, we never knew Purim we never knew, Shavuot, or Sukkot, or anything like that. We knew only the big ones.

Q: And what were considered the big ones?

A: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover, Seder, one day.

Q: But no -- and --

A: Not the whole 10 days, we did o-only two days we didn't eat bread.

Q: And Hanukah, you celebrated, but not as a big holiday?

A: Hanukah we did, and not as a big holiday, we -- we lit the candles, and we got gifts, and that was it. Only one night we lit the candles, we didn't do it every night.

Q: I -- I want to go back to your being given pocket money. So you're given pocket money every week, and what are you supposed to do -- what were you supposed to be doing with this money, what was it for?

A: For our own pleasure, for if we want -- if we want to buy ourself something in school instead of the lunch Mother gave us. And if we wanted more than Mother thought it's necessary for me to have. I would have gifts. We saved for gifts for Mother and Father. And we wouldn't get special money for that, and it was expected that we give something. So we got pocket money.

Q: So if you were s --

A: If you bought yourself some ice cream --

Q: Or if you would go to --

A: My mother wanted us to be able to handle money, and since I remember -- I don't know when it started -- I think, in my opinion, started in sixth grade, because we didn't have -- we didn't have possibility buying lunches in fifth grade, in grad -- in grade schools. We went home for lunches. So I think it started in sixth grade, and we could have lunch from home, but I liked the lunches what the other [indecipherable] were buying. So that went for my money. By the time sixth grade, we went to concerts, we went to the theater, we went to movies by ourselves. We had to pay for it from our pocket money, which I spent [indecipherable] Sunday, sometimes all.

Q: And you would not have anything -- when would you get the money, by the way?

A: Every Saturday.

Q: Every Saturday.

A: Every Saturday, and I only got it if my closet and my room was clean.

Q: Ah. So you worked hard to keep your closet --

- A: No, only five minutes before, I [indecipherable] it up. Which my mother always said, that's not [indecipherable], you're to keep it all week, but [indecipherable], but she couldn't change me.
- Q: But you know, it's -- it's interesting that you call yourself a spoiled brat. It seems as if you're spoiled in relationship to your father --
- A: But --
- Q: -- not in relationship to --
- A: -- my mother too. She made sure we played tennis, we -- we really had everything, you know? Not -- I didn't grow up like a girl that had to work, you know?
- Q: Right.
- A: I didn't grow up without things. We had toys. My father made me a whole furniture -- doll -- for dolls, which he hand carved from -- you know, he was very handy with his hands, he was a -- he was also very nice, and draw beautifully, so we ne -- never got books to color, but he would make pictures for me to color, pictures of flowers, and I would color them.
- Q: Really?
- A: We really had a easy life.
- Q: Do you think that you were selfish?
- A: I don't think so, we were -- we were taught to share, and we shared with my brother, and I did my sharing with my friends. I don't think I was ever selfish. Nobody was that I knew. Our house was very open, a lot of people came, mostly Mother's family, my father didn't have family. She was very close with her sister, that's why we went -- she spent vacation with on -- us, she's [indecipherable]
- Q: Uh-huh.
- A: -- my aunt was like a second mother to me. And I spend vacation with her in Austria, she -- when I was rough -- five years old. And well, my parents were very giving, so I don't think we were selfish, [indecipherable] my brother.
- Q: Because of your characterization of you -- when someone calls themselves a spoiled brat, they're often an extremely difficult person to be around. But your parents were teaching you discipline, and teaching you a certain kind of responsibility, and respect.
- A: Discipline definitely, discipline definite.

Q: Yes.

A: You had to greet every time you came, just stand there till you can greet them. We had to had to sit at the table and not talk, because that's impolite. If you made a spot on the white tablecloth, that was an affair, you know? We were raised strictly in how we behave.

Q: So in -- at dinner, there was no s -- talking.

A: No, after dinner.

Q: After dinner? At the table, or you were [indecipherable] the table?

A: At the table. What happened is my mother wanted my father and my brother to get close together. She found some old letters, and old stamps, so she brought them, and my father got interested in stamps. Old Austrian stamps since 1850, since stamps started to be -- and my brother, they -- and they were sitting every night working on the stamps, and you couldn't breathe, and you couldn't move the table, and I hated it. And Mother knew we would do our knitting, our -- she taught me crochet, she taught me to embroider. We would do our things like good Jews. We were always [indecipherable] together, we were not, as kids, allowed to go out at night. And it was a rule, seven o'clock was dinner, so after dinner we had to do something. We'd listen to the radio. We didn't have anything. I remember working on those stamps, and that was their hobby. The stamps, a lot of them got saved, and my nephew has them.

Q: Really?

A: My brother's -- my brother inherited them, because I never wanted to have anything to do with them, even after the war. And then my nephew inherited them from my brother. So they still exist, and it's a old, Austrian collection that supposedly is valued, I don't know.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I have no idea about stamps.

Q: Were your parents affectionate?

A: Yes, and we were a kissing family, and very much so. That's why we had to kiss every time you leave, every time you came back. But we were a very affectionate family.

Q: Right. What did you like in school, was -- were there particular subjects that you were attracted to?

A: Yes, history and geography, that is mine. Hated math.

Q: Hated math. No wonder you were uncomfortable with the money.

- A: And no wonder my father didn't bother with me, and ma -- my brother was a math genius.
- Q: Yes?
- A: My brother was very bright. He spoke five languages, and he was really very bright. On him it was [indecipherable]
- Q: And was there something particular about history that you liked, since history is -- was it history of Czechoslovakia?
- A: Yeah, the old Greek and Roman history interested me, loved that. All the stories about the gods, and things like that.
- Q: Did you want to study Greek?
- A: No, because I went into riyad gimnasium where you don't have Greek. You see the schools, are -- I didn't tell you the [indecipherable] gimnasium where there was Greek and Latin. The arr gimnasium where they kept only Latin. [indecipherable] in riyad, where they had the math and the sciences only, no Latin and no Greek. So from the riyad gimnasium where I went, you could go to both colleges, to the sciences, and to the university. But the others weren't geared directly. I don't think it's the same today, I have no idea how it is -- things are there today. But you had to made a test, right, where you can go. And the pressure was tremendous, and my brother made the test from the fourth grade, and he was young -- a year older, I went in fifth grade for that test, and I thought I will die if I don't get in, because my mother wanted me so strongly to study. But I did pass, and God, I cried when they read the names in class, and I came out with tears, and I knew my mother thought I failed.
- Q: But you --
- A: Because I was so nervous and so tense that I let go of [indecipherable]. And as a reward we went for ice cream.
- Q: And how old were you then?
- A: I was -- and in fifth grade.
- Q: So you were --
- A: 10 and [indecipherable]
- Q: 10 - 11, 10 - 11 years old.
- A: That was end of [indecipherable], so I was 10.

Q: Right. So you really liked school, when you liked the subjects?

A: I loved school --

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: When it came that I had to leave, I was devastated that I couldn't study any more, that -- that was, for me end of the world I wanted -- but then burns, my father said, "This will -- war will be over soon [indecipherable]." You know, all this --

Q: Right, that's what everybody thought

A: -- six months and you'll be home.

Q: Right.

A: We were saying even two months, some people, not six months.

Q: We have to stop the tape --

A: Okay.

Q: -- and change the tape.

A: Okay.

End of Tape #1

Tape #2

- Q: Hana, do you have any way of explaining why your mother was so ahead of her time? For a woman of her time to say you may not get married, so you have to be able to be independent, you have to be educated. It's very unusual. Where -- where do you think that came from?
- A: I don't know. I think my mother, as I said, was a little rebel of -- in her young days, because she told me little stories, when she got punished. Her mother looked so strict and severe. And she loved her parents, and I went to the cemetery every time with her to visit, and she always cried, so I knew she loved them, and she -- I thought, how could somebody love grandma, who looked so strict and -- and she lost her mother when she was 20 years old, and had to take care of the whole -- my grandfather had a far -- big farm, with employees, and things like that, not a small where he was the farmer himself. And she had to handle all the men, there had to be cooked for all the employees. And she has to take care -- I mean, she was 20. She also went to school -- not to a gymnasium, because they didn't exist in villages, but to a school for girls, to -- they call it pensionnat, and they learn behavior, serving, cooking, and you know, some subjects, too. Which was unusual, so maybe that's where she got her independence. And I don't think my father liked all that in -- dependence sometimes because when she wanted for us to do it, and -- and do other things, my father didn't want always to do it, they might have a little fight about it, but there were no serious fights, there were -- there were regular squabbles because we -- she wanted us to play tennis, and all -- swim and do things. My father didn't think it's important or should be, or the girls should do it, too, you know? We did all the sports from very early age. Mother felt very important. You had to learn tennis, we loved it. We had to learn skiing. She tried to ski with us, but she couldn't keep up with us, and gave it up because she always had to be with us, my father wouldn't let us go --
- Q: Without her.
- A: -- without her. And we -- the swimming I started at a very early age, and I did dancing, I did gymnastics, I played piano. We had all -- everything was because my mother wanted; to travel too. My mother wanted us to see foreign countries, and -- the only thing that I remember when I started to be little older, and I loved the American movies, or s -- English movies, I wanted to learn English, and I was not allowed. English is for businessmen, not for young girls.
- Q: And this your mother said?
- A: Yes, I had to learn French. French is for girls. So when I came back in '45, I immediately started to learn English, cause I always wanted that.
- Q: And did you want it because you -- you thought you wanted to come to the United States, or just wanted --
- A: No, I wanted it because I wanted to understand those movies --

Q: Oh.

A: -- I -- I l-liked the sound of the language, I didn't like French. Especially after '38, I was hating the French, what they did to us. The British did it too, I didn't know that. Silly. And I wanted to learn English, and I started in '45, and by '47 when I went to England, I spoke English. I was so di -- when I am determined, I do it.

Q: That sounds like it.

A: Yeah.

Q: And you loved the American movies more than the movies of other countries?

A: Yeah.

Q: Wh-Why do you think?

A: I don't know, I admired them. "Gone With The Wind," came only after the war, and I maybe saw it 10 times.

Q: Really?

A: I loved that movie. When I had to leave school, there was "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," on, and my father, as a -- to lessen the pain that I have -- they knew I -- I -- I was unhappy about leaving school, but there was nothing they could do, and so he took me to the movies for that, you know? And that was the last time I was in the movies, because right afterwards it was forbidden to go to the movies.

Q: To go to the movies.

A: So I loved anything, we -- you know, it's interesting, when we were little, when you went to a movie, there were -- we saw Charlie Chaplin movies, there was always the Fox news before, and then a cartoon. And all this was in English, and I couldn't understand, I had to read. The reading wasn't so easy when I was little, so I wanted to understand. I don't know, maybe that was the reason.

Q: And did you have favorites when -- how young were you when you went to the movies, five or six years old?

A: Yeah, tha -- for the cartoons.

Q: Yeah.

A: We got them later than you do.

Q: Yeah.

A: You know, they came to Europe later, "Popeye" and all that. So we loved cartoons like the kids love today. Not the crazy ones, but we liked the regular cartoons.

Q: Right.

A: And they had special performances for children, but once we went to school and had friends, we could go on our own to movies, and that's when we had to pay for it. As long as we went with my father sun -- Sunday morning, we didn't --

Q: He would pay.

A: Yeah.

Q: But if you went on your own --

A: But on -- later on my parents did not go with us, we -- we went to the national -- there was part of the school, it was -- they made student programs, and the student programs meant that you got cheap tickets from -- from -- as -- as long as you were a student. And I was only 10 years old, we went on our own to concerts, on our own to the opera. And that was sun -- Saturday afternoon, and that was our program, Saturday after -- sun -- Saturday morning we went there to school, Saturday afternoon we went to the theater, or to the concert. Sunday we went to the movies.

Q: And that young you were going to opera and concerts?

A: Yeah, yeah, because it was part of our schooling.

Q: Yeah.

A: As a matter of fact we had to sometimes write a report about it, that was expected of us to go and hear it.

Q: And did you study opera in school?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: Nnn.

Q: It simply -- this was just normal? This was --

A: This was normal. One subject was music. So sometimes you had singing, sometimes you had history of music. Sometimes you learned about the composers, mostly Czech --

mostly Czech music, and Mozart because Mozart was favorite of the Czechs because he wrote in -- in park, he wrote -- got not -- you know, mostly the Czech composer.

Q: So then how --

A: Rorchak, and Smetana, and Such, and the --

Q: Uh-huh. Right. And d-you -- d -- whose operas did you see, mainly?

A: Mostly it was Rorchaks, and Smetana, because those were the popular operas. But we saw Tosca, we saw Carmen. I mean, we went whatever the program was.

Q: And --

A: Much ma -- my parents never went to a concert with us, we went with my brother, and my friends.

Q: Interesting. And did you sit in the back?

A: Yeah, yeah --

Q: Because it was [indecipherable]

A: -- we tried to save money, we -- we didn't buy the expensive tickets, no.

Q: Right. And when you went to --

A: There was a special student prices, too.

Q: I was going to ask whether there was special prices.

A: Yeah, and they're right in the back, we didn't sit in the orchestra.

Q: Right. And were there s -- concerts that you preferred? Did you prefer orchestra, did you prefer piano, violin --

A: Piano.

Q: Piano.

A: And then in Terezin too, I used to go to Sommer-Herz, to listen to her all the time.

Q: But you were playing piano all along, is that right?

A: Yes, but I -- I -- neither my brother nor my -- nor me were very musical, I don't think so. My father was -- had a tremendous ear for music. But it was part of the education, you

had to go through with it. And only when it was forbidden did I miss it, because I had to practice every day when I was little, half an hour, then later an hour. And the watch was on the piano so that I don't practice a minute longer. So it wasn't in me, the music. It was only because I had to do it.

Q: You had to do it.

A: But again, when you lose it, then -- my brother to give up his violin, I -- they -- we had to take out the piano and give it up, it wasn't allowed, Jews to have. I wanted to play then, and then it was not possible.

Q: Then you couldn't, I see.

A: But just to tell you how part -- and we were in Israel and we had very little, but when Danny, our oldest son was five years old, he had to learn piano. I thought that's an omen, that has to be. We didn't have a piano, we didn't have a refrigerator, the first thing I bought was a piano for him.

Q: Really?

A: No refrigerator, icebox. No stove, just the kerosene, but the piano was in the house. And when we came to Boston, I bought a piano for 25 dollars, that the kids can play piano. So th-that was what I was used to.

Q: Right, right.

A: [indecipherable]

Q: Did you start trying to play again?

A: Here and there, but I'm not good at.

Q: You're not good.

A: I can still read notes, but I'm not good. I have never been really good. You had performances for the parents, you know, that had recitals that had to be so that the teacher shows what she did. But I was never good at that.

Q: Did you like to perform?

A: No.

Q: You didn't like to be in public?

A: No.

Q: No. About anything?

A: Ah, in dance I didn't mind it.

Q: In dance?

A: In dance I didn't mind it. In the gym -- gymnastics I didn't mind, cause I felt secure that I was good at sports, but music, no, I wasn't so good.

Q: And were you doing modern dance, or you're doing ballet?

A: First I was doing gymnastics.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And that was with a German deutsche toonfuray. And then my mother didn't want that I get muscles, because --

Q: What is a deutsche toonfuray?

A: That was real German, German speaking gymnastics, and later on it was very [indecipherable] oriented, but I was there very early. And so she took me out, and I did do dancing. Not ballet, but dancing, so there was more like -- not modern dances, it was like dancing, you know.

Q: Was it at -- ballroom dancing?

A: No.

Q: No, it wasn't that either.

A: No, it was like a ballet except dancing, you didn't stand on your toes.

Q: Toes.

A: You were doing waltz or in group dancing the girls, and that's what we had the performances.

Q: Right. And y -- did you have a -- one live-in maid, or you had --

A: We had, when we were little, there were a lot of people around, I don't know. But we had a nanny that stayed faithful to us, and we loved her very dearly. After that she got married, she would still come and help Mother, but al -- we had later on only one lived-in -- live-in maid.

Q: But when you were younger, there were a lot of people around doing things.

A: There were -- there were lot of people around that cook -- I don't know where they lived all, I don't know. We -- I remember only one live-in maid, but they were coming in and out, and the nanny was there. We loved her, so she took care of us. And she was from the same village where mother was. She brought her in -- into Prague. And she died shortly after the war. And she was the only one, where my parents le -- ta -- some money, and she immediately said, "I give you the money back." So we said, "No, we divide it into three," my brother, me and her, because she didn't have an easy life. The other people said, "Your parents gave it to us, when they come back we give it to them." They never gave it to us. Even though we told them my parents are not coming back.

Q: Right. I --

A: But she did. That was our nanny. But she died in '40 s -- '46, beginning.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: She was very sick when we came back.

Q: Things start changing in '38 and '39, don't they?

A: It started really for us in '38, when Hitler occupied Austria, anschluss. Because mother's sister lived with her husband in Austria, and in June they moved to Prague. They were the ones who told us the horror stories about Jews washing -- I mean, being beaten in the streets, having to wash the pavement. But they were not taken because they were still Czech citizens. So they didn't touch them. And they got an apartment near us, and that was the year [indecipherable] was very high. Czech screaming we will never give up, we will fight, before Munich. And that summer, there was a -- the Czech organization called Sokol was very patriotic, was all -- like a Olympiad. And all the schools took part in it, and then we marched through pr -- Prague. And I marched with my school, I took part in it with my school, my brother took part in it with his school. And we were all very chauvinistics, the Czechs were never -- we will fight, and -- the Germans, and we will never give up. And my uncle who came from Vienna, was always like pouring cold water over us, and telling us today they scream we will never give up, tomorrow they will scream heil Hitler. And he was right. And then came '38, September, and we did give up. And from that time on -- my father did look into immigration. Our life didn't change until 15th of March, because my father still worked. I don't know how he felt, whether he felt any anti-Semitism, but we have seen changes in school. We still went to school, nothing changed, and -- but some people weren't so friendly any more, and some people stayed friendly. But it was a very uneasy -- the slogans were volt -- which rhymes in Czech, Volt number eight had again conquered noses, which meant the Jewish noses. The typical Jew had a crooked nose, and so that's -- was always said, that's Jewish. And the situation changed, you didn't feel so safe any more. And -- but in 15th of March, the day I will never forget, it was snowing, it was very raw. Where we lived -- we moved from that [indecipherable] other d -- apartment. Jews did not -- there were no condominiums, you either owned a house, or an apartment. Houses to own, rent -- to own big apartment

houses, you really had to be very rich, because you did not -- mortgages were not like you buy a house today here in the United States. So we had a large apartment again, in -- on Benohuradi, which was a modern, and much nicer part of Prague, more green there. And I went to school there in my fifth grade, and then I had to walk downtown to school. We didn't use public transportation, we walked to school and home. And it started -- I -- across from our house was a German school. And the German school was immediately occupied, 15th of March by German soldiers. They came -- they -- at four o'clock in the morning, the telephone rang in our house, and my father picked up the telephone, it was somebody from the factory, I don't know who called, telling my father Hitler crossed the border, Sudeten -- from Sudeten into Bohemia. Don't come to work any more. And that was the end of his work, 15th of March. And when we woke up, the school was occupied across the street, and I saw the Hackenkreuz fa -- flags hung, and the German soldiers standing guard from my windows. And it was snowing, it was very cold and raw, and we didn't go to school that day.

Q: What kind of flags did you see?

A: The German flags --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- with the --

Q: The swastika.

A: The swastika. And we stayed at the house all day. Also my parents decided to let the maid go from now on, because my father was without a job. So that was the whole change of our life.

Q: Can I ask you something? Your father is working in a Jewish business --

A: Not a Jewish business, this was a regular business, j-just a board of directors were Jewish.

Q: Were Jewish.

A: But they were gone from that day on, too.

Q: I see. So it was so fast nothing -- they just --

A: Maybe some of them are already left, I couldn't tell you --

Q: Yes -- yes.

A: -- before, you know, and some other people bought the sto -- stocks or things. I don't know the financial --

- Q: But they clearly knew what they were going to do, as soon as Hitler came in.
- A: Oh yeah.
- Q: Yeah.
- A: Because they wanted to please the Germans right away, there's no Jew working here.
- Q: Right.
- A: It was immediate.
- Q: So this is --
- A: And a non-Jew stepped into my father's position immediately.
- Q: Really? So this is extremely shocking, this is not a development --
- A: I don't know whether my father expected it or not. We didn't, we kids didn't. I don't know what was happening from '38 in the job with my father. But I know that we were -- my father tried to get out in a way. I don't know what all this happened. Cause we found a letter that a friend of his from Palestine had a job for him. And I know that my brother took some Hebrew lessons, which, I didn't know why. You know, we kids were not told anything. We were not told when somebody was sick. As a matter of fact I could never forget that my parents never told me when my beloved grandpa died. I just found out when I came to visit grandma and grandpa was gone. We were never told anything. They didn't tell us what the financial situation is, what --cause we lived -- we -- we didn't f -- I didn't feel we don't money or something, you know, afterwards. We lived in the same apartment. We didn't have to move. We had to give up -- later on we had to give up a room that was among the Jews and Jewish community to -- people lost apartments, because if they lived in a certain part of Prague where the SS moved in, they wanted to have it clean of Jews, and they moved out. Somebody else had to take them in. We took in two women that were refugees from Austria, two old women, they were only in their 60's. To me they seemed ancient. And then we had a -- when they were deported away, which was interesting, Mother told me later, they had poison [indecipherable] and they said Hitler will not get them. But they said they -- they were going to Łódź -- they went in the first five transports -- they said we will never let him torture us, to Mother, but we won't do it, because you have kids. So when you asked about the suicides, the German Jews had -- some had poison [indecipherable] and the Austrian. We did not, the Czechs, didn't think about that ever. And then we had another Austrian family, a man and a wife, because when they left, we had to take somebody else. That was not the German decision that the apartment was too big for a family. And a friend of mine lived with us, too. It was the decision of the Jewish community, agreement. You know, they -- they had to take care of them -- their own people, nobody else would. And I think everyone complied gladly, we didn't need that much room.

Q: So these two women who told your mother they had poison --

A: -- went to Łódź.

Q: -- they said they wouldn't do it.

A: They wouldn't do it.

Q: -- at the -- in the house, yeah.

A: They told her about it. That's what my mother told me.

Q: Hm, interesting.

A: They left us a legacy, they used to own in -- in Vienna, a like bread and breakfast, or something, a pensionnat they call it, pensionne. And they had a cookbook from 1906, I still have that coo -- cookbook.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah. It's falling apart, and I still bake from that cookbook. It's in German.

Q: And -- and they gave it to your m --

A: To me -- my mother for me.

Q: -- mother. How sweet.

A: Yeah.

Q: Very sweet. So what was it like for you then? Is -- where is money coming from? How do you get food?

A: I don't know.

Q: You don't know.

A: You don't know, because the day Hitler came, you did go out that day, my mother went to the bank, wanted to take out her safe. And they wouldn't let her, the Czechs said no. The safe was gone. All what she had in the safe was gone. I don't know what my parents had in the safe. When, after the war I went there, because I knew -- I used to go with my mother, I knew the number, and I knew the safe. I went there, and the Czechs said the Germans took it all. And when we applied for, in Germany for German [indecipherable] wrote about it, they said, "Give us a proof that the Germans took it out of Czech Republic -- of Czechoslovakia." So, that was gone. And the money was put immediately under -- confiscated. Your savings, and your money. But every month you were allowed to take

out certain amount, so that I think that's how we lived afterwards. And then I worked -- I had to do something, so my -- I couldn't go to school. So --

Q: Wait a second, from March 15th of '38 --

A: I still went to school till '39 --

Q: School till f --

A: -- then they closed the universities, and they closed the gimnasium for the --

Q: In '39?

A: [indecipherable]. I -- '39 or sometime during the 40 -- I don't remember. I think it was in '39.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And then I had to do something, so my mother found a job for me to do as apprentice for dressmaking. So I got little bit money, so I had little bit pocket money, and I gave some thana -- something to my mother, I don't know. It wasn't much. And I had to do something, so I was working as a apprentice for s -- I hated every minute of it. I hated sewing, but as a reward, my father bought me a new sewing machine, so that -- maybe that will interest me in it. That's the same, except it started much later with me, where they felt a girl has to have a -- something, if she needs to earn money, and -- because they did think we will get out. Mother had some relative in Chile, and we were supposed to go, but we kids were deadly against it, we didn't want. The same way I was in the kindertransport, because I wasn't 16 yet at that time. My brother was 16, he couldn't go, and I threw such a tantrum that I won't go alone. If he can't go, I'm not going. So my mother took me out. And then I went alone to the camp.

Q: But you would have gone if --

A: My brother would -- my -- my brother would --

Q: -- your brother jor -- if your brother had gone, you would have been --

A: -- I would have gone, I just couldn't bear to be alone.

Q: -- alone. Now what -- why do you think your mother chose dressmaking? Was this because that's what women did?

A: I think the girls did dressmaking or hat making.

Q: Uh-huh.

- A: And she thought dresses are more -- more peop -- you know, hats you don't change as much as dresses.
- Q: As dresses. And what did your bro --
- A: My friend, the one that went with to school with me, she went into hat dressing.
- Q: Oh.
- A: Hat making [indecipherable]
- Q: Hat making.
- A: [indecipherable]. Some learned to be a hairdresser or something. Something that women did those days.
- Q: So what was clear very quickly was that you had to learn to be able to do something [indecipherable]
- A: A trade, with your hands.
- Q: -- not something that was professional, in the intellectual sense.
- A: You couldn't, your schools were closed to you.
- Q: Closed, right.
- A: University my brother went, I think not even a month university, and they closed all universities.
- Q: So what did he do?
- A: He -- I think he got a job, something on the -- in the Jewish community, I don't know what he was doing. [indecipherable] something. Cause he had already matur -- matriculation, he had all -- you know, in Europe, matriculation was enough to do something --
- Q: Right.
- A: -- was not like here, that you have to have four years of college to be something, to -- to -
- Q: So he was 19 in 1939?
- A: He was 18.

Q: No, 18 in 1939, and in 1940 --

A: The high s -- the universities closed definitely '39. I think the --

Q: Right.

A: -- gimnasium closed a little later.

Q: We have to change the tape.

End of Tape #2

Tape #3

Q: Did you have a problem with food when you were younger?

A: I was spoiled in food. I didn't eat anything. I was always very skinny, and my parent thought I was sick because I couldn't gain weight. I was very healthy and I did a lot of sports and not sitting still a minute, so I didn't gain, I could even [indecipherable] not like today, that's [indecipherable]. And I didn't -- I -- those days parent thought that you have to eat everything what if once you get hungry, so that you don't get hungry, eat everything. My mother tried, and tr -- I wouldn't. But when I went to camp by myself, I promised her I will eat everything. And that stayed with me, and I'll tell you a funny story about it when we get to that. I was very choosy. So m -- I would get paid extra money if I put whipped cream on my dessert, or if I will eat another piece of cake, or -- so I earned money extra.

Q: But what ha -- what happens after the occupation, and your father loses his job, but you're not quite sure what's happening --

A: Well, we didn't have such special foods, we had mostly -- first of all, after all the restrictions, my mother had access removed from -- because there was a -- one store very near us of [indecipherable] where my father -- and my father was loved by a lot of the employees. He was very good with them. There was a young woman there who loved him too, and her boss, you know? So she would give Mother out more -- more of noodles, and more of flour, or things like that, without tickets. Because Jews had different tickets, and my mo -- rations, and my mother could go shopping only between three and five. And I don't remember if it was every day or three times a week, Monday, Wednesday, Friday. I don't know how, because I never went shopping, because Mother wou -- did all the shopping. So we didn't -- we had some friends would bring an onion, Jews were not allowed to have vegetables, onions. There was a funny story. Fish we were not allowed to have, and my mother got from somebody a carp, and if you know about Heidricks [indecipherable] of hi -- the assassination of Heidrick? That day, somebody gave Mother a carp, and she put it in the bathtub to have it for weekend. Tha -- this is [indecipherable] she was on [indecipherable]. And that night Germans came to the house to search, to our house. And when they banged down on the door, we woke up, and my father right away knew it's German, my mother threw dirty wash into the bathtub, so they didn't see the carp. But of course the carp died. So we had to have it the next day -- the next -- the same day. They were looking if we don't hide the assassins. I mean -- you know, they just wanted to make the Jews afraid, which they succeeded.

Q: Right. Well, so -- let's -- let's talk a little bit more specifically. There's a -- there's a series of restrictions that --

A: Yes.

Q: -- w -- could you tr-tr --

- A: I tried to remember all of them, because I think I was in -- at that time ba -- home. Of course, the first was to wear the Jewish star, and -- because I considered myself looking Jewish, I would be afraid not to. You had to have it on your coat, and underneath. You got -- at the Jewish community you got a sheet of stars, you cut them out, and you had to have it sewn on, not with pins, so that you can't take it easily on and off. And that's the one I have sewn by my mother, still on her dress. And --
- Q: Does that mean if you took off your coat --
- A: It had to be underneath.
- Q: It had to be -- yes, I see. So it always had to be visible, and it was on the left side?
- A: Always it did, on the left side. Then came when schools were forbidden, any schooling for the children. And in the beginning I still got some schooling, a teacher -- a Jewish teacher after work, we could go and read something, books or -- she had some books from history, so I would go in, she talked about history. It really wasn't schooling, we were just -- they thought to work the brain little bit. And I don't know whether my parents paid for it, what it was, but I went with my friend to this s -- but second thing was that Jews have a -- eight o'clock you have to be home. Jews were not allowed to be on the streets from eight to five unless they had a special permit. Jews had -- there was from the beginning, eight o'clock was Sperre, we called. And my father, being very concerned, we kids had to be home 7:30. And I always said, "You are worse -- Hitler gives us eight, you give us 7:30." We were rebelling against that, but there was no way, so our friends to -- we went ho -- they walked us home and then they went home, because they could be eight o'clock, we were the only ones -- my brother and me, we had to be home 7:30. You have to understand, by this time we are teenagers, so we want to be out little later. We couldn't. That was the next thing. Then came that we were not allowed to go through park. So when I went downtown, or walking, we had to go around the parks. Nothing where green grew, you could go around. Then we were not allowed to go to the main squares. To the [indecipherable] like [indecipherable] squares, the old squares, you had to go around, on the out squares. Then came you couldn't go in the street car, only the last train, the last platform. And if it was full, it was your bad luck, you couldn't get on, couldn't get on, wait for the next one. We couldn't go to any coffeehouses, because the Czechs were -- even the young one used to be -- would go for a coffee or dessert in the afternoon, walking, and then sit down for a coffee. That was fibil, no coffeehouses at all, no movies, no theater, no concerts, nothing. So what we did, like young people, we met in -- every Saturday and Sunday with a group, in somebody else's house. And what was happening, these groups became very close. You couldn't bring a friend unless everyone agreed. It was like a social club, you know, because you couldn't have it grow big, because only few people could come to the house, cause if it was too many it was seen by others and it could be considered that we are planning something against the Germans, or -- so the groups had to be very small. I was in a very nice group and I have pictures when we put up plays and we put up plays with -- with our friend Rhode, and then we showed it to the parents, so we had something to do in the afternoon. At 7:30 I had to be home. It was only for the afternoon.

- Q: So it was set -- it was eight o'clock, but for you 7:30, seven nights a week.
- A: 7:30, seven nights a week, 7:30 I had to be home. When we were young it was seven, and then it ca -- became 7:30.
- Q: 7:30, so it was a little better.
- A: Yeah.
- Q: And what's the --
- A: And that was dinner, and we had to be together. Meals were always together.
- Q: Always together.
- A: And there was no excuse from meals. We had to be together, and if something was conflicting with it, we had to give it up, because my father wanted to see us.
- Q: So you couldn't be invited to dinner to someone else's house?
- A: [indecipherable]
- Q: Did you ever invite people for dinner at your house?
- A: My parents did, but not my friends.
- Q: But not your friends.
- A: N-No. My parents had their friends. And when we were little we couldn't have dinner with them, when we were bigger, we could sit with them.
- Q: But be quiet.
- A: Be quiet.
- Q: What sort of plays?
- A: I don't even remember --
- Q: Did -- do you remember
- A: -- I have some pictures from it, and I don't even remember what they were.
- Q: Were you acting?

- A: But -- we were acting. Our friend who died in Terezín afterwards, very early, was the first one we lost, which was such a shock to us, he was 21, in 1943. And he was very intelligent, and very bright, an intellectual, and he wrote them, and he was so the -- the director, and he choosed who was doing what. And that was fun to do because we had nothing to do the afternoon. We would play, like we had a -- a record player, we would play music, we would do little dancing, but you had to be careful not to make noise so the neighbors don't hear. You know, we had nothing to do much in the afternoons, except be in the apartment. Next week we went in somebody else. So we tried -- so he tried to do, and then we had rehearsals for months, and months, and months. And then one production the parents would come and watch us do it, which was so childish I think today, but we didn't think so at that time.
- Q: Why were you meeting each other on Saturday and Sundays? Since you had no -- cause you were working during the day?
- A: Because during the week we were working --
- Q: You were working.
- A: -- that was our free afternoon.
- Q: Yeah.
- A: And what would we do, you can't go anywhere. You couldn't even sit in a park. You couldn't walk the streets, you couldn't go shopping, you couldn't do anything. I remember when we knew this will be forbidden, and we have to wear the star, with a friend I went to see this -- the castle, and go through the church there, which was such a famous part of Czech history, because we knew we won't be able to do it any more. We couldn't go to a museum, we couldn't go to a church, to -- you know, one thing what we did too, which was interesting when you talk about concerts, we went to church to s -- hear the mass, Bach, and all that as kids. In the church were the concerts Sunday morning, we went to the church and listened. Music was very big part of our life, and I didn't give it to my kids here as much. [indecipherable] kids, you don't take them to concerts.
- Q: [inaudible]
- A: I did in Boston tried. On Wednesday morning was at the Hatch, with Arthur Freeder -- Fiedler.
- Q: Arthur Fiedler, right, the Pops concerts, yeah.
- A: I took my son when he was five there. But he wasn't interested.
- Q: It wasn't interesting, no.

- A: I don't know how our parents made us interested, what -- I don't remember when they started us. So that I forgot, that we went to churches, all that was forbidden. [indecipherable] were closed. You know, nothing was working, so we met in the houses, that was the only --
- Q: What was your mood? This is a very depressing, oppr -- oppressive situation. Everything is --
- A: We were very optimistic, even my fa --
- Q: Really?
- A: -- my father had a short wave radio. And Father listened to BBC, and to Voice of America, and to -- mostly the British one they had.
- Q: BBC?
- A: Yeah. And he would watch what the war is doing, and he was very optimistic. Then we had to give up the radio. Bicycles had to be given -- my brother owned a bicycle, I never did because my mother wouldn't let me ride a bike, I would have muscles on my legs, legs should be nice and smooth. So my brother, to give up his bicycle, what he did is he let out the air from the -- from the bike, and walked it, so that he ruined the wheels and everything because he says he's not going to give it in a good condition to the Germans. And the radio we didn't give up either. From this non-Jewish friend, the father came and switched the radio, he had a very ordinary radio, where he could catch only one station. And my father gave him the short wave radio, and then he would come and tell my father what's happening at night, slip in under darkness. So the ordinary radio, the Germans did get. So you didn't -- we didn't -- were not allowed to have a telephone. All my life I -- we had a telephone, my father had, and we were not allowed to have it afterward. So they'd stripped us of everything, and every time we thought it's the last thing. And another thing what the Germans did which was cruel, every Jewish holiday, some laws came up against the Jews. So when Jewish holidays like Rosh Hashanah was approaching, we were thinking, what will come this time? What will they take away this time? The jewelry? This is my mother's ring. She always wore it so I never got another one from Edgar. So that's her -- I don't know whether it was her mother's or whether my father gave it to her. But when I had it checked, they said it's 1900 cut. That she hid for me. But you know, it came slow. All these people say why didn't you ever -- weapons -- first thing was weapons. My father had his sword, cause he was in the Austrian army, and had a revolver -- had a -- a handgun at home. So he had to give that up, that was the very first thing. So they stripped you slowly of all your right, and before you knew it, you were like a slave, you had no rights at all. And you -- if you didn't step -- when the SS man walked on the pavement, when -- we had to step down into the gutter, whatever. We were not allowed to be in the pavement when the SS walked by.
- Q: And how did the Gentile Czechs treat you?

A: Once Hitler came, except for one friend, all dropped me like dead wood. One stayed faithful, I'm still with -- friends with her. She's the one gave me everything, she's the one with the radio, and the first thing she said to me, "I have your father's radio." I said, "I don't want it, he gave it to your father, and you were so good to me, keep it." She still has it. But the others dropped us, wouldn't talk to us, would turn away.

Q: So they never said anything, they simply stared?

A: No, they just dropped us. They were afraid to be seen with us. I [indecipherable] and they [indecipherable]. But this friend still came to visit.

Q: Did that anger you or hurt you, or did you understand that they were afraid, and --

A: I wa -- I did understand, and I tried to connect after the war, and the same thing happened.

Q: They did the same thing?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: I did the sa --

Q: You did?

A: -- I don't know. I met with them through somebody I -- I didn't know where they lived any more, I forgot the address [indecipherable]. We got in touch and the four of us that were very close in the gymnasium, met. This was soon after the war, very early the summer of '45. And I was devastated, I lost my parents. I had -- didn't know what I will live off, I didn't have a profession. I wasn't that young that, you know, today you think they are grown-up at that age, I was really immature for that. And I didn't know where I will be tomorrow, and I had no roof over my head. And we met, and we went into coffeehouse for coffee. And they talked about boys and dances, and dresses, and I don't know what. And they were not interested in me at all, and I had nothing to contribute to the conversation. We said good-byes, and I never saw them again [indecipherable]

Q: So they never asked you what happened. They didn't --

A: No. When you wanted to say something you were told, "Don't talk about it, that's gone, we survived, it's finished. Don't think about it at all." So that was the end. I don't know where they are, or whether they live, or nothing, e-except that one friend that I kept.

Q: So you -- you're saying that you remained optimistic, in spite of all of this --

A: Always optimistic in spite -- my father was so optimistic. I don't know whether he did it for us, or whether he was -- first of all, he thought Hitler won't do to the Czech Jews what he did to the German Jews. And we always felt we are different. We are -- we are not like the Polish Jews that wore -- you know, the Hassidic. We were dressed normally. They always considered themselves different. And then we thought, he can't do, we are a protectorate, we are not Germany, he won't do the same thing. And once -- special in 1941, when America went into war after Pearl Harbor, we celebrated, this is the end of the war. People said the next day will be end of the war, the America will just bomb Germany, and that will be the end. The Germans won't get up any more. It didn't work that way.

Q: And you alone, with your friends that would meet every week --

A: We were very optimistic.

Q: You're very optimistic, you didn't sit there and say, oh my God, what's happening?

A: No.

Q: Really? That's very --

A: Until -- until '41 when the transports started. That was a wake up call that maybe everything will not be -- first of all, in the first five transports, which went to Łódź, [indecipherable] the friends went already. And then in '41 in November, when -- they opened Terezín, a lot of friends went. And my boyfriend went, and that's a funny story about too, cause that's wa -- how I got to Terezín by myself. And that started, and my father had me to be always ready on time. Start -- my mother started to preparing for deportation. We had our 50 [indecipherable] everyone had what -- what we didn't wear, what do you take with us. My mother wanted everything to be like so, in condition like new, so we wore the other things. My mother would e-eggs were a very hard com -- well, you know, commodity. Jews were not allowed to -- we didn't have it in rations, but my mother got some on black market from that lady that was her savior, and she would dry egg whites, use only the yolks, here and there, and if you mix the dried egg whites with water, you had eggs, you know, egg white. So sh -- and that didn't weigh much, so we got all a bag prepared of egg whites to take with us, and she would bake gim --

Q: How do you da -- how do you dry eggs?

A: On a plate, and -- and she let it dry until it got hard like crystal.

Q: Oh my.

A: And she would bake special gingerbread that was very hard, but could all -- never got moldy. She made for us what we called a studenmix, almonds, nuts, raisins that she still had, and if she had a -- something to put in [indecipherable] and that -- that [indecipherable] and that she made a bi -- see, this is all the food that [indecipherable]

took with us, or we wouldn't touch it any more since '41, that was prepared for deportation.

Q: So you were always ready to go?

A: My father -- I don't think other people did it, but my father had to be ready. And my father made another thing, he handy with wood, he made mirrors for each of us, and put money in it. And these mirrors we took with us.

Q: So that there was a wooden backing --

A: Wooden back and a -- and a mirror, and in between was a hollow, and there he put the money. They took it each to th -- Auschwitz, and I had mine to the end, and my brother took it to Auschwitz, and I had mine till the end, but when I took it out, marks were nothing, just a piece of paper, because they were German marks, and --

Q: And it was worthless. When -- when Germany attacked the Soviet Union, did that make you nervous, or you still thought someone's gonna come in and --

A: We -- we still thought that the British --

Q: I mean Poland, not the Soviet Union

A: -- then German, that was the beginning of the war.

Q: Right, right.

A: We knew one thing, that Hitler will not give up Czechoslovakia unless there is a war, we wanted that war.

Q: Yeah, I see. So you needed something, because it was the only way to get a --

A: And the same thing happened to me when -- the Communists, who I never believed that Communists will fall without a war. I said, there has to be a third World War to get the Russian Soviets down. Because that's what we believed, the Germans will not give up on their own. They will never move back. But of course, we saw Britain will coming, and we -- the biggest depression I think what happened was when France fell. Poland, let them take care -- Russia will take care of it. But when France fell, that was very depressing, cause we thought they will move forward. And then they did the same thing in World War I, and the Czechs were saying French are good lovers, but lousy soldiers. They give up, you know? But then the Czechs gave up too, finally. And the biggest excitement was when there was invasion, when we thought that's the end of the war right then and there, that the Americans --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: -- will -- will walk through Germany. Didn't think Germans are that strong, still --

Q: So you --

A: -- to put up the fight me -- but I think we just closed our eyes.

Q: Right. So you really didn't have a sense of what the conditions of all these countries were. What the economic --

A: Not the condition, not the condition. We thought they are strong --

Q: Right.

A: -- and they will take care of Germany. And we thought Germany -- Germans are weak. We thought they don't have reserves. They had -- didn't have oil, they didn't have rubber for the wheels. I didn't -- they didn't have anything, but they made what they had.

Q: Right.

A: They could recycle, which, you know, kept them -- and the worst thing was that from the Jewish money, and gold, and art, they supported the war. The -- the -- the Jews paid for the war.

Q: From what they confiscated.

A: What they took from the Jews, they paid for the war.

Q: I see.

A: They had the money, the Jews in Switzerland, they supported them. But you didn't know that time, but the Jews supported the war. And we thought they were run out of material, they wouldn't have enough to fight with.

Q: So when they --

A: My father had some connections in -- in -- in Terezín that he got news. What the movement of the front is, he knew. But by that time he wasn't that optimistic, because the interest -- the Altestenrat, I think he knew also what's happening, because he -- the things he told me when we left, and I couldn't go with -- they did not want me to -- to volunteer, and I did, and it didn't help. But what he said is, "We had our life behind, we are old. You have to survive. You have to do everything to survive. Don't worry about us." He [indecipherable] so he went to Russia. He didn't go to Russia, which I didn't know.

Q: Right. So he knew something.

A: He knew.

Q: He knew something. So between '39, when -- Germany attacks Poland. And then there's a pact between Germany and the Soviet Union. And then they violate the pact, and they attack the Soviet Union.

A: That was no surprise to us, because we didn't trust the Russians anyhow. They -- you know, we ju -- when they made the pact with the Nazi -- the right and the left, they were make a pact, that's just [indecipherable]. I don't think anybody believed that Stalin tells the truth.

Q: And were you hearing things about what was going on in Poland, before the beginning of Terezín?

A: Yeah, we were, but you know, people always think things are exaggerated. And it happened there, it is not happening here. Do you know how today people think, happens to the others, it won't happen to me.

Q: Right.

A: I think that's what we thought. I think that was what we were hiding behind.

Q: Now, did you know a lot of people who tried to leave, or actually left?

A: Yes, yes, we knew people who tried to leave, we knew people who left. My aunt was supposed to go. They had a f -- fo America, and they were supposed to go to Cuba because they had to wait, and she just wouldn't leave. They already had their tickets, and everything, and she wouldn't leave withou -- without us, you know, and my mother, and they stayed, and it was -- well, they died. And we were supposed to leave for Chile, and then I don't know why my parents decided not to. And my father didn't want to go to Palestine, that was open to us. I don't know what was happening around then, because not much was shared. We -- more was shared with my brother, my brother knew more than I did, because he was little older.

Q: I was going to say, was it because he was a boy --

A: And he was also longer with my parents, he went to Terezín with my friends, I went by myself.

Q: [indecipherable] yeah. We have to take a break.

A: Sure.

Q: Okay.

End of Tape #3

Tape #4

- Q: Hana, I want to go back a little before Terezín, just to get a couple of pieces of information. Did you have pets growing up?
- A: Yes.
- Q: What did you have?
- A: We used to have dogs, never cats. Birds, parakeets, turtles, y-you name it, we brought animals in. Both my parents were big animal lovers. When we moved from the original apartment where I was born, I don't think there were allowed dogs there, because we had to give up our dog. Was a big German Shepherd, and he went to a farm in Votice, to friends. So we didn't have a dog, but we always had canaries. We had different birds. My father loved birds, and they loved him, because he always brought them goodies, and they would sing for him and not for us.
- Q: Really?
- A: And w-we tried to get babies by pairing them, and had eggs, but that never happened. And we had to give it up when Jews were not allowed to have pets. But by that time you didn't have -- thank God we didn't have a dog we had to give up.
- Q: So you gave up the bir -- and you gave -- did you give them away to people who took care of them?
- A: Yes, my parents found somebody who -- because canaries were pretty expensive those days for you know, not -- your dogs you got, any dog you could get free, but -- so I think people gladly accepted it. People had pets like that, it was a pet that they didn't have to walk or do.
- Q: So it wasn't unusual for people to have birds?
- A: No, no. As a matter of fact my aunt, who came from Vienna came out from the train, I still see her, with two cages in each a parakeet, these little green and blue, you know, yellow and blue parakeets. She had them until she had to give them up, too.
- Q: And do you think many of these animals ended up being killed, that they couldn't find anyone?
- A: I don't know, I think the Jews tried to find somebody who would take care, who would love animals. I think you could find somebody. I don't know how they did it with cats and dogs, because we didn't have it, but I don't think we had any problem of giving it --
- Q: Right, right.

A: But it made you lose a friend, it's there, you know.

Q: Right.

A: Everything was a loss, whether it was the piano that I didn't care so much before, or whether it was your jewelry that you got as a kid, and you know, the birthday present from your father. You didn't like to part with your things, so you didn't like to part with the animals either.

Q: Right. And tell me, your -- you talked about going out with friends, and --

A: Right.

Q: But -- but did you have a social life, were you dating?

A: Yes, we did. Within the parties usually you found a partner, and then you switched. I mean that going together wasn't very serious. It could become serious. And then in 1939 -- '40 -- I think in the winter of '40, I don't know, I met a boy. That time we were still going to Hagiboar, which was like a playground where you could run around, and do a little sports. That was Jewish, so that was allowed to go to. And I met him there through another friend of my friend. Since 1939, a girl lived with us. My very clo -- became a close friend of mine. Her parents lived outside, and they wanted her to learn the profession, so she was learning to sew in some other place than I did. And she lived with us and we shared a room, and ti -- tha -- used to go weekends to her parents [indecipherable] just fun. But then even that was forbidden because Jews couldn't travel by train at all. So then she couldn't visit her parents and met them only again in Theresienstadt, which they came from the village, she came from Prague. And her brother also stayed in Prague, and lived with my aunt, who was around the corner, wasn't very far. So within, you know the group you were, and you had one or two groups, because you met Saturday and Sunday with others. You paired up with a boyfriend. We were -- when Hitler came I was 14, so by that time we started to be interested in boys, and we did, and I had a boy that we got engaged when we were 16 and a half, 17.

Q: Really?

A: My parents and his parents didn't say anything, and that was -- he put me later on on his list as a family member, and that's how I ended up in Terezín.

Q: Well, that's why I asked you.

A: I had to go before my parents, and even though my father was devastated, so was my mother, and I was. I wasn't ready. You know, I wasn't -- today 18 year old girls go to school, and they are ready to be on their own. We were not growing up that way. We were never alone or going out at night because we never had those opportunities. And so we were, I don't think, not that grown up yet. So for me going for the first time out of my house, not knowing -- I remember the last night, thinking will I ever sleep in my bed

again. And my friend was staying with my parents, it was me who had to go. And that was really for everybody devastating. And my father tried to arrange and go and tell them that they want to -- they did not want to volunteer because of my brother. They felt if they -- as long as they can stay out, maybe the war will end, and we will f -- continue to live our normal life. So they didn't volunteer, and I didn't want them to. So they tried if I could wait for them, and they wouldn't do it, so I had to go.

Q: So who -- what's -- was this boy's name?

A: In Czech it's Honza, it's John, and his last name was Kosepak.

Q: So you have this funny engagement, and --

A: Not funny, we really thought --

Q: -- you were serious [indecipherable]

A: -- we were li -- we were serious, we -- we thought --

Q: -- but the parents obviously --

A: -- the parents I don't know, they didn't -- were not against it, we knew -- both families knew each other, and f -- was nice Jewish boy. They were not against it, and they knew the war is here, and people get engaged earlier, or even marry. We didn't -- I didn't intend to get married or anything. And so we just got engaged.

Q: Did he give you a ring?

A: He did, and I still have the rest of it. It was only silver with a blue aquamarine stone. The stone is lost, the ring is broken, but I keep the rest of it as a remembrance because that one I smuggled, that one I gi -- didn't give up.

Q: So that was when you were 16 and a half, now you're --

A: 17 something.

Q: -- 17. Now you're 19, so you -- were you actually going together for a couple of years?

A: Yes, we were --

Q: So you were --

A: -- not 19, I w -- he went with the second transport, he was just in --

Q: In '40 -- in 1940? Or '41?

- A: 1941, with the second men transport, Edgar went with the first one --
- Q: Right.
- A: -- he was with the Akar, too, which was November '41. He just became 18, and I was 18 September.
- Q: Uh-huh.
- A: And we met again when I arrived in July '42.
- Q: Now you just mentioned something that I think is important. Akar one and Akar two.
- A: Aufbaukommando.
- Q: And can you explain what that means?
- A: The first ones, because they were supposed to build Terezín, were called Aufbaukommando one. That was the 340 something that Edgar went with.
- Q: Right.
- A: After that went another thousand men, only men, and it was called Akar two, Aufbaukommando number two.
- Q: And do these become privileged --
- A: They were -- were privileged one degree below the Akar one.
- Q: I see. And then everyone who comes after, it's not Akar --
- A: No, it's already, it --
- Q: It -- it's gone, y --
- A: -- first started with, I think Edgar's transport -- parents were M. I was already in triple digit transport, AAR647 was my number.
- Q: Uh-huh.
- A: My parents were already in CC alphabet. The whole AAA, and the BBBB alphabet.
- Q: Right.
- A: And they came at CC [indecipherable]

- Q: But it's only the Akar one and Akar two that become [indecipherable]
- A: Two that they're aristocratic. We call them aristocratic.
- Q: Aris -- aristocratic. Now when y -- when John -- John?
- A: Well, Honza we called him
- Q: Honza --
- A: Hanush in Czech.
- Q: -- went, was that shocking to you?
- A: To both of us. We didn't -- we had fun together, we enjoyed each other company --
- Q: Right.
- A: -- we didn't want to separate. But he said to separate from his parents, too, his parents didn't go.
- Q: So he didn't volunteer for that transport?
- A: No, no.
- Q: Did he tell you he was going to try and get you to -- to come --
- A: No --
- Q: -- trying to get you on the list?
- A: -- but I think they enticed them, they said if you put them -- these two transports were supposed to be kept in Terezín, they were like privileged, they didn't think -- and, you know, like Edgar they send him with the last transports, it wasn't in any other. And they said if you put your family members on your list, they will be also privileged. So I think that's why he did that. He didn't mean to get me into -- but that's how Edgar's parents too, because they were on his list as parents, came in early.
- Q: Right, right.
- A: So that's what happened.
- Q: So what happens, you get a notice through the mail, or it's delivered to you? What -- how -- do you remember?

A: I don't know how that was delivered, but I got a notice on that and that day, to be at the palace with 50 kilos, which is 110 pounds, what is allowed to take, and that's it, you go. My brother went in the streetcar with me, you had to carry the 50 pounds yours -- kilo -- yourself, up to where you had to register. What you had was a backpack, a roll where you had your pillow, your linen, and you put in some food or anything. We call it bedrollup -- bedroll, and the trunk. So somehow I got from my boyfriend -- fiancé, whatever you want to call it, a notice through his parents that I should make a white rectangle around my name because he will save my luggage, because the luggage was confiscated usually, and you ended up only with the backpack and the roll. Not the first transport, only when -- in '42, so Edgar doesn't even know about it. So, you know, we had to put Sarah in our name, every woman was Sarah, and every man was Israel, to degrade us more. We didn't -- we used to say we are privileged, because Churchill's daughter is named s -- Sarah. So we very proudly carried that. I was Hana Sarah Fuchsova. So -- or German Fuchs. So we did it, and he did save my luggage, and he saved the same way my parent's luggage. He worked at that time at the transports, and he kept his job to help people.

Q: So a -- in this early stages, they -- you were able to get some messages from Terezín once --

A: I don't know how he did it, but he did do that.

Q: He did it.

A: Well, you know, there were nine boys hanged for letter writing in Terezín in January '42.

Q: No, I didn't know.

A: Oh yes, that's very well known.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And -- because they wrote letters and they were -- and they were caught, so they were executed. Edgar can tell you about it, he was there when that happened, we --

Q: This is before --

A: And we knew about it in Prague because that was made sure every Jew knows it. The Germans made sure, so that they don't write letters. But through some of the gendarmes evidently, he succeeded, give them something, and he smuggled a letter to his parents, and his parents told us.

Q: When you're going to be dropped off by your brother --

A: My brother wouldn't go out of that streetcar, he promised my father he wouldn't because he was afraid they can pick him off the street, and bri -- if there is a [indcipherable] company. So he was in the streetcar with me at the back, cause we had -- as we were

passing, I saw my father standing on the corner, he wanted a last glimpse of me. Crying. And then he just had to go another station, my brother, and then he returned home. And I had to walk up the street to the entrance by myself.

Q: And your mother stayed inside, by herself.

A: My mother stayed home.

Q: Were you crying on the train, do you remember?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yes.

A: Well we were, I think three days or four days it took, till they processed the thousand people. Register. And I don't think they even weigh our luggage, you could have had more, but nobody dared.

Q: Right.

A: I --

Q: Were you in a cattle car?

A: No. Until we went -- this is with a streetcar.

Q: The streetcar, right, is the normal streetcar?

A: Yeah. I-In T-Terezín we were in a cattle car.

Q: Oh.

A: But that didn't take three days, that was in one day, although it took very long, for it's only 60 miles. We arrived somewhere afternoon, three o'clock in Terezín from they started to load at five in the morning, so --

Q: So you were waiting in Prague to leave for three days?

A: In Prague for processing took at least three days.

Q: Three days.

A: Because I arrived on the 16th of July in -- in Terezín.

Q: And you had left your house on --

A: Around the 13th --

Q: 13th.

A: -- I think it was.

Q: When you're waiting in Prague, and you're going with your brother on it -- on the street, what's your biggest fear? Do y -- do you know, or is it very confused?

A: I'm afraid. I'm afraid to do this alone.

Q: Yes.

A: I was scared, I had never been alone.

Q: Alone.

A: Either with my brother, or with my parents, and I have never been alone like that.

Q: Right.

A: To have to take care of myself, and that's when I promised my mother I will --

Q: You'll eat.

A: Eat everything, and they gave us this big portion of the watery -- brown water, which was supposed to be coffee. So I promised Mother I'll finish everything I'll get. So I finished and drank it. My friend thought I like it, she gave me again. And I hated it, but I said I will drink it because I promised my mother to eat everything.

Q: Now, w-when you're waiting these there days, and there are a thousand people, are there people that you know?

A: I didn't know anybody, but you start talking to your neighbor -- and I had the same name because you are alphabetically put on the mattresses. And you try -- you walk around trying to find somebody whether you know, and it's a long day. You wait, you get to -- you have to go to the table, you have to register. You have to give up your trunk. The bedroll and the rucksack you carry yourself. This is in July. I had a winter coat on, I had a suit underneath. I had double -- double underwear. I had heavy shoes because you wouldn't take sandals. And I had to lug the luggage, and we walked from Bohusovice to Terezín, and some people fainted, and some people couldn't make it, it was very hot. I did. And when we came into the -- they brought us to Hanover barracks. That was the Schleusse they called it, the accepting barracks. Didn't take long and my boyfriend was there, telling me, I have your trunk. And I told him right away to tell my friend that I am here, which he did. And he brought her over, he smuggled her in, because nobody was allowed to come near us. And they had to process us again. And her mother arranged that

they move me to Hamburger where they were staying. She took over like my mother, her mother, and she later on saved my life again. So when we came to register, I already had a address where to go, I went straight to Hamburg, and then my friend said she's working at the mica production, where we peeled the mica. So she went immediately and signed me up for that. So the next day I went to work with her. So I had somebody there. And then you start -- and then I tried to locate my grandma, who was there. My grandmother, si -- about three weeks before me -- 15 -- or four weeks, 15th of June she left Prague, my grandmother. So then my boyfriend located her, and that's when I say Edgar is wrong, it wasn't yet opened the ghetto, he had to get me a false document, of another girl to -- so I can go to visit her into that house. And I did, and I saw my grandma.

Q: So it wasn't allowed, you couldn't just walk around.

A: Not yet, it was op -- and she died on 22nd of August of that same year, and by that time it was opened. But when I arrived --

Q: Right.

A: -- I couldn't move freely, any -- and the first thing she told me, she was so happy -- she was blind, but she knew who I am, she was so happy to see -- see me. According to our -- what we counted, she was 86. According to what they have in the files, she was born '54, not '56 as we thought. So she might have been 88. As I say, she lasted about six weeks there. Got sick, she died of dysentery. And the first thing she said, "Tell your father not to come." She thought my father was a powerful man, can do anything, and he can say I am not going, and he will not go. "It's a terrible place here. Why did you come? He should have taken care of you, you should not come here." I don't think she understood, you know, the situation.

Q: But she understood something.

A: Oh, she understood that it's a bad place --

Q: Bad place.

A: -- but she didn't know --

Q: What.

A: -- that you have no choice.

Q: Yeah. How did this w-w-woman, the -- the mother of your friend, and what -- what was her name, and -- and the -- the name of your friend, and the mother's name.

A: Okay, my friend was named Eva, their name was Dittel.

Q: Dittel?

A: And I called her Mama Dittel afterwards. And she died in Munich at age 101 and a half. So I saw her last time when we went there to celebrate her hundredth birthday.

Q: Wow.

A: And what she did for me, in September of '42, I was put in for deportation to Poland -- to east, nobody knew where. And she decided that's ridiculous, her parents are still in Prague. She went to [indecipherable] and put down the -- my application. She was OD, Ordnungsdienst, so she could do it. And said, "This girl is not 21 yet, her parents are in Prague, how can you send her alone?" And put stamp, do not send. So I got out of the transport, and I didn't realize somebody else must have gotten in because of me. That time we didn't think that way.

Q: Yeah, right, right. Now it's --

A: That came only when the people started to ask are you guilty of -- yes, somebody else must have gone, because thousand people had to go --

Q: So they had to --

A: -- and that's one transport where they have destination unknown. Nobody knows what happened to the thousand people.

Q: Really?

A: That's the September transport to the east.

Q: So the -- uh-huh. And --

A: I found it only, you know, after we got the -- the memorial book from Prague, from the Terezín inshairtif. They collected a book of all the names and birthdays and where they went and where people died. And all the transport that went ever to -- to Łódź, or to Terezín, and where they went further, and their -- this -- under that transport, destination unknown.

Q: Hm. And they have the names of all the people who are on them? Oh, excuse me.

A: Well, that is hard to find who -- they have the name of the transport, you would have to go through all the people.

Q: Uh-huh, to find it.

A: To find that there -- when you have your name there, it says where you were liberated, and where you died if they know it. If they don't know it, it's the transport where that

went where you died. Because many people went straight to Treblinka, so they don't have the date or anything.

Q: Right. And what was Mama Dittel's ti -- she was -- let's explain what that is, that --

A: She was a real, very aggressive, in that case woman, she got the job, and she would -- OD means Ordnungsdienst, which meant she was responsible anywhere there was a line, to keep order, and so if she kept order on -- in the line for people to go into the offices or something when they requested -- everywhere you waited in line. Whatever you wanted. In -- you wanted a job or something, there was 50 people lined up for that, too. So they needed these people who kept people not fighting, and to keep them in line.

Q: Right. So she had --

A: So she had such a kind of job, she was standing near the kettle so people don't fight for the food when they were giving out food that was her job. And Eva and I worked together. We are s -- friends, we were friends from Prague already, she was one of the group. So we used to go to her house, to our house, you know, and to others, she was a member of one of the groups that I was in.

Q: Right.

A: And she was there since January '42, they went early. And her father was there too at that ti -- and I knew the whole family, my mother knew the whole family.

Q: So the mother had a certain -- certain kind of position, which was why she could get you --

A: No, she was on the -- yeah, but she was also very aggressive, she could get it, you know, somebody else wouldn't.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Somebody else wouldn't march into the office of the [indecipherable], she did.

Q: Right.

A: And she was accepted, people accepted her. She had a way with people.

Q: And in -- in the same way she got you into the other barrack. Instead of being in Hamburger you were in Hanover --

A: Probably, I don't --

Q: -- no, a -- the reverse, the reverse.

- A: No, that -- that was ten -- temporary anyhow. They would assign you where to go, they would make a list wherever they had place, but if you had somebody, and wanted to be together with the family, and there was room, they would do it. I got my mother then, to be with me in the room, too. We just put it on her list, you know, as a request. That -- the -- where to put people wasn't difficult to get --
- Q: Uh-huh.
- A: -- because they didn't care. If there wasn't room, I had to sleep on the floor between the - on the corridor until there was room. There was constant movement. People moved around, they found a friend, they wanted to be put together, that was not so hard to do.
- Q: Uh-huh.
- A: And transports went, so there were empty spaces --
- Q: Spaces.
- A: -- you when -- that was like a seniority. You started on the floor, and ended up where you wanted after awhile, when it got -- became available.
- Q: So y --
- A: So in the end, Eva and I had a bunk together.
- Q: Together. And you were in Hanover?
- A: Hamburger.
- Q: Hamburger.
- A: Hamburger. Hanover where -- where we arrived.
- Q: I see.
- A: And then -- then Hamburger became what they called Schleusse, for incoming and outgoing transport, but at mi -- sometimes it was a different barrack, whichever they emptied for it. When I came in '42, it was Hamburger, when my parents came, there were in a different -- Hanover -- when my parents came it was in a different [indecipherable].
- Q: Different place. And Schleusse means what?
- A: Schleusse is where the water goes through. People coming and going, and that's probably how the -- they took it and was a expression I learned only in Terezín. In Czech it's Schoishka, so they took over the word, gave only a Czech ending. I-It means passing through, probably.

Q: But this was also where they would confiscate the luggage, am I right? They would take it --

A: The luggage never arrived there. The luggage was put on some carts that the people that worked in the transports schlepped, like my boyfriend, and they schlepped it directly to the magazines or to the storage where they store them. This clothing original was only for Germans, that the Jews didn't get it, only until they opened the stores, did they share the clothing for those -- from those storerooms with the Jews. Because th-the Germans were bombed out, they lost everything. They needed clothing, so they took it from the Jews.

Q: Right. And was your boyfriend -- was Honza taking a chance bringing you your luggage?

A: Yeah.

Q: He was, wasn't he?

A: Yes, but he did it for his parents, and for my parents too.

Q: So did you then take the luggage a -- I mean, put the clothes --

A: He brought it after wa -- he kept it until I had a permanent place in the Hamburger.

Q: I see. And where did you keep the luggage? Under the bed, or what did you do?

A: No, I didn't have a space under the bed.

Q: Okay.

A: I lived on the upper --

Q: Oh, you were on the upper? So then what did you do?

A: -- upper bunk. There was a shelf and I put the trunk that was all where you had your clothes, you couldn't hang it, you couldn't -- you didn't have anything.

Q: Right.

A: So you kept it in the trunk, and the bedding you spread on your bed.

Q: And where -- where would be this shelf? Near the -- near the --

A: O-Our bunk was -- we had the top, the two of us.

Q: Right.

A: And the shelf was going towards -- there was a window, and the shelf was going to the window. So on that shelf I had the trunk.

Q: So someone had to lift up this fif --

A: Yeah. The middle one had also a shelf, the bottom one had it underneath. But the trunks became my bed later on. The tr --

Q: And I -- the trunk became your bed?

A: Yeah. Three trunks made a bed on the -- on a trip with [indecipherable]

Q: Did you -- excuse me, did you have a lock on this trunk? Were you concerned about people stealing? No.

A: No. I doubt it.

Q: Okay. I think we should stop the tape.

End of Tape #4

Tape #5

Q: Hana, I want to ask you some details about the --

A: Arrangement?

Q: Arrangements, yes. So you're on the top bunk, although it takes you a little while to get to the top bunk. Is that when -- when you're in the top bunk, is that when Eva is up there as well?

A: She was there already, and her partner, whatever -- whoever lived there, then moved out of -- I don't know where, was pretty fast, there was always a mor, or found a better, or found somewhere else to live. When it emptied, and I was on the floor, a -- but nobody else wanted it, I could get it. It went according to seniority. Each room we were about 40 women in the room, and there was one woman who was called Zimmeralteste, which means the oldest of the room. And she was the one who made the decisions. So -- but she was pretty good, she -- you know, honored some request, it didn't change anything for her. So it didn't matter if I was in the corridor, meanwhile, when my mother came she was in the corridor. She couldn't climb up because she suffered from sciatica nerve, otherwise I would have switched with her, but it couldn't. And then she got right away a bed because of that, so you know, she made those decisions, she also made sure everything is clean, that the room looks clean, because there were checks sometimes. And -- and I don't know by whom, but we were always expecting some inspections. And then she also was the one that distributed the rations. You got a ration of bread. Sometimes you got little bit of milk, which was like bluish water. And sometimes you got little bit of sugar, and margarine, those were the rations. So she got the whole thing, and she had to divide it into 40, so there was enough, you got a big s -- soup spoon of sugar, if was more, you got two. Bread was always the same, you got a piece of bread, that was for three days. Being me, the first time I got the bread I ate it. In two days I didn't, so I learned very fast that I marked how much bread I can eat every day. And that was only once that it happened that I ate it all. And I took little bit supply from what I had from mar. So, she was the responsible person. She also decided if we had little bit of wood, when to heat up the room or not, because there was only little stove, in that -- in -- for winter. So it was pretty cold, but you had the blankets. You did have blankets. So we slept with Eva huddled together under two blankets, we didn't need each a blanket. In summer it was much worse. The bedbugs were terrible, and we would take our mattresses and put it on the corridor outside, in front of the room, along the -- you know how these windows are in Hamburger --

Q: These round [indecipherable] windows, yes.

A: -- barrack? Under the windows, and we slept outside, because it was too buggy, and too muggy inside.

Q: So it was buggier inside than outside?

A: Yeah.

Q: And what sort of a mattress was this, was this straw? Or was this a real --

A: Yes, straw.

Q: It was straw.

A: Straw. I think that's what all the Czechs used. I think that's what was mostly they used, horsehair mattresses in good times, but I think for us they -- it didn't matter, we slept. We were so tired, we slept. The first -- I wasn't so tired from the mica peeling, or something, that was sitting down. We had fun because we were -- that's where we made most of the friendships, we were eight girls together. Course the young clung together and we were also a very noisy table, because we were telling our th-things, and we were laughing and things, and the old people didn't li -- the old people, they were in their 40's and 50's, didn't like it, so they were always hushing us that nobody can hear when we are there. And all of us knew that this is a terrible job, dusty, sitting and peeling them, and we had to make a -- sort them, and make a certain amount a day. It wasn't just playing, you know.

Q: Wh-Wh -- what -- what --

A: It's a -- it's a --

Q: What is it?

A: -- the mica you have to peel thin, they said it's for the airplane, and there was bigger pieces, smaller pieces, and you had to sort them according to sizes.

Q: And then you peel the --

A: Peel it into thin, like if you would peel --

Q: An onion?

A: -- anything in layers.

Q: Yeah, yeah. So it -- there would be a number of layers on the mica --

A: Yes.

Q: -- and you would peel it off.

A: You would peel it to the thinnest one and then the supervisor checked that there is not something wrong, no -- the sizes are all right, and -- because he was responsible to the German. So we all tried to get into a better job, and one of my friends with whom I'm

friend to -- today, she lives in Los Vegas, she decided -- she had a boyfriend too, that time. And who told her to get into agriculture. So she was the first one to leave the table, the -- you know, the eight of us. Then two others went to agriculture, so I decided I'm going too. And I went and apply for the job and they -- I said I come from a farm, my grandpa was a farmer.

Q: He was?

A: So they asked me how potatoes grow, I had no idea, because I have never seen potatoes grow. So I don't know where I got it, I said, "Like onions, with the -- with the roots in the ground." And they said, she knows, and I was in my -- in agriculture.

Q: Now where would you -- fir-first of all let me ask you, why was it -- I-I -- one would think that working inside would be better than working outside, but that was not the case there?

A: What did I have, I had nothing from working inside. I peeled mi -- for mica that I couldn't do anything with. I breathe in the particles, and [indecipherable]

Q: There's a lot of --

A: I wanted to get out.

Q: Uh-huh, okay.

A: They told you get out into the fields, and you can eat the vegetable, so I got out.

Q: So then where -- where do you go to apply for a job in this --

A: There was a place where you -- the groups always gather, that was called Drusstvo, it was like a collection place where they had offices. These were lot of people, and lot of fields that had to be. They had cows -- they had horses, not cows, and they had pigs, and there had to be organization, and there was a head of that, and then over him was the German head, who was in the party but was not -- who was not a SS, was a civilian. He must have been member of the Nazi party, was a civilian. So there was a organization, so they had to meet in the offices and the -- the storerooms where we stored some of it, because we grew all kinds of vegetable. So my friend started it, she knew where to go, she taught me, I went there.

Q: Okay.

A: And I got in. Which was in winter, which wasn't the best thing because we were in the freezing cold all day. But you were outside, and you got out of the ghetto. My father, my mother never set foot out that since the day they came.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And -- behind the wall. I was out every day.

Q: So did you --

A: [indecipherable] group.

Q: -- so you -- did you have a different sense of yourself, and was it --

A: A different sense of jealousy. I saw people, I said people still live normally, how is that possible? They walk on the road, they went with the horses, we had to go to the side because we were marching in columns, with the gendarmes, two gendarmes with their rifles, so we don't run away, or don't pick up a fallen apple, drop the apple from the trees. And people were -- passed the SS -- we went along the river, and we passed the SS -- like for swimming place, and they were there sitting and enjoying themselves with children. And I couldn't understand why we can't have a normal life. It was very -- we were jealous, why do we have to be like this? Why couldn't we be like them?

Q: So it was a conflicting -- a situation of conflict.

A: Yeah, we -- we -- we talked about it, what we will do when we get free. You know, we -- I remember saying I wish I was -- I cou -- I don't care how old I will be at the -- as soon as I can say it's 10 years after the war. It's -- you know, we wished for the impossible that time.

Q: Were you very hungry all the time?

A: Not when I started to work in the agriculture, no I had the [indecipherable], I brought in the vegetables, I smuggled them in my bra.

Q: But this was very danger -- w-was someone -- a group called Berusky, s-something --

A: Berusky yes, but I was the only person that never was examined by them or touched. When I went to work, they were there only at the j -- gate when I working on another place. I was the good luck charm for my group. I had never been searched by them.

Q: Never?

A: Never. And I went every day to work.

Q: Now explain who Beruskys wa -- what the name --

A: Those were women, SS German, that waited at the gate, that were allowed to frisk us. And of course, if they found something was the same like SS. So we were afraid of them. Sometimes you had a good gendarme who would warn you, and some people were caught.

Q: Why do you think you were -- it's an --

A: I don't know.

Q: You don't know.

A: I don't know, I never lived it. I lived through one search. There was a big -- this was in summer, June '44. We called it afterwards, fashion show. What happened, they caught -- there were people who were transporting ashes out of the town from the kitchens, and from where they were heating in big -- I don't know, they were ashes. And un -- they -- they were stopped by some SS, and they found some lettuce. These people were imprisoned, and everybody who was on the field were -- had to stop working, and they hoarded us into one of the barracks, into one of those -- there were -- in the -- in the bastion or whatever that is, there were rooms, and there we had to -- they took four and four wim -- girls in, and they had to strip totally, and the SS -- and we were stage -- standing naked in front of the SS, and th -- he checked whether you don't have anything. And then you dressed, and we didn't know what they will do with us, but they did let us go. This took a whole day till everybody was frisked, till three or four, and we went home. But while we there -- we were there, we didn't. But that was the only time I was frisked like that. And because the gendarmes were there, and of course they knew us, they were watching with us, we had to strip to be naked, we called it fashion show. And we always said, "Oh, that one was in the -- at the fashion show." Because he was with us, so -- that was one time, but we still -- I don't think we were afraid that something will happen to us, because we didn't have anything, whatever we had, we ate. A girl had a -- something like a lettuce, so we ate it all. It -- it was just swallow a little wad of paper. My sister-in-law said they had to swallow something else, like piece of -- they had a crown, or the money on them, which was supposedly harder. She just told me now, I didn't know it. She was in -- my sister-in-law was with another group, she was there, too. So I wasn't sure which one, she says it was June '44. Was hard to remember dates, you didn't have calendars, so you didn't know exactly, but you knew when it's Sunday, and you knew dates, but to remember the dates, you don't. The one date I remember is -- did you ever hear about the census taking in Terezín?

Q: From? Oh yes.

A: November 11th, 1943?

Q: Yes, tell us about it.

A: Oh, we were the first barracks, because Hamburger is right on the edge of Terezín. So we got the notice that everyone has to be counted, we didn't know how extensive it is, and what it means, but we had to line up in the courtyard at five in the morning. Because it was November, some people took a blanket with them, which was very good, because it was fr-freezing cold to stand there all day. We didn't know what they'll do. And they marched us into this place, which was not like a valley, but it was surrounded by little

higher, you know, not wall, the earth was like a division between fields, but it was higher, much higher, so -- there's a Czech word for it, like a small valley or something. And they marched you by hundreds, always. And we came there, and we were one of the first ones, so we were right on the edge. And they put the SS with machine guns on top of these things, so we got little frightened what will be on -- they going to shoot us here? They said to count, somebody supposedly ran away, and there the count was off. And I never heard counting one by one. So I think it took nearly all morning till everybody got assembled there, or till 10 - 11, I have no idea. And then people started to walk around. My brother lived me and my parents, but I was the only one -- by that time my father got the room in one of the houses, and Mother and Father lived together, because he was also privileged. And I still stayed in Hamburger, and my brother found with a friend in the cellar a room, and they made themselves in the cellar a -- a room for them. So he lived near my parents, so they were together in the column, but I was again separated. So then my f -- brother found me, and I went over to say hi to my parents, that I'm okay, and everybody's there. But then you were afraid, because the Germans were walking by, and you were not allowed to move. And when you have to go to the bathroom, luckily you had the blanket, somebody put it around you. And they were counted, one by one every column was counted. And it was getting dark, in -- in -- in November, it's not so long daylight. And we decided to talk how nice it will be, I will kiss my bunk if I get home. We didn't know whether we will be there all night. It was pretty upsetting. So by 11 at night we got home. We were again the last ones, because we were the first ones coming in, some got earlier. The next day my father said that's it, the family has to be together, you have to move in. So I moved in with my parents, I was very willing. I didn't like to be separated. My brother was again with them, and I was in. My brother lived in the house next to them, so the whole block of houses went together, he was not separated. So there was not room for another bed, so on the floor we put the trunks, and then we separated them -- the door was blocked. And -- and when -- during the day we put them up like a seat. So that was the room I had there with my parents, in November '43.

Q: So -- well -- now let's go back. So you left the mica working, you're working the agriculture, you work six days a week or seven?

A: Six days a week.

Q: Six days a week.

A: Not seven, no. There were days when we had to work on Sundays when there was harvest, and maybe it would rain and they wanted to get the hay in, or the -- the harvest wasn't, for the Germans, going fast enough. Those days we would, from early morning till light was out, 10 o'clock or so -- there were days. But regularly six days a week.

Q: And what are you do -- doing? [indecipherable]

A: Well I have -- every group was different, and everybo-body -- I got into the group with my friends because I wanted to be with them, with this girlfriend that I had. And I got in what they call the field group. And we were designated to take care of the tomato fields,

which was near a village called Travcice, so that those fields were called that. And there we went every day. We had to plant them, we had to tie them. Everything was done by hand. We had to clean all the weeds every time. We had to harvest them, we had to prepare the fields for next season. In between they had some kohlrabi or other vegetable, we had to harvest that. And then if something was necessary, we had to plant other -- other vegetable, there were fields. Spinach fields, there were beet -- beets. You know, anything that you are doing agriculture, there is always work to -- they would put the field, and there was a Staabsgarten, which was -- they were the -- this was for the German population soldiers, or population. But there was a garden where they had vegetables only for the SS, for the SS kitchen where they cooked for them, and for the whole SS soldiers [indecipherable]. So my friend, the one that we went to school together, worked there. And she went every day there to work. You know, everybody had different places. My other two friends were -- their mother joined too in agriculture, and they worked on the place where they -- so when I went to help out there, I had onions, I could bring home onions. You know, it's -- we stole anything we could, and we ate anything we could.

Q: And did you usually eat it there?

A: What we ate, I wouldn't touch a tomato at home, I ate tomatoes all day. That was all I ate all day, I mean, no bread, I wouldn't use the bread when I had tomatoes. [indecipherable] my stomach was full of vegetable, and we -- when we were harvesting kohlrabi we would -- but we had to cover up the peels or anything, because we were not allowed to eat. And we had a lookout, because Heindel, who was supervising us, SS, had the motorcycle, we could hear him. The lookout will hear him, so we wouldn't eat, and we would work very hard when he came. And if hear -- saw somebody standing up, he gave us two hour more work, the whole group. So we had a lookout. And the lookouts were on all fields, and we whistled. We had a sign to whistle, then he forbid to whistle, so we were barking like a dog. I mean, we found always a way to -- to -- I -- I have to put my hand up.

Q: To -- to s -- to signal people.

A: Signal. And we had a lookout for that.

Q: Were you getting f -- whatever normal food would be getting -- i -- people getting in the ghetto during the day that you're working?

A: Yes, we went home for lunch.

Q: Oh, you went back to --

A: We had to go home for lunch and come out again.

Q: I see. So you would have whatever breakfast, if they had anything, in Terezín.

A: We had -- breakfast was black coffee.

Q: Black coffee.

A: And we had a bread. We had a piece of bread.

Q: So you would get bread for three days that you had to eat.

A: Yeah, a certain, it was this -- about this big.

Q: And where would you --

A: Like a big loaf, and a fourth was the -- but then my brother worked in the bakery, so we had more.

Q: Where would you keep the bread?

A: Except my mother wasn't a good -- we kept it outside, on a paper. My mother wasn't a -- no [indecipherable] or anything, my mother was a giver. There lived a lot of old people in the housing, she would share with them what I brought, [indecipherable] the bread, too. My father wasn't allowed to know about it.

Q: Now, wait a minute, but -- there's a period of time when you're working in the fields, and your parents are not there. Am I correct? That you --

A: No, my parents were there. By the winter of '43, my parents were there.

Q: Uh-huh. So by the time you have the job --

A: Yes.

Q: -- in the agriculture --

A: Yes.

Q: -- they're there. But you don't move in with them --

A: No.

Q: -- for a --

A: No, I stayed in the Hamburger. Mother was with the Hamburger. My father and my brother were in Sudeten barrack.

Q: Barracks.

- A: And after my father got established, and found his way around, and became member of the imagdabolt, and after the housing was totally empty then, I mean available or whatever, I don't know whether it was empty already.
- Q: Right.
- A: He got the room for Mother and him. So that was little later, that was also around winter of '43. First they were in barracks two --
- Q: Uh-huh, okay, right. Now, when I -- when I asked you about where would you keep the bread, when you were living in the barrack, you weren't --
- A: You kept it up on top on your shelf.
- Q: On top?
- A: Nobody would steal it.
- Q: And what about the bugs? Did they eat it?
- A: The bugs don't eat bread, no, they eat your blood.
- Q: Oh.
- A: They suck your blood.
- Q: I see.
- A: Bed -- bedbugs suck your blood [indecipherable]
- Q: Were there lice? Were there lice?
- A: Yes, there were lice, but luckily we didn't have it, that was our biggest concern if somebody got lice, they shaved his head. Her head.
- Q: Or her. And nobody got lice in your group?
- A: No.
- Q: And how come?
- A: We were very careful. I don't know.
- Q: You don't know?

- A: I don't know where the lice were more prevalent, but nobody had in our room, in the barracks. You tried to keep -- you washed your hair, tried to keep clean.
- Q: And you washed your hair with what?
- A: Cold water and soap.
- Q: You had some soap?
- A: I think we must have gotten - couldn't be there for three years that I was there, I brought enough soap with me.
- Q: [indecipherable] yes.
- A: The soap was swimming. You know, that was not the regular soap. The war soap.
- Q: What do you mean it was swimming?
- A: It wouldn't sink.
- Q: It wou -- it was very light?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: I see. And did you have toothpaste?
- A: I don't know. Maybe in the beginning.
- Q: Did you brush your teeth?
- A: We did. We had to go to the dentist, but he couldn't do much. My teeth were -- I got my wisdom teeth there, and afterwards they had to be pulled, but we didn't have much dental care, but there was a dentist, yes.
- Q: But the dental care was probably pulling teeth.
- A: Probably they had to. I don't know if they had Novocain even that time.
- Q: Yeah. Were there toilets there?
- A: Yes., and pretty near us was the toilet. We were the last room -- we were 191, and the last one was 190, and opposite was the toilet, so we didn't have it far. I don't remember being any problem with long lines, because we went late at night, maybe and we didn't go at night, and the early morning because we had to go to work. So I don't think we had such a problem.

Q: And --

A: There could be a line here and there you know, but --

Q: But you don't remember that?

A: There's always a line in ladies room, you know --

Q: Yes, I know.

A: -- that when you go somewhere, so that's about it, what we had too.

Q: And when you were in the field, did people just go? In the fields?

A: Behind the tree.

Q: Behind a tree.

A: There were no toilets.

Q: No, I imagine there was no outdoor toilets, right?

A: No.

Q: Was this very tiring work for you, or because you were eating more, were you less tired than you might have been?

A: We were tired because we really worked hard, very, very hard, we were out on our feet all day --

Q: Right.

A: -- with the hoe, we had to turn over the ground, we worked like men. But you know, you are not really hungry, but because you don't have it -- first of all, tomatoes, you full your stomach and in half an hour you are hungry again. And because you don't have it, if somebody tells you can't have more in a day than this, then it's -- this is very small. So you do feel hunger. And we talked a lot about food, but we also heard a lot of requiem. My friend was singing in requiem, and while we were turning over the manure, she was singing what she learned the night before.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah.

Q: Was that good for everybody that she was singing?

- A: Yes, yes, yes. We were singing songs with her. She had a beautiful voice, and we knew what's going on, and we were waiting for the production, and we all went to listen, and it was so uplifting that I could never forget it.
- Q: And when you were talking -- well, we'll talk about that more, but when -- when you were talking about food, you're all young women --
- A: We didn't talk what we cook, what we like to eat and what we would order, and what we wanted to eat.
- Q: I see, what other people would have cooked for you.
- A: Yeah.
- Q: Yes.
- A: I didn't know anything about cooking.
- Q: Was this --
- A: What dessert you like best, what ice cream you like best.
- Q: Is this --
- A: We always ate.
- Q: Did this make you hungry, or was this helpful?
- A: I think it was helpful, we tried to taste it in our minds.
- Q: Yeah, right. Now, did a --
- A: We were not really that starved. I can't say, because we did have something, but we didn't see eggs for years, you know, so you were imagining how good eggs are. At one point they decided that they will have silkworms on a f -- there. So four of us girls, and I was among them, were responsible for the silkworms, we had to feed them. We had to go and look for mulberry trees, and a German was coming with us. We had to take all the mulberry leaves, put it in a bag, and then we came where they had the silkworms, and we fed them and cleaned out that. They were very nice, they were silky, the worms are very nice. And once it was in a farm, and the chicken lost her egg. Now we were four girls, and we were trying to get the egg. What we would do with one egg for the four of us, I had no idea. But the -- the German saw it, and he picked it up, wouldn't let us pick it up, so we lost our egg. But th -- those were the things we were longing for that we didn't have. We had the soup, and the black coffee and bread, normal meal. And sometimes the dumplings with [indecipherable] a treat. But you didn't have variety, you didn't -- so we -

- we dreamt about that, we were hungry for that, but starving like they did in Poland or in -- in those camps, no.

Q: Yeah.

A: You see, I would pull out the carrot and eat it with the earth and everything on it, and --

Q: So you were really --

A: -- I got vitamins.

Q: Right, I was going to say you've got minerals, and --

A: Mm.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I bring it home, and I couldn't tell my father, and we had to cheat him, and telling him that I got it as a reward, and I found it, and I -- I don't know what kind of excuses I found that he eats half a tomato.

Q: The tape is running out, we're going to change tapes.

A: I have to get up and get --

End of Tape #5

Tape #6

- Q: I want to go back to the tomatoes for a minute. How -- when you carried a lot of tomatoes, how many could you carry?
- A: Well, the maximum that we counted what I carried were 33 tomatoes wrapped --
- Q: In your bra?
- A: In my bra.
- Q: Now these are not big tomatoes?
- A: Regular tomatoes. They are not beefsteak tomatoes. They are --
- Q: 33? Without breaking them?
- A: Without breaking them.
- Q: Did you have a very big bra?
- A: Empty bra, yes, very big, I had nothing there. But --
- Q: Because it seems inconceivable to have 33 --
- A: Once we found on the way, and we happened to have a good gendarme with us, walnuts. But if you know the walnuts are in a very prickly --
- Q: Yeah.
- A: Well, we put them in bra, too, and we got burned from the acid.
- Q: You got burned from the acid.
- A: On our chest.
- Q: But it would also hurt --
- A: It did.
- Q: -- because it --
- A: But you would bring it in, that was something totally different.
- Q: Now I have to tell you, my vision of you with 33 tomatoes is the Berusky would come after you in a second because you would be so hu --

A: No, we had roll -- the clothing, I had my father's shirt, for example. I -- sometimes to work I had to have my father's shoes in -- in winter, because I put newspaper -- paper, whatever we found in, because we were working cutting re -- reeds, and that was standing on ice, sometimes little water. And I didn't have such strong shoes like my father, and so he made me wear them so I don't get frostbite. So you -- you know, you -- I wore --

Q: [indecipherable] your father's.

A: -- my father's shirt, I could put in anything. And when I worked with my friends, I told you they worked four people on this little -- it was a little place where they had few fields of onions, she would give me onion. The onion burned you too, made us brown if I brought onions home. But the onion was like gold, because that made any food better, if my mother just -- but I don't know how often my mother -- my mother always found somewhere some wood, and would -- would make something in -- we had a little stove for heating the room, so you only got little leftovers of wood from the carpenters, so -- so she always would find something to heat with. We were feeding pigs for example, one week it was our job, our group. We were a group that was put wherever they needed. And we stole the good potatoes from the pigs and gave the rotten ones only to them. So we always found something different to -- to eat, and to steal.

Q: And how many were in this group?

A: We were about 15 girls in the group, sometimes 10, sometimes 12, and was always the same group. You kept together one group, and you had a head of the group. And there were several groups together and the head of all the tomatoes and everybody was Werner Neuflied who still living at age 95 in Israel. And we are still very friendly, and he's not writing now, so I don't know what's happening to him. But you had a leader, you had a group leader, and you were a group. Now, when they needed to bring in hay, we had to all go and rake the hay and turn it over till it's dry. Bundle it and stick it up, and we had to carry the heavy bundles like anybody else. But we were all young, we were all in our teens, and -- no, we w -- had women that were in their 30's too, and had children already, they -- so we were but still young people, so we could do it. And we had the vitamins.

Q: Was -- where there may -- comparable male groups, or were these --

A: There were some male groups, but not field groups, not garden groups. Males were working with horses and different things where women were not working.

Q: Were any of you in these groups knowledgeable about farming?

A: I think so. My friend came from a farm, for example. She still lives in Czechoslovakia, we see each other when we go there. She's the one who was singing in the choir. She was from a farm, she knew about field work.

Q: So did -- did you learn --

A: When she was young -- she was younger than I was, two years younger, but she still knew about it. The Prague girls didn't know much.

Q: So you had to learn quickly.

A: We learned. We did -- it's very easy, shows you what to do with tomatoes, how to plant them once, and you do it. They show you how to make the plate around so water keeps, and you do it. And then you got through all the rows all morning until you finish.

Q: And you said in your group, you don't know what other groups were like, but whatever food you took out, you shared.

A: We shared. We had three older women -- old women we called them, but as I say, they were in their 30's and 40's, who were very nervous, who didn't want -- were not as risky. We -- we somehow -- I don't think we believed something can happen to us, that's the stupidity. And because they were so nervous, they didn't know how to hide it, and they didn't know how to behave in front of the gendarmes, they would put us all at risk. So we decided, hey you don't take anything, you go on the side, so you see you are free. And we will, when we get behind the door, we will divide it. And they agreed.

Q: So it was very smart.

A: Yeah, but -- was very smart. There were days when we couldn't take, we knew we can't take because it was a very bad gendarme, and we didn't know what he will do at the -- at the gate. And so there were days when we didn't take anything, and when we had the feeling it will --

Q: So did you discuss this as you were in the field --

A: Oh yes.

Q: -- and say, oh we think we should nothing.

A: Oh yes, we worked together --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- we worked together as a group. We worked together, we did entertaining together. As a matter of fact, the last -- on New Year's Eve in 1944, we decided we will party, this is the end of the war, we -- two months and it's ended. And I think we knew that the war is going bad for the Germans. So we decided -- we saw a room and there was -- used to be a stove -- by that time, don't forget, after the transports in October, the ghetto was half empty, more than half -- we had a program. And I have the program, I didn't -- I don't think I left it -- wrote it -- what

[indecipherable] each two or one made a -- a -- a -- like a number performed, and we didn't have anything to drink, but we were like drunk, because we said we'll be free, this is the year we will be free.

Q. So you were there all night, partying.

A. All night partying, yeah. Very quietly partyinh, nobody should hear.

Q. Right.

A. But we were together, we were very close knit group.

Q. Right.

A. But I think the others were, too, because I think it was a necessity, you have to work together, you couldn't do it on your own.

Q: So you didn't hear fighting in the barrack, or people yelling at each other, having arguments, or did you?

A: Oh, some winnen -- women might have a argument that she threw down a piece of paper on her place, or maybe, but we were so little in the room. And then I lived with my parents, there was no argument there, so --

Q: When -- when you first got this --

A: -- bickering, I would call it, not really fights.

Q: Bickering, okay. When you first got there, this is before your parents come, and you have a sort of substitute mom --

A: Martha -- Mama Dittel.

Q: -- do you -- Mama Dittel -- do you have a f -- a feeling -- d-does it take away the -- some of the loneliness because there's someone there?

A: Definitely, definitely.

Q: Right.

A: And I had my boyfriend that I looked forward to see. We did part, afterwards, but I had him there, too, so -- and -- and I felt freer in one way, I had no -- the people that looked at us differently, I didn't meet the others. We were among ourselves only, I felt much freer. I felt better. And I felt that when it is over in two months, I have my room, and my bed, and our apartment and my parents. They are still home. I felt privileged that they're -- I was -- by that time I was happy that they didn't come. But was the bubble blew and they came, but --

Q: Right.

A: -- which was again, I was happy to see them, I was unhappy that they had to come. But at that time, the first few months, I felt privileged that I have still my bed at home.

Q: So there was a si --

A: I don't know why the bed was so important, because I think the bunkbed wasn't very comfortable.

Q: But there was a sense of outside security, because the war will be over, so you'll have a place, and here it's not so bad yet.

A: Yes. You know --

Q: Because you at least have -- yes?

A: -- we -- my friend had scarlet fever, my other friend had typhoid fever, and I thought if I -
- we slept together on the bunk so I might get it too, and then I can't get into transports. The transports were hanging over you all the time. You would be rather sick than getting into transport. But I never got it.

Q: You never got sick?

A: No. There was diphtheria, there was encephalitis, there was hepatitis, there was scarlet fever. What else was there?

Q: Dysen --

A: Dysentery. I was always healthy. I think the vitamins did it. But o -- even in the beginning when I didn't have them.

Q: So you were very strong, there was something in your system.

A: Probably. Because in the end when we were liberated, friend of mine came as the first transport that came, where we for the first time realized what happened, where we saw for the first time -- we called them musselman, those devastated people that looked like skeleton. We tried to feed them. We were three girls that volunteered to -- immediately we had to take care of them, and everybody was mobilized to do something for that effort. Forget the garden, and -- but s -- do something for these people. They cooked the soup, but -- whatever they did, and they brought it and we were supposed to dish it out. And they all swamped around us, and the whole kettle and everything was down. We had one girl that was like a general, and of course they broke another kettle and she screamed at them. They all -- you know, they were afraid of screaming. We didn't want to do that. We got them -- she helped us to get it. We saw them like animals and -- and that was

terrible for us. And with the first came -- the first women, there was my friend with her mother. And she was sick so she was in the -- in the teepho -- typhoid barracks. But it was open, I could go in and out. So -- and she called for me and from the window I saw. I said, "What do you want?" And she told me, I don't know, piece of bread or whatever. I ran home and brought it, and I just walked into the typhoid hospital and I brought it to them, you know, stuff. Then I went outs -- we had outside hothouses, you know, for stuff, and we had all this vegetables there, so I brought some veggies to them, something to nibble on, and nobody stopped me, could in and out as I wanted, and I did. And some people got sick, I didn't.

Q: It's really quite amazing.

A: I didn't know. I -- I was not afraid to get sick and I d -- I -- I never thought I could get sick. When I think of it today when I have a little sense, it's different.

Q: You had some sort of immunity --

A: Probably.

Q: -- who knows? Who knows?

A: Probably.

Q: Bef -- be -- when you were y -- there before your parents came, did you have bad dreams? Do you remember at any time having bad dreams, having nightmares?

A: Opposite. I was dreaming being home.

Q: You s --

A: And it hurt in the morning more when I woke up around.

Q: Because you were in a different place.

A: They are not bad dreams. Bad dreams I had afterwards, not there.

Q: Uh-huh. Right.

A: Not there. I was always dreaming I'm back at home. Because that was -- I -- I wanted my parents to keep the apart -- I wanted home, you know, we wanted to be liberated, and we thought life will continue where it stopped, but it didn't, and that was the biggest disappointment, and it took out all the pleasure of being liberated --

Q: Right.

A: -- because it was not --

Q: Right.

A: -- what we were -- we thought will be.

Q: Right. Your parents arrived --

A: End of --

Q: '43?

A: No, '42 --

Q: No, '42 -- end of '42.

A: End of '42. '43 I was already in agriculture. '43 they were there. End of '42.

Q: So you're there July '42 --

A: [indecipherable] there end of November.

Q: And they're -- they come --

A: Four months later, something like that.

Q: Four months later.

A: Yeah. Four and a half months, it's about that time.

Q: So, to the beginning of '43 --

A: End of '42.

Q: -- or the end of '42. End of '42. Okay. You didn't know they were coming?

A: No, but as soon as my boyfriend got -- he working with the transports he got the list, he saw them on the list, he came to tell me your parents are here. And then he took me over to them, he smuggled me in. Because nobody was allowed to come, but those boys that worked with the transport could, and he got me in. So I saw them still in the Schleusse, and immediately I put on my mother that I want them in the -- want her in Hamburger. My brother and my father went to the barracks they were assigned to. My father -- I -- immediately there was a transport going to Poland, and I was afraid they would go, so immediately my father contacted his friend who was on the Altestenrat, on the council of the elders.

Q: And who was that, do you know?

A: Zucker, his name was Zucker.

Q: And so he's he deputy director un-underneath Eidelstein?

A: Yeah. And he made sure that he stayed. And he gave him the job.

Q: So he got a job [indecipherable]

A: Not right away, but he -- he stayed -- the transport I think went -- I'm not sure when the transport -- early in January or end of December. I -- I don't know when the transport went exactly, I could check on that. And he made sure he stayed, and then he gave him the job to make order, to make sure. My father had a vision that if nobody steals from the main -- I -- I stole from the Germans, but he didn't [indecipherable] stealing either. So stealing is stealing.

Q: No matter from whom.

A: No matter from whom. If -- as long as everybody will eat his portions, then these old people that were dying would get enough food, too. There was some truth in it, but I don't think he realized that maybe the young people need more food than the older one, and the kids need more food. He wanted justice for everyone, and he worked very hard on that. But he was very generous. All of his friends and everybody got a good job there, too, as long as he could take care of them.

Q: Hm. But there's always --

A: There was the end. He went with the last transport when all the -- when all the -- the whole f -- Alteste and everybody was gone, so he -- he couldn't stay any more. Zucker was gone, and I don't know what happened, why he was taken. There was a group of 20 young boys taken by Heindel, out. That's why they wanted me as a witness against Heindel. They were taken off the -- you know where you get on -- into the train. They were not in the train, yet -- on the --

Q: On the ramp.

A: On the ramp. And my father was among them, but he wasn't in his 20's, he was 50 years old -- fi -- 50 thr -- 54 years old. And they took them to the small fortress and they were the ones -- which I found -- we found only afterwards, and we found his name on the small fortress too, and they were the ones that had to clean out the crematorium from all the urns, and throw them into the river. And last time when we were there, there is a memorial for these 20 men, and where they threw down the -- the ashes into the river. And according to Elna Haas, he was about six weeks, and then they executed all of them, all 20.

Q: After they'd finished this.

A: Evidently. So that -- I found that out from Elna.

Q: Right.

A: And Mother -- that was the 20th of October. Mother went to Auschwitz and didn't pass the selection. She was 51, that was too old for them. My friend's mother that passed because she was with her, she said that she is 40 years old. She was the same age, 50 about, and that she's my friend's sister. And because she was naked then -- and she said she had so many children, that's why she -- she lost a lot of weight, and she survived.

Q: This was Mama Dittel?

A: Mama Dittel.

Q: When your parents came, and your mother is living with you, and then your f -- your father is in Sudeten, do you thi --

A: Yeah, and my brother, too.

Q: -- for -- for awhile before -- and your brother too. Do they come and say that they have some idea of what's going on in Poland? Or don't?

A: No [indecipherable]

Q: They don't know anything, and they're not hearing -- or they're not telling you what they know?

A: We knew what's going on in Poland little bit, because everybody, wherever you got the 30 [indecipherable] and as I said one of Mother's best friend, we called her aunt, wrote to her, in a way she wrote that it's awful, and the only thing that's good for her is the mirror. So we knew that she had little bit of money that she could use in the ghetto. That was the mirror my father made for everyone.

Q: Right. And she was in wudge -- Łódz --

A: Izbica.

Q: Oh, she's in be -- Izbica, right, right, right.

A: From my real aunt I never got -- we never got news, we never -- she went -- according to the book, I think they went to Sobibór, straight from Terezín, they never went to Auschwitz or anywhere.

Q: Now, does it surprise you that you're not hearing rumors by '43?

A: We knew it's very bad, everybody was afraid to go east. We knew the Polish people were very bad to the people. That was somehow known, that the Polish people are not sympathetic to the Jews.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: We knew that the Jews are suffering, that they are beaten and killed, and -- and we knew about concentration camp. But there is still the belief that if you do and work hard, and do what they say, they let you live. We didn't believe in mass extermination. We thought in masses is strength, and they can't kill hundred people at the same time. How dumb. They could kill six million.

Q: Mm. So your parents, I assume, are somewhat less optimistic than they were before they come?

A: But in front of us kids --

Q: They're the same.

A: -- they were always talking, it will be ending soon, you will have a normal life, you have to survive. Their aim was that their kids survive, they didn't care much about themselves. My parents lost a lot of weight, even though we tried to bring and steal, they never take a thing, you know, from anywhere or anything. So we kids were the ones. My brother worked in the bakery and would bring additional bread, and -- which he would give his par -- our parents, and they lost a lot of weight. My father was a little belly, and you know, he looked well-to-do, you will see it on the movie, and he was very skinny afterwards, and my mother too. And that went very fast. And I was bringing home the stuff, so you know, that didn't help, to [indecipherable] they were healthy people. Otherwise, there was nothing wrong with them. And they -- they considered themselves old, and lived their life, although they was only in their early 50's.

Q: Did your mother work?

A: Before the war?

Q: No, no, no, no, when she was in Terezín --

A: Oh yes.

Q: -- when she same to --

A: Oh yeah. She started with the Putzkolonie like Edgar's mother, like everyone. When new people come they start the worst jobs because once you are there for a little while, you find a way to find something better. My father didn't start on that note, he started in some office or something. But my mother started in the Putzkolonie with washing floors, and - and I don't know where they all cleaned, and I have no idea, because I was gone for the

day. And then -- for a long time she was very handicapped with her -- she got a terrible attack of sciatica nerve and she couldn't -- she could only lay down, she couldn't move for weeks. Because there was no medication, nothing, no pain killers, nothing. So only time would heal. And then finally I -- she got onto a bed so she could rest better. And then it stopped slowly, and she started to work. So for some time she was incapacitated.

Q: Were you concerned that she would be transported out if she was incapacitated --

A: No.

Q: You weren't?

A: No, no, that -- I wasn't, because I believed in my father. We believed Father can do anything too, like my grandma.

Q: And because he was in a sort of privileged position by then, could he protect your mother?

A: Yes.

Q: You -- he could?

A: And they also went together.

Q: Later -- no, I -- yes, I understand.

A: Because of that --

Q: Yes.

A: And at that time, I knew that if she -- if I get her into -- there was a man that was responsible, Edgar wanted me to tell you, for the agriculture, his name was Kurzawy. He was not an SS, and he was really very good to us. When the SS came he was -- he would call us all dirty names, and scream at us, and when the SS went he would said, "Okay, it's normal again." You know? He would always protect us if he could. He was a great guy. In 1945, he was imprisoned like all the Germans, in the small fortress, and the agriculture group got together and signed a petition and we got him out. And he ended up his life in Austria. But he was great, so I thought maybe I -- my sister-in-law sometimes worked in his private garden in his house, it was outside the ghetto. So I thought we -- I could get my mother in to be protected, but my mother wouldn't let me, she said, "Ah, you are -- your father and me, we are together. We will go through this together. You have been here before alone, you can survive again, and you have to survive." And she wouldn't [indecipherable]

Q: She wouldn't [indecipherable]

A: -- she wouldn't s -- try to save herself, no. And I tried to get in, but they wouldn't take us. We were 29 girls that appealed to everyone we could, including Marmelstein, who threw us out very rudely, that wanted to make a swap, 15 girls take in and 15 parents take out, you know, swap it, it's number for number. No. Because it was a rule that we have to bring in the harvest, that -- and that what Kurzawy did. None of his girls were allowed to be send away. He needs them for harvest, and that he saved everyone.

Q: So do you now think Marmelstein in some way, even though he was not the nicest of persons, that he ended up saving the girls life?

A: I think he did it -- I don't think he cared, I don't believe that he cared. I think he did what was the order from the commandant.

Q: So these people --

A: And the order was not to send anybody who works in the fields.

Q: Right.

A: And [indecipherable]

Q: Because they couldn't substitute the older people for you.

A: Yeah. So I think that was his, and as a matter of fact, Kurzawy told me -- I went to him too, and he will talk to us. But he said, "You wi -- you won't be with your mother, and you will be grateful to me that I saved your life." And I said to him, "I don't ask you for that. I want to go." And he said, "You will not go." That was the end. So then in February came a Swiss transport. And I happened to be in the Swiss transport ti -- again. By that time [indecipherable] could go, that was already the end coming. And I decided if he didn't let me go with my parents, I'm not leaving Terezín because my parents will come back to Terezín. I don't want to be somewhere in Switzerland. Besides, it's probably goes to the sent -- to Birkenau. Birkenau we knew -- to Birkenau two, and I do -- I'm not going anywhere now. So I went to Kurzawy and he said, "It's going to Switzerland, I'm telling you." I said, "I don't believe you, I want to stay." He said, "You can stay." And I stayed. Took me out of the transport. But that went to Switzerland

Q: That really went to [indecipherable]

A: That really went, but I didn't trust them any more.

Q: Okay, we have to change the tape again.

End of Tape #6

Tape #7

- Q: Hana, when Heindel said to you, you will be grateful to me --
- A: Kurzawy, not Heindel. Heindel would never --
- Q: Oh, of course, kur -- s -- I'm sorry --
- A: -- talk to us.
- Q: Kur -- kur --
- A: Kurzawy.
- Q: Kurzawy --
- A: Yes.
- Q: -- said that you would be grateful to me, cause -- that's you're alive.
- A: Yes.
- Q: Did you then un -- realize that for every --
- A: I think we understood that it's very bad on the other side. What we didn't know, and I didn't know that he was in sh -- Auschwitz once, that he was there, he saw what happening.
- Q: So he knew?
- A: He knew, but I didn't know it until my sister-in-law told me years later that he was sent to Auschwitz as one of the transports, and he saw.
- Q: And then he ca -- and then --
- A: And that's when he decided to save his groups, and his -- the girls he worked with, I think. We think, we don't know.
- Q: So it only seemed to you that he was saying it's -- one can be very vulnerable there, was not --
- A: It's very bad there, there's --
- Q: Right.
- A: -- you know, much more hunger, there is much more -- we knew that.

Q: Right.

A: And it's under the SS --

Q: right.

A: -- very, very bad, you know. And we knew that the camps were worse -- the ghettos in -- Łódź ghetto was much worse sanitary and everything, that we knew. Everybody was afraid of the east, because the Polish people suffered before the war, with pogroms. They didn't need the war for that.

Q: I'm asking this only because it's -- it's --

A: But nobody believed that --

Q: I know, I understand.

A: -- somebody can do such a thing to human beings.

Q: Right, right.

A: To children.

Q: Yeah.

A: To young people, old people. Nobody believed it. I was so upset when grandma died because I thought it's my fault, I should have taken better care of her, which I didn't know what to do, how I would have been able, because they were dying at that time, the - the book it says 220, I thought about 150 a day in '42, in summer. That was the worst summer for death rate in Terezín. And after the war I said I'm so grateful that she did, because they schlepped the old people to Auschwitz, they died on the way in the train. She was spared that, she died in a bed. You know? And she was 86 or 88, I don't know. So for her it was a good deed. But I -- we knew it's very bad, that we knew. Why would everybody fight not to go?

Q: Right, right.

A: Terezín wasn't a bargain.

Q: Yes, right. But the real -- what was really happening, no one was --

A: The gas chamber we didn't know.

Q: -- no one had any suspicion.

- A: And we didn't know that 50 is old. My mother said, "Look, I am strong, I am still good enough to work, I can work hard and I'll come back." She didn't.
- Q: She didn't.
- A: Was too old.
- Q: I want to ask you some about, not only the requiem concert, but also other artistic and musical and theater activity.
- A: We went to anything we could get our hands on tickets, or whatever they get. I saw Brundibar. I saw Bartibride. I saw all -- some operas.
- Q: Did you see, "Marriage of Figaro"?
- A: No, that one I didn't see.
- Q: "Carmen"?
- A: "Carmen" I saw. I saw -- I went to nearly any concert [indecipherable] to get on Alice Sommer-Herz, which was the pianist I loved so much.
- Q: What was her name -- was her name?
- A: Alice Sommer-Herz. She's the hundred year old one, and -- and --
- Q: A hundred?
- A: -- I would listen to her, because sh -- to -- she played the Mozart, she played Chopin, and I loved that. So I would try to get to these concerts, but they were not only concert -- as a matter of fact, we did some recitals of poems, because a guy, usually George Loy put us, about six girls together, and we recite, just to do something, because we couldn't sing. But that wasn't too -- too successful --
- Q: It wasn't?
- A: -- cause people didn't listen to poems too much, so after short while it -- it stopped [indecipherable]. But we wanted to do things, because that -- that took away the boredom.
- Q: Did you have to pay for these tickets?
- A: With your ghetto gelt.
- Q: And what was ghetto gelt? There was actually money printed?

- A: Actual money that you get for your work. We played Monopoly. My sister-in-law made Monopoly board, I don't know where she got the cardboard, and with this money we played Monopoly sometimes.
- Q: Really?
- A: Yeah. But I don't know what happened to it. She said all she has left is about two calendars that she made for birthdays. You get -- you -- you paid with something, like tomatoes, and you -- she made you a -- you know, a something else, and the person made you whatever you ordered.
- Q: Right, right.
- A: I have a pendant that I got in '43 on my birthday.
- Q: Really?
- A: Yeah, yeah, we have it with us. Edgar didn't show you his pendant in those pictures. He has one too, different. It has his -- his number, transport number in the Akar, and mine has my transport number and the date on it. It's from scrap metal, it's not silver --
- Q: [indecipherable]
- A: -- it's not gold, it's just [indecipherable]
- Q: -- it has a different kind of value.
- A: Yes.
- Q: Yes. Did many, many people go to these events, or a small --
- A: It was always full.
- Q: It was always full.
- A: I don't know how many people go twice or three times. Because it was also hard to get tickets, there was too many people that wanted to go, because that was -- for the two hours, an hour and a half, you forgot you were where you were. The music was -- well, I'm not a musician, but I s -- would say perfect. That was -- anywhere else the concert could be held, and would be great. She was a great pianist, so you know, I'm not a good - - maybe somebody would say the piano wasn't tuned very well, but -- and there were too -- big competition, you -- sometimes you knew somebody who could get the tickets or you -- you really bargained for that, but you got tickets, you went. I don't remember how it was later, because in the beginning you also had to be eight o'clock home. Whether for Freizeit we were allowed, because this was all evenings.

Q: Freizeit was Friday?

A: The free --

Q: Free day.

A: No, Freizeit means that was the free entertainment, or whatever --

Q: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

A: -- you know, and that you got permission to go later out, I don't know, but I know that there was a -- from eight to five, you were not allowed to be on the streets, but you had to get home from those performances, so that might have been allowed.

Q: I just thought of something that may seem stupid. Ho -- how were your barracks lit at night? With what? Candles?

A: No, there was electricity.

Q: There was li -- there was electricity.

A: Electricity. There was only no heat. There was no heat or hot water. I don't know how they had it in the kitchen, but in the washroom, where Edgar ad -- des-described it, where we went every night to wash, and sit under --

Q: There's no --

A: -- the cold water --

Q: -- hi --

A: -- yeah, there was no hot water there.

Q: You sat under the cold --

A: No, you -- you jumped onto the [indecipherable]

Q: Yes?

A: -- and sat down and opened the pipe, and -- and that was your shower. There was no shower.

Q: You had towels?

A: We had towels from home, sure. That was in the hun -- 50 kilos, in the 110 pounds. You had towels, you had bed linen in that.

Q: And then you sent this out to be cl -- washed?

A: Only the big things you could send out to be washed, like the bed linen and the towels. Your -- your things, you washed in the cold water. You had a basin that you shared. [indecipherable]

Q: And you washed that. And where would you hang it?

A: Above your bed.

Q: So it would drip down?

A: You hang it this way, they didn't drip down. [indecipherable] where you could. Also between the windows outside.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Wherever you could.

Q: But in the cold weather -- really cold weather --

A: Yeah, it would be --

Q: -- it would -- it -- it would freeze.

A: So you didn't wash that day.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: I don't know how we did it. I don't know things of ordinary, we didn't have paper, we didn't have pencils, only what you brought in. But then those people that work with it, the painters, they got it, they might have, you know, some may k -- have come to their friends, or again exchanged the barter system.

Q: Right.

A: But paper was very valuable.

Q: Sure.

A: There was no toilet paper, I don't remember ever getting a ration.

Q: Of toilet paper.

A: And any hygiene, there was no hygiene. But we all ar-are s -- young girls, did not have period for those three years.

Q: You never got your period in Theresienstadt -- Terezín.

A: You entered the ghetto, it stopped.

Q: It stopped. You know it's interesting, because many women will tell you when they went to a concentration camp it stopped. But they forget that they may not have gotten it in the ghetto.

A: No, it stopped in the ghetto.

Q: It stopped.

A: And --

Q: And you had obviously --

A: -- which was lucky, because we had no way of getting --

Q: Right.

A: -- anything. It started only when we came back to Prague. I don't know when, I mean --

Q: Right.

A: -- never thought about that.

Q: Well, it was fortunate that it stopped.

A: Well, evidently. Which we didn't think of at that time. We just forgot about it [indecipherable]

Q: Were -- was anybody worried that they weren't getting their period? No.

A: No.

Q: That was the least of your worries. But you re -- you never got it? So immediately? So it wasn't that you were getting less food. Because --

A: Well, it was the first three or four weeks and nothing happened --

Q: Nothing happened.

A: -- and that was it. You didn't worry about health those days, we were young, we thought we are -- nothing can touch us.

Q: It means you're invulnerable.

A: Yeah.

Q: Was the Verdi Requiem one of the most important concerts for you?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: And why was that the case?

A: The most impact, the most -- because we -- I at least knew what they are singing about because my friend told me. She was singing for us, she was with Schechter. She knew what [indecipherable], and I took Latin in school, don't forget I went to school from --

Q: That's right.

A: -- sixth grade I had Latin. So I knew what libera may mean, e-even if I didn't understand every word, and couldn't translate it for anybody, I didn't know that much.

Q: And what did --

A: It was very powerful.

Q: And what did it mean for you?

A: I thought I am back in Prague in a concert scene. So [indecipherable]. You -- you forget where you are that -- those two hours, you -- you hear the music, you hear the concerts, you hear the opera [indecipherable] it was only singing, there was no acting, there was no stage. I mean, there was a stage where they s -- were standing and the piano and only singing. And you were back in the National Theater hearing the opera. I mean all in am -- imagination was great.

Q: So it was -- but all of the performances that you heard were important, was the requiem particularly important somehow? Or was it more --

A: I think so.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I think so because it -- somehow our -- my friend told me what the meaning is, to tell them that they will suffer. In the end, truth will win somehow, and we wanted to believe that. You know it was very interesting, I thought I could kill any SS with cold blooded. In '45 when they started -- when they marched them, they were torn, they were dirty, they

were not these spic, span with these high boots SS. I suddenly didn't hate them so much, I couldn't. They looked so vulnerable. I don't think I could have killed anybody, and -- even though I thought I could.

Q: So they became people again in some way?

A: In some way they looked worse than we did. But in 1947 I went to England, and on the way back, I -- I brought some oranges. I had a one year old nephew, my brother had a child with my sister-in-law, my friend. And on the all -- the all -- we went through Nuremberg which was all destroyed, and I enjoyed that very much. And under -- in the station we stopped, and I had these oranges, and chocolate in my trunk that my friend -- I called her cousin, gave me for everybody. And they were begging for food, those children. And I said, "No way do I give you German children anything." Like if those kids murdered all the others, but I could look at them begging for food, and I didn't feel guilty at all. And I know I was awful, I know I -- I'm biased all my life, and not good, but I just couldn't get rid of it at that time, '47 was too early after the war. Now I am different.

Q: Do you remember the preparations for the Red Cross visit in June of '44?

A: Yes, yes, because our group again, being put anywhere we're needed, was put on the main square to do the grass. And it was all done, we had to clear everything away, new earth had to come. There was nothing, there was just mud and stones. We had to clear it of stones, which was heavy work, several times. The earth had to be brought in and turned over, and put in lime and stuff that -- to grass to grow. And then we had to seed it, and then we had to stamp it by -- by -- see, we worked days and days and days on fershernerone we called it beautification. And then when they did the film, we had to march because we -- we looked healthy, because we had the vegetables. We had to march with our hoes, and shovels on our shoulder. And march in front of the camera, and pick up the cake, and then behind the corner, we had to put the cake back on, and a new tray was brought in. Nobody could take a bite. That was just a little something that we had to pick up.

Q: This is the film --

A: That Hitler made -- Hitler gave a ghetto to -- a city to the Jews, or whatever.

Q: To the Jews. But it was never actually [indecipherable] the Jews.

A: Yeah, the film that they showed, we -- we saw part of it, we saw our f -- one of our friends in it. But the agriculture walking there, they never showed that. They said there are parts missing.

Q: And that was missing.

A: Maybe they didn't put it in, I don't know.

Q: They never completed it as far as I know.

A: Yeah, maybe they didn't put it in, it might be it's lost. I wouldn't know.

Q: So you were watching also, while you were -- while you were --

A: We knew what they are doing.

Q: What they were doing.

A: We knew what they are doing.

Q: Right.

A: The shops were being introduced, the shops were being staffed. My mother was put in the food shop, where she was selling mustard and relish, that's all they had. But it was a change, I loved mustard and bread, and that was the [indecipherable] delicacy.

Q: So it went on long enough, so actually people living in the ghetto could go into that store and get --

A: Yes, they -- yes, yes --

Q: -- if they had gelt.

A: -- it was -- it -- it took time to establish that it took time till the grass grew.

Q: Right.

A: Then we had to cut it to -- to -- you know, to make sure it looks good.

Q: And could every --

A: Have the flower planted too, flowers. There were -- it was made beautiful. They were putting up -- one space was for the gazebo for the musicians or something. And on the day of the inspection, I was in the fields working, I was not in town. We were rarely in town during the day, because once the grass grew and was finished, we went back to the fields, cause those had to be taken care of, and the summer is still most work. So on the day of th -- I never saw the --

Q: The Red Cross.

A: -- people, the Red Cross or anybody.

- Q: Mm-hm, okay. Now, during that period before the Red Cross visit, could anyone who had free time walk in that area and go into the shops? Or was that a restricted area to only certain people?
- A: It was a restricted area, it was in the middle of the town, and I don't know when the shops opened exactly, but once they were opened, I think you could go in. I don't think -- I don't know how early before that they opened it, but in the ghetto, was no restricted area. I have no idea how it was during the exi -- actual inspection, whether they restricted the main street where they walked, because I was outside.
- Q: Right.
- A: I wasn't there.
- Q: Now, it's a few months -- well, it's four months, June, July, August, September -- five months after this visit, that your parents and brother are deported. Are you living together during this period, or have you wi -- now been separated? Are you --
- A: Until they were deported, I stayed in the room with them.
- Q: You stayed with them.
- A: My brother next house. When they -- by the time they left, in the last transport, there was nobody in the house, I was all alone in the whole house.
- Q: Really?
- A: And my sister-in-law was in another house around the corner, and she was alone, too. So first we moved in together. I moved over there, I -- I didn't want to stay in -- in that room, I -- I had nightmares, I was -- I wasn't afraid of anything, I was afraid to stay there alone. I tried to save few of the things. When you went to Auschwitz, you were allowed your backpack and what you can carry, no more a trunk, that stayed all with me, the three trunks. My brother's things too. And then the agriculture department opened a house right opposite where we had the place where we gathered for work. And my sister-in-law immediately, through her supervisor, got a room for us there. So we were five girls that moved in into that house in one room. I don't remember the fifth, my sister-in-law says we were five, I remember only four.
- Q: Let me ask you something, I know this -- I know how difficult this is for you to talk about. But y-you assumed that your parents were protected.
- A: Until they weren't.
- Q: Until they weren't. And at a certain point, I guess, the people who were protected stopped being protected, they just --

- A: They all went, and I knew there is no help by that time.
- Q: By that time.
- A: Because once my father says, "We have to go," I knew that.
- Q: And did -- you obviously spoke to your brother before he left. He was the first one to go, he left on a different transport than your parents.
- A: He left on a different transport, and my sister-in-law says they got married the day before, I thought always they got married the same day he left. That was a period of time when me and my sister-in-law were jealous of each other. She's 18, I am 20. So, you know, you don't -- 21 -- you don't --
- Q: Get married first if you're younger, isn't that --
- A: No.
- Q: Oh.
- A: You -- not that --
- Q: Oh, oh.
- A: -- that didn't bother me, mi -- married my father -- my brother, not anybody I wanted. But she would claim my brother more, and she would claim that she knows him better. Now I lived with him, he was a little baby, I know him better. So in Terezín we were bickering to, and fighting, and all that. When we came back and my brother returned, he was not in a very good condition that time, because he weigh like 90 pounds, 80 pounds, he was very skinny. He had the boils like Edgar. Didn't look very good. But the first thing he said, "I don't want to hear my wife what she says, and I don't want to hear you. We are now the only family [indecipherable] and you will get along. And that's it, don't come to me." So we didn't.
- Q: That was [indecipherable]
- A: We got along, we had to get along, but not willingly. We love each other now, and I'm so happy when I see -- have to see each other every year at least. She was just here now. So she left Monday, the day you came here.
- Q: And -- is that true, uh-huh. And Honza also was deported.
- A: He was deported --
- Q: Earlier?

- A: -- in the third transport, we -- we separated.
- Q: Before.
- A: Before, because I wasn't ready to be a true fiancé or whatever. I wasn't really ready for it. And he wanted more experience, let's put it that way, as a boy.
- Q: So he was looking for more intimate experiences?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: And you were saying --
- A: So we separated, but we didn't fight. And when he -- he came to tell me he is in a transport, this is in '44, when they all were leaving in the third transport, and will I would accompany him to the Schleusse, and I said, "Yes, I'll go with you." And his last word -- words were, wait for me. But we were not going together, what do I'm waiting for? His mother stayed, his father went, too. And we were very good friends, she came to visit us in Israel, his mother.
- Q: So he --
- A: He was an oldest child, he was a terrible --
- Q: Loss.
- A: -- terrible loss to her. She stayed in Terezín, we were there, because she worked in the mica, and those people were also safe because that was war effort. So she stayed till the end, too, like I did.
- Q: Now, when you talk about yourself, with respect to sexual intimacy, did you notice that --
- A: We knew what's going on, but I just wasn't --
- Q: You weren't ready.
- A: I wasn't ready, not in camp, and not under those conditions. That's not for me.
- Q: But you -- but you noticed that this was happening around you?
- A: Oh yeah, we knew that, that there were plenty of girls who were willing, go ahead. I had better ideas about my life.
- Q: Was this surprising to you, shocking to you, or no?

- A: No. I just wasn't ready in the [indecipherable]. I wasn't ready because I don't think my parents would approve. My parents were all to me, and I wanted to live the way my parents wanted me to be. I -- my mother was very modern and everything. We never talked about sex or anything like that, but I thought she wouldn't approve, so -- not just casual, I couldn't.
- Q: Right. Do you think people were being casual?
- A: Yes.
- Q: They were?
- A: Yes. Even some of my friends.
- Q: And they --
- A: And they knew it.
- Q: And when you say casual, you mean they weren't in love with somebody?
- A: They were neve -- not in love somebody, it was just the present that counted, and somebody e-else can come afterwards, and I wasn't that type, I couldn't do that.
- Q: Did you understand it?
- A: I knew that I couldn't do it.
- Q: No, no, no, I -- no, no, I'm not talking about understanding yourself. I understand that you understood yourself. Did you understand o-other -- the women and [indecipherable]
- A: I did not judge them, no, I did not judge them.
- Q: Yes.
- A: That's their way of life. My best friend was that way. She told me about it, she told me I'm stupid.
- Q: And why did she think you were stupid? Because she thought you should do this?
- A: Because I didn't take advantage of the --
- Q: Of the --
- A: -- free -- of being free, not even having parents. She had her mother there, and I -- I just -- I don't know. I -- I wasn't mature enough. I think I was too yo-young, even though in age I was older.

Q: Right.

A: By this time I am 20 - 21. And so today 21, that's --

Q: Old.

A: -- old. I mean, you know, I just wasn't mature for that. I did not think that -- I -- I wanted relationship, but something that I can value, and that wasn't there.

Q: Right. No, I'm not suggesting that you should have been different. It's a very -- it's -- I -- I would imagine in some situations of -- of that level of depravation, with the possibility that you'll die, that one might say, this is something that I'll do. And I suspect that that might be what motivated --

A: That wa -- was for them, and not for me.

Q: Right.

A: Edgar says I was stupid. He says I was stupid till I got married. He had always said I was stupid as a young kid. I don't know, you know, I respected my parents very much, and all my life, I just wanted to be the person they wanted me to be.

Q: Right.

A: The -- it was very important to me, I don't know.

Q: No, I understand.

A: But I think -- I always said to Edgar, it would be different -- because I had my s -- my fights with my parents, I wanted things that they said no. My father wouldn't let me go on trips when he thought it's too dangerous, because he was overprotective, and I was -- tell you I told him you are worse than Hitler, Hitler said eight, and you say 7:30, you know, but he had to be 7:30. So we f -- I had fights with my parents, I wasn't the -- just the cream of a relationship. But they died so tragically. I couldn't do anything for them, to help them. If they lived certain age and died of illness, and I could take care of them, I don't think it would be so painful, and I don't think that you would have such a impact, their teaching, on me like this, what happened. Because I believed strongly that they will come back. For me it was a shock. For whatever, my parents will come back, my father knows what to do. He will help Mother, and he will -- he always -- he survived World War I, he will survive this war. So I was -- I believed my father be powerful, and -- which he wasn't. You know? So the -- for me, the hardest times were after '45.

Q: We have to change the tape.

End of Tape #7

Tape #8

Q: When your parents and brother were deported, and you couldn't go, you must have felt really awful.

A: We all did. We were in the barracks from which they were deported, we were 29 girls with our backpacks that we packed, thinking -- what sometimes the Germans did, if they room in the -- in the wagons, or if not enough people they thought were deported, they would collect anybody they saw on -- in the courtyard, and sh -- we thought maybe that way we get with. So we stayed until the train left.

Q: Hoping to get on?

A: Hoping to. And we were huddled there all night, because we couldn't go back in, back home. We were 29, and we were all crying because the parents just left. And that was it, we were devastated, but I did what my parents said, I have to go back to work, and I had to survive.

Q: So you end up with --

A: But the three days were difficult, I was constantly thinking that three days we ne -- I don't know how we knew that it takes three days. Somebody must have told us it takes about three days to get to Auschwitz -- to Birkenau. We didn't think it's the same thing.

Q: You didn't?

A: They were talking about Birkenau. But we didn't know it's next to Auschwitz, we didn't know where it is. We thought it's another camp like Terezín.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: That we knew somehow.

Q: You knew the name, but you had no idea --

A: We didn't know -- no idea.

Q: -- of the con -- no idea what it was, and that the conditions --

A: But they said three days it takes to get there.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: So when the three days were over, I said, "Oh God, they're out of the wagons." My mother had some food, and some drink in the wagon for the trip. Whether she ate it,

whether she didn't, I have no idea. And my father, too. And I was relieved after there days, because I thought they were now start maybe working, and maybe they had to --

Q: Right.

A: -- establish themselves, and what I didn't know that that's -- when they arrived, that's the end. Ah, not my father, my mother.

Q: Right. So from November until the Russians come in May --

A: Russians came May eighth.

Q: Eighth of 1945.

A: But somehow we knew something is happening because in April -- first of all, people weren't coming back to Terezín in the awful state they were in. And there was lot of work to do, we still had to have the vegetable growing, we still had to have -- feed the people. There were not enough people to do things, because we were so decimated, just the few of us. And the Red Cross, Czech Red Cross came over --

Q: There's another Red Cross visit, right?

A: No, the Czechs came over --

Q: Czechs.

A: -- around the fourth of May. They -- I think fourth of May they moved some people from the small fortress into the hospitals in -- in Terezín. And in April, the Swedish re -- Red Cross, the -- came with I think four buses, I don't know how many. And they picked up all the Danes -- there were the Danish people. And the Danes were very good if -- they took all their girlfriends with them, even though they were not Danish. And sometimes they were not girlfriends, they just took somebody with them to get them out. The SS didn't say anything. The Swedes were standing now and giving out cigarettes and chocolate, and the SS wanted to stop him, and he said -- they just showed him [indecipherable] the SS man decide. So we knew something has happened, the SS wouldn't interfere. There was nobody who would interfere if you wanted to get in, or the SS didn't say anything if you wanted to get on the bus. Depended whether the Swedes will take you. So some people got to Sweden that way, like a fren --

Q: Did you -- did you --

A: I didn't want to leave, no way.

Q: Cause you're waiting, you think your parents are coming back.

- A: My parents and my brother will come, and that's wa -- we -- I didn't know where to go in Prague. Where do we meet in big Prague? They know I am here, they will come here. That's what we had, you come back to Terezín, I'll wait for you. So I didn't want to leave any more, no way.
- Q: So who is doing the kitchens, I mean, there -- s -- you -- you --
- A: Women, all women --
- Q: Women. Everyth --
- A: -- and there were no -- very few men, there were some --
- Q: -- men. I see.
- A: -- there were some. There were some in the agriculture too, but very few. And when the Russians came from that time, it was the worst thing, because first of all they quarantined us right away, you couldn't move freely any more.
- Q: Within the ghetto you couldn't move freely --
- A: No, within the ghetto, you could --
- Q: Oh, you could, you --
- A: -- but you couldn't go out. We could, we were agriculture, again. I could go in and out, and I did. My sister-in-law, as soon as she heard that my brother -- someone -- I don't know how the news traveled. My sister-in-law found out that my brother is on the way to Prague, so I knew my brother survived, he's going to Prague. So she said, "I leave everything here. Watch over our things, we need everything. I'm going to Prague." She left. My friend left too, for Prague. And then she said, "I got an apartment back, if you want to come, come." So I decided with another friend, we will go, I want to see my brother. Meanwhile, the people from the last transport came, who said that my mother didn't survive, that she did make the right side. I didn't believe them. In my mind I knew it's true, but in my heart, no. My mother is somewhere in a hospital, she -- sh -- I'm sure sh -- she said she'll survive, she'll keep her word. And -- but I decided I want to see my brother. I didn't know anything about my father. But le -- meanwhile, my brother spoke with Erna Haarth, and knew about my father, and he told me. And was devastating for me, but you know, I was still hoping maybe it's not true, maybe somebody else died, and not him, maybe. He's so sick, maybe he forgot his name, maybe -- you know, I --
- Q: Well, sure.
- A: -- I wanted the impossible to come true. So we met with my brother, I saw my brother and that was nice, and then I went back. Because he said, "Go back, and you have to come only when you can take all your luggage, we need everything. I have nothing what

I have only.” And he left few things when he went to Auschwitz, and I have few things from my father and mother, so I watched over it, and on the first of June, they announced that the first transport going to Prague, so I immediately put myself on the list, pack everything, took all the luggage I could in the train, and I went for Prague -- first of -- Prague, first of June, and I went -- I knew where my sister-in-law, my brother are. Her father came back, so he got his own apartment back, so that’s where we met. And sh -- and I brought the things, she didn’t let them come up, I had to leave it all in the courtyard, and they sprayed it till that we don’t bring the bedbugs. Ba -- back to the bedbugs. We thought that Theresienstadt is moving, and that’s --

Q: Everywhere.

A: -- from the bag -- bedbugs, millions of them. So -- so that’s how I came home, with the first empty -- and I found out from the poems, and from some writing of his mother, she wrote a little diary what happened --

Q: Edgar’s -- Edgar’s mother.

A: Edgar’s mother. It’s hard to read because she wrote in pencil. And she writes that first of June they came by train to Prague, so they were on the same train I was, but I didn’t know them, so I wouldn’t know who they were.

Q: Yes, right. Now, if I can interrupt your story for a moment, is there a story about bedbugs --

A: Yeah, there is a story that -- yeah --

Q: -- and a candle that I’m supposed to ask you about.

A: But from him, not from me.

Q: Yes.

A: As you know, we lived on the bunkbeds --

Q: Yes.

A: -- with Eva, and right at the window, the fourth window from the corner was our window. And downstairs the men were working on the railroad day and night. Now we had with Eva, a arrangement that if one is being bitten, she wakes the other up, then both of us look for them. Now we didn’t have what to do with them, so we put water in that dish we were fus -- getting our food in, put water in it, and we were throwing them in to drown them. But we had to do it always together, and we had to find them. So we had a candle. And in summer it was hot, we slept naked. So we would light the candle and look for it, and Edgar said they had a good show downstairs, the boys did, who were working. We didn’t care. We couldn’t sleep, we had to catch the bedbugs. So that’s the story he likes.

- Q: I see. The candle had nothing to do with the bedbugs, but just had to see --
- A: No, we had to see where --
- Q: -- see them -- right.
- A: -- where to catch them. How do you see them in the dark?
- Q: Right. So many people saw you.
- A: And you couldn't -- not too many. You couldn't put on the big light, because you would wake everybody. So we would put on the candle and look for the bedbugs.
- Q: Right.
- A: So we can sleep.
- Q: It's fortunate you didn't start a fire, I guess.
- A: We didn't think of that.
- Q: So you come back to Prague. How long does it take you before you believe that your parents are not coming back?
- A: I don't know because I -- I wanted to believe for a long time, maybe s-six months. We had to dict -- we had -- we wanted to get something back from my parents, so we went to the insurance company because they had life insurance. We went to the firm whether my father wouldn't -- get something from like pension or something that he paid, but of course, we were over 21, so there was nothing we could get. And the -- the insurance company wanted death certificate. We couldn't explain to them we don't have death certificates, they died in a camp. So we had to go to the court and declare them deceased, and that took six months. And then we got o-officially death certificate. And I don't know whether that made me believe. I don't think I wanted ever to believe that they are dead. And then we went to the insurance company, and then they told us, well the Germans took their life insurances and everything. It's in Germany. So we wrote to Germany nec -- to the company, and they said give us proof. They wouldn't give us the proof, and they didn't believe us, so that was lost. I don't know when I stopped believing, when I knew they are gone. I didn't want to believe it. I knew that. I -- I saw -- I don't know whether I even could have taken the suffering I saw in the other people and the state they were in, imagining that my father would look like that. So I didn't wish that on them either. I just wanted them to be alive, and the way they were before. So --
- Q: You wanted to move from one period of time, back to the other.

A: Back to whatever, but nothing I've -- I -- they wouldn't give me our apartment back because my brother lived with his wife there, and I was a only person, the apartment was so -- too big, so I didn't get an apartment, I had no right for an apartment as a single person, so I had to find a room somewhere, and I had to find a job. And I didn't know anything. And luckily a friend of mine send me to the trade unions that they are looking for somebody. I don't know why they took me, because I was supposed to work as a secretary and I never -- I -- meaning -- I say I never saw, I saw a typewriter, but I never worked on a typewriter. But they took me and gave me chance to learn. And I was lucky to have a job, and when I had a job, I rented a room, and that's how I started, with nothing. But I still, you know, in back of my mind, some miracle will happen, but --

Q: [inaudible]

A: -- in my -- in my head I knew it is impossible. I went every day to the -- there was a office of political prisoners, which we were considered by that time, political prisoners, and they published every day a new list whom they found in some hospitals, or in Germany, survivors. And I would go there every day to look for the names, whether my parent's names appear there. I was searching. I went to Red Cross, whether they have some people that, you know, we think maybe they just lost the memory and don't remember where they are from, or who they are, whether that exists, you know? There were some people in shw -- Sweden, I wanted to know whether they are -- whether the Red Cross there knows about them. But there was no -- no way that there -- could survive in a -- when people were witnesses that -- not the -- exactly to it, but witnesses to what happened, and they knew.

Q: Was your brother like you, or did he believe them?

A: No.

Q: He -- he believed they were --

A: He -- he knew, but he had his wife, and my si -- nephew was born September '46, he -- he went back to school. That's why he told me, "I can't help you, I am student, I don't have money." He lived with his father-in-law and his wife and -- and the son. And he had a new life, I didn't. Not -- no -- very fe -- all my friends that we were the groups, few girls came, no boys. None of my --

Q: So Honza is --

A: -- the friends I knew -- no.

Q: Honza didn't come back?

A: No, no, none of them.

Q: None of the --

A: None of my brother's friends, none of my friends, none of the boys I knew survived. Of one friend, one brother, who lives in Australia, who was like four years younger. His brother was ou -- my brother's friend. So we were in a group. But from the groups we were bef -- before the -- before Terezín, none of my male friends, if you put it that way, that were in a group, not all the boyfriend, came back. Only the ones i -- Eva is -- few of the girls, and the rest were the girls we lived through the whole -- until the end, because they were in agriculture.

Q: So you're 22 or 23, in --

A: In '45, I was 22.

Q: -- 19 [indecipherable] 22. '46 you're 23. And you not only don't have your parents, your whole world has collap -- essentially has collapsed.

A: Yes. Yeah, and don't forget, I -- my aunt, whom I loved very dearly is gone. My uncle, my three cousins. My mother had an extensive family with whom we were very, very close. One of her cousins which -- whom I knew very well, survived in Bratislava, and two of them -- so I was in touch with them. And her sons, I was very close, which are like second cousins already. One survived in England. In '47 I went to visit him, we are still in touch. That was the whole family that survived, but the family that was living in -- near Votice where we went visit -- when we went visiting my grandma, my mother's cousin would call all the cousins and her aunt, and we would have big dinner, and th -- it was like a huge family, even though they were mother's cousins, they were not -- you know, ki -- my close family, but we were very close, and I loved them like an -- all were gone. Everybody there was gone from her family. Her brother, the brother's family, the three children and his wife. The -- everybody was gone.

Q: How difficult was it for you with your -- with your brother, with whom you were close in a certain way, but now he's moving in another direction, and you don't know where to move? You -- your -- i-is that difficult?

A: I think I suffered, but I knew that I have to do what he says. I can't hang on him. I knew I would be dead weight if -- in that case, and that I have -- I have to do something.

Q: So does in some way your having been in Terezín -- I -- I hate to put it like this, but in some way a help to you because it was the first time in your life you were alone, before anything bad happens. So you learn that you can cope.

A: Yes, yes, it helped me, it made me different. It made me aware of different life than just protected by my parents, and I think it helped me to f -- put my feet down on the ground in '45, because that was very difficult. I -- today I think it was difficult too, because I have nobody to talk to.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Nobody wanted to listen to us. With my friends I could, and we were all in the same boat. But nobody want -- I couldn't went -- I couldn't talk to my brother, he wouldn't listen.

Q: He wouldn't?

A: No. He looked only forward, my brother. He wouldn't listen what -- just forget what happened. You -- you have to look forward. So you know today we know that sometimes people need to talk.

Q: Yeah.

A: I didn't know it that time, either.

Q: Well, you knew in some way, because you wanted it.

A: I think so, but I didn't know -- have a person that I would want to talk to.

Q: You didn't find someone?

A: No. Eva was in the sa -- you know, my friends went through the same with me, but most of my friends had family. Had mothers. Eva had her mother, my other friend had her mother. Most of them. One had mother and father.

Q: And Mama Dittel never said do you want to --

A: No, no. They wanted to forget, too.

Q: Everybody wanted to forget.

A: Mama Dittel went through Auschwitz, she didn't want to talk about it. We were visiting, we were very close, I was very close with them.

Q: So w -- you --

A: But not close enough to have a shelter there.

Q: Yes.

A: I had no shelter, you know?

Q: You had no shelter.

A: Until 1948. I was moving from room to room because somebody got married, because a friend took me in and the brother married, they needed the space. I pick up my trunk and I move. In 1948 my friend brother had a little studio apartment. You had to have a permit

from the town, you had to get -- it's -- it was very complicated to get an apartment. But he we -- he was running in front of -- away from the Communists, and she said move into his apartment and then you will have it. So I did, and that's the first -- and from work they helped me to get the apartment, and I had roof over my head permanent, that nobody can tell me I'm getting married, you have to move out, or you know, things like that. I moved from place to place during the three years.

Q: So for those -- those years, '45 to '48, you don't have a permanent place at all. You always were thinking --

A: Any time I could -- can be asked to move out.

Q: And all that time you're working as a secretary?

A: Yeah.

Q: So you learned how --

A: From -- from auba -- August '45. I had to, I had no money. I had to take the job as soon as it appeared.

Q: And you learned how to type, I gather.

A: I learned how to type, yeah.

Q: Were you good?

A: I don't know, they kept me.

Q: They kept you, I guess you were good.

A: I worked here 25 years.

Q: Yes?

A: Yes. In one job as Administrative Secretary, so I think I did okay.

Q: Obviously, very good. And you married -- you met Edgar in '46, and --

A: Well, we met and separated, and he went to -- to Switzerland and I went to England because I wanted that -- I wanted to learn better English, and I spent about six weeks, '47, in England, and I wanted to stay in England. And they offered me you could stay as domestic. Well, when I wrote that to my brother he exploded. "You didn't survive the war to be a maid. You have a job here. We are the only family and you are tearing it apart." So I returned. You can go any time you want to England. And I returned because -- and then the Communists came and I couldn't go --

Q: And you couldn't go. And then you re-met Edgar.

A: Edgar, in '48, when he came back from [indecipherable] and suddenly appeared in my office. Had no idea why we didn't hear for year -- for the two years he was away we didn't hear from him cha --

Q: For two years you were separated, that's --

A: A year and something, I don't know exactly.

Q: Uh-huh. And he found you, cause he knew where you were.

A: I was still working, he knew where I was working --

Q: Uh-huh, yes.

A: -- so he went to look up for me.

Q: Yes. And you took up again.

A: We started to go out again, and by this time he's a -- he was sophisticated, he was traveled in the world, and he was good looking, and I got interested.

Q: Right. More than you were before.

A: I wasn't interested before because first of all my friend was interested in him, and she invited him, and I didn't want to take him away from her. I didn't know what the arrangement is, I didn't know he was not interested, or interested in me more, I don't know. I just didn't feel it's right. She introduced us, but she told me she is interested in him.

Q: Right.

A: But she -- she has a f -- she married, but she -- we planned together to run away with my friend, the one that lives in New Jersey. By that time she got back the business -- she and her sister survived, so sh -- they got the -- back the business of her father. And she had some money, and to get illegally across the border that time, what she found was like 10,000 dol -- crowns, not dollar. And she did it, and I was visiting my brother at that time, but even if I were in Prague I couldn't go, I didn't have the 10,000. So she left illegally in '48, in May. And so after she left, and Edgar came back, I had no problem.

Q: Right. You could see him.

A: She was gone --

Q: Right.

A: -- she was here in United States already. And she had a boyfriend, and married an American soldier that was in -- in Germany. So we are very close, both.

Q: And how soon after you -- you start seeing ed -- and it's Edgar Krasa, in case anybody doesn't realize --

A: Pretty soon I got interested.

Q: Interested --

A: Very pretty soon, he didn't know it that I made up my mind. That's it --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- that's the right person. The first time, no.

Q: And how soon after you decided were you willing to meet his parents? Or did you meet him s --

A: He asked very fast about that, that was one thing that I didn't want, I thought it's too serious the first time when he started right away we go to visit my parents.

Q: I see.

A: But Edgar took it as a visit. I came there with him, I agreed to it because I was already interested in him. And the mother's -- he said, "I want you to meet my girlfriend," new girlfriend, whatever he said. And her mother -- my mother-in-law said, "Another one?" Like what -- she shouldn't think she's the only one. And his father looks me over, I was very skinny that time, and says, "What do you see in her? Nothing front, nothing back." So that was their greeting.

Q: This is the introduction.

A: But they were, you know, I have not seen a family together that all -- everybody, like two parents and the son. I -- I thought it was something marvelous to be invited to dinner there, and -- and share.

Q: Right.

A: And Edgar was a great son, he did not -- he would -- Mother would go with us to every concert, which I sometimes didn't like, he doesn't even know it. Cause I wanted to be all alone with him, too.

Q: Right.

A: And we had to go every Sunday to visit his parents and play cards with them, you know, he was that kind of a son. He wouldn't leave them even -- he would bring the company there.

Q: Right.

A: And I liked it because it was family. There was something tangible.

Q: And it was a kind of devotion you understood --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- because you -- you had that.

A: I think I respected it. I respected it because I saw it at home, too. My father and my mother were really dedicated to his parents. My mother didn't have her parents any more. My mother was great with her mother-in-law and father-in-law, and -- and there was great respect, and we had to respect the grandparents very much.

Q: You described yourself as feeling very guilty.

A: Yeah, always.

Q: And you still feel guilty?

A: Of course.

Q: Do you really blame yourself?

A: No, but all the girls that went, like Eva with her mother, and the other Eva that I knew, saved their mothers because their mothers had a reason to try to be together, would try to get to the other side. That happened.

Q: But it didn't always happen.

A: Probably not. I only looked at when it happened.

Q: When it happened, and blamed yourself for not being able to do it.

A: Yes. I couldn't do anything for my father.

Q: Right.

A: That was hopeless. And wouldn't be even near him, because men were immediately separated, which we didn't know. But after knowing everything in '45, I felt if I was there, maybe I could have sav -- everybody said it's ridiculous, I know.

Q: You know it intellectually.

A: Probably.

Q: But not -- not in your heart.

A: No. Cause I really tried hard, and it didn't happen, so maybe I didn't try hard enough.

Q: Is this your punishment?

A: I don't know. I don't know, but I was tied to my -- you know, there are -- my brother was more independent than I was. Since he was a boy, he was more inden -- independent. And my kids, thanks to Edgar were independent. I wouldn't have let them be independent. So maybe that's -- I wasn't -- I -- I tell you, I wasn't mature for being alone in the world and do for myself. Some -- Edgar was. He was the one who fed his parents since he was 14. Sup -- Supported this parents. And he was very easy to start anywhere else life. For me there -- every time it was difficult. Whether it was Israel, or it was United States. And so I am not so courageous like he is. I needed somewhere to come back to.

End of Tape #8

Tape #9

- Q: I know there's a -- a lot more to your story after the war, it's very complicated, but I -- we'll have to do a lot of that at another time, but a lot of people think that when the word liberation is used, like [indecipherable] right, that everything is fine. And it's not.
- A: We thought so too.
- Q: You thought it was --
- A: We thought so too. But our liberation was, you go back home, I go back to school and everything will be normal. And of course it wasn't, it cannot be normal. And my sister-in-law who got the apartment back wasn't normal.
- Q: Right.
- A: She got interrupted her schooling even earlier than I did. They did offer you -- they give you a paper that you finished school, but what's the use, that education was missing anyhow. So you thought liberation means back to where you were before the war. And like when you saw, if you go back to your hometown, it's not the same.
- Q: Right.
- A: We didn't -- we didn't know that, or we didn't want to know it, and didn't think about it.
- Q: Right. That was -- that was the fantasy while you were in Terezín.
- A: Yeah, yes.
- Q: But it's a very difficult adjustment, if one ever fully adjusts.
- A: Yeah.
- Q: Do you think you adjusted?
- A: I think once I met Edgar, and we started new life, and then really, I think that was for me good life. That was what --
- Q: Yes, yeah.
- A: -- I wanted from the beginning. I didn't want a career, I wanted a family. So I worked because I have to support myself. I didn't think of working myself up or something, that wasn't important. Important was to have family.
- Q: Right.

A: So my brother said -- I said, if I don't have a kid by -- or something by 25, I'm going to do it without the husband. My mother, you know?

Q: Yes.

A: Ahead of the time. So my brother joked that, "I think somebody will sacrifice himself, I put an ad in the newspaper." I was determined to have it one way or the other. I was determined.

Q: Really?

A: I wanted a family, but if I can't have it, I'll make my own family.

Q: And what was it -- what was it about having a family. Was it reconstituting what you had before and recreating it --

A: Yeah, yeah

Q: Is that what it was?

A: Yeah.

Q: So that you could make it.

A: Yeah.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: I needed it.

Q: Right.

A: You know, some people are [indecipherable] they don't even want a partner or anything, because it -- it's -- you have to adjust to a partner, too, and all that, so they don't want to do it. But for me that was important.

Q: You said you mainly had bad dreams or nightmares after the war.

A: After -- after the war.

Q: Did that continue for many years? Does it --

A: Oh yeah.

Q: -- even now?

A: No, I don't think so any more, no.

Q: And the bad dreams are --

A: Even in Israel -- in Israel I was dreaming we are in Prague, want to get out, and can't, and Edgar is in Israel, how will we get together. Things being separated, so I had dreams about that. But I think that stopped already.

Q: And did you ever have nightmares about Terezín, that you were back in Terezín?

A: Yes.

Q: You did?

A: Yes. And can't get out.

Q: And you can't get out.

A: Always this can't get out.

Q: Yeah.

A: Or after we ran away, that I am back in Czechoslovakia and can't get out.

Q: Right.

A: That -- that did happen, yes.

Q: And I'm certain you've dreamt about your parents. Or I shouldn't be so certain --

A: I dreamt of a --

Q: I guess.

A: -- yes, I dreamt that I found them in a hospital in Poland. I -- I dreamt that they came suddenly back. I wouldn't even know how they would find me, because we didn't have a common address --

Q: Right.

A: -- or anything where to find me, but you don't think about these things.

Q: Right.

A: And till today when I think about my parents, I see them the way they were in their 50's. I have no idea how they would age.

- Q: Of course, of course. When did you start talk -- who did you find, when you found someone to talk about what you had gone through?
- A: Nobody until Edgar.
- Q: Nobody until Edgar.
- A: Until he wanted to know what I did, or something, no. And until the 90's, nobody wanted to hear. People I worked with for 25, didn't even know I was in a camp.
- Q: Did they know you had come from Israel, from th --
- A: Yeah.
- Q: And from Europe?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: But they never said, what happened?
- A: They were young people that were born here and they didn't know it.
- Q: But you were in United States when the film, "The Holocaust" was on television.
- A: Well then that --
- Q: 1978.
- A: That was in '78?
- Q: Yeah.
- A: I think that's when people started to get so in -- I thought it was in 80 - something, so I thought that's when people start to be interested. And that's when they started to ask questions, yes, after that movie. That was a serial, and that --
- Q: Yes.
- A: -- that -- that was anyhow fiction, that's --
- Q: Yes, it was fiction.
- A: -- not a true story.
- Q: That's right.

A: I saw it, and I thought, that isn't true.

Q: Terrible.

A: Terrible.

Q: But it worked, because a lot of people started talking.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. And was it helpful then, or was it too late?

A: I don't know, but I think what happened to us is that we found out that being quiet is harmful, people should know that as we are dying out, there are coming more and more people that will say it never happened.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: It's fiction, it's imagination. And in memory of all those that died, that it should be known and so I can talk.

Q: But you don't talk in schools, am I correct? Is it --

A: No, because I am not a public speaker.

Q: Oh.

A: I am very conscious of my accent.

Q: It's a beautiful accent.

A: It's terrible.

Q: No.

A: When I heard myself on the tape the first time, I said, I sound like [indecipherable]

Q: No you don't.

A: On the tape I do.

Q: Absolutely not. [indecipherable]

A: And I get embarrassed in front of all people. I -- you know, this is fine, I can do this any time. And besides, I already feel I know you, since yesterday and feel very comfortable

with all of you here. But total strangers, I -- I have difficulty, and Edgar can do it with a thousand people, he doesn't mind, and he will joke, and he's witty, I am not. I can't joke about it. When he gets embarrassed he jokes more. [indecipherable]

Q: And you don't.

A: I don't.

Q: You -- you get very shy.

A: Yeah. I don't -- besi -- and again, I don't have what to tell in the schools, it's not such a interesting story like his. Comes back to that.

Q: Well, I guess that's in the eye of the beholder, what's interesting or not.

A: I know, but you know, especially the way Terezín is pictured now as a paradise for the Jews. So -- what should I tell them?

Q: It wasn't a paradise for you.

A: No.

Q: Or for anyone else there.

A: For anyone. And that's where I have the difficulty, take people back there, because the psychological, the fright when it came transport is going, new transport is collecting. Who is going to go, which friend is going to be in it? Will I be in it? Where is it going? That -- that psychological -- that cloud was over you all the time. All those years, up to the end we didn't know when a transport is going, until the Red Cross came. Because one thing we were afraid of all that, what will the end be like? Will they shoot us all? Now we are such a small group here, they have it much easier. Will they let us survive? And when we heard the stories that they did not let the people survive, the last day they were shooting them, I don't think they would -- if they have time would have not be willing to do it to Terezín, too. So that was -- we were always afraid of the end, even though we were in Terezín, the end was for us a mystery. And we thought in masses is strength, that they can't kill 50,000 people, but we learned that they could, so --

Q: Let me just ask you one -- I'll ask you two more questions. One has to do with the -- the world in which you live now, that -- that isn't the Holocaust. When you hear the news about genocides in various countries, in Rwanda in '94, in Bosnia, in Cambodia --

A: You are saying it's going on again --

Q: Again.

- A: -- and it's everywhere, and still in the world. And I feel that humans do it to themselves. You know, I couldn't believe in God afterwards, because my mother was such a angel, and my father helping everybody, how could they be killed? And the rabbi, I don't even know his name, I don't know where he came from, I met him somewhere where I was. And I told him I don't believe because He let my parents be killed, and who were so good. And he said to me, "What do you think God looks like? Do you think he's there like a puppeteer, moving his finger and saying this one die, this one live? God gave humans brain. Humans are doing this to humans. He's not guilty, he's trying to make you a better human. You believe in Him, you believe in good."
- Q: You believe that?
- A: I think humans that -- are doing it to themselves. I don't think that -- I think it's in -- it's - - they are animals. If a man can kill a little baby and go home and hug his own baby, how can he do it? And that's what the SS did. So they are not humans to me, they are just animals. And I can't even treat animals badly, because they have feelings and pain; and they could, so they are worse than animals.
- Q: So has the world improved?
- A: No, they are still doing it. They are doing it still all over the world.
- Q: So this has to be a disappointment to you, you can't --
- A: It is, but I don't know how to repair it, I'm not that clever. Education, education, but what happened in Israel? The kids are educated to hate each other, the kids are educated to fight, th -- th -- it's -- they get hatred with their mother's milk. And it won't be good until they change that. And I don't think it will be for our generation to see. Maybe these terrible atrocities and terrible wars can change the generation of my grandchildren, that they get some sense, and say violence doesn't pay, and shouldn't be. Our generation wouldn't do it.
- Q: We haven't learned.
- A: Hm?
- Q: We haven't learned.
- A: No.
- Q: Is there anything you'd like to say that I haven't asked you about, or you'd like to say anyway?
- A: No, I don't think so, I don't know.
- Q: Well, I want to thank you very much --

A: You're very welcome.

Q: -- for your honesty and your being willing to talk about what I know is really difficult for you.

A: Sometimes.

Q: Yeah.

A: There are parts of -- even during the war when we were happy. I cherish, I think for life, all the friendships I made there, and we are still writing, even if we can't see each other, we are all over the world. This -- and I think those friendships, and those -- that closeness cannot be replaced, and cannot be achieved later. The circumstances were such that you became close, and that's a great feeling to have such friends.

Q: Right. Well thank you again.

A: You're welcome.

Q: And who is this?

A: This is my grandfather, Gustav Krasa, who died sometime in 1923, so I have really never met him. That's my mother's father. She was a born Krasa.

Q: And who is this?

A: This is my grandmother, Johanna, born strassa -- Krasa, who died much earlier, in 1913.

Q: And who is this?

A: This is my father Oskar Fuchs, and my mother, ro -- Rosa Fuchs, and my brother, their firstborn, Yearje, which means George.

Q: And this photo?

A: This photo is again my brother, and me. A professional picture by a photographer.

Q: About what year, do you know?

A: I think I was about three here, maybe two and a half, something like that.

Q: And this one?

A: This one is again me and my brother, I think about two years older, maybe four I am here.

Q: And this shot?

A: This is my mother, Rosele, and me and my brother.

Q: And here?

A: My brother and me. I have to be about six to seven because I got my new teeth, front teeth. So I would judge first or second grade.

Q: And this one?

A: This one is going to first grade. We did not have kindergarten in our times like here. I was very proud to get the school bag, and I wanted a picture with it.

Q: Doesn't look like your brother was quite so happy.

A: My brother was older, he was already being in third grade.

Q: And here?

A: That's my brother in -- going to first grade. And because he had the picture with his school bag, I wanted it too, when I went.

Q: And this shot?

A: This is me, but I'm not sure whether that's fifth grade, or -- probably before going to gymnasium or something like that.

Q: And this shot?

A: This is around 1940, when we started to wear stars. Both my friend and me went to get pictures.

Q: And who is this?

A: This is my friend, Ollie Dupe, who perished with the 5,000 Czech Jews on March seventh, 1944, in Auschwitz.

Q: And this was the same day that you took this picture that we just saw? Right? You went - - the two of you went on the same day to get your photograph, right?

A: No, this --

Q: Oh, this is different.

A: This is diff -- this is a picture on the same day, but she perished on -- on that March -- that's not -- that's '44, we were not taking pictures any more.

Q: Right.

A: Days before liberation.

Q: And this picture?

A: This picture is my boyfriend, quote fiancé.

Q: Honza.

A: Honza Kosepak, who died in April '45.

Q: And this shot?

A: This is my mother Rosa kra -- Krasa-Fuchs, who -- her last picture, official picture that I - - that she had made and I got.

Q: And these two beauties?

A: Well, this is my friend Ollie, and me.

Q: This is Ollie?

A: Yes.

Q: And this is?

A: Me. We were pretty inseparable certain times before I was transported away. Eva was already gone, so we were inseparable.

Q: And this was when you were in the -- in the group?

A: Yeah. This is during those groups. She was in the same group as me.

Q: And this shot?

A: This is Ollie and her brother Gusta Dupe, and Dolphie Reeshnofsky, we were in a group, and he -- Dolphie was the one who wrote the play and directed the play, this is from the play.

Q: And this is?

A: This is Dolphie Reeshnofsky. That's Gusta Dupe, and that's her, Olive Dupe.

Q: And this shot?

A: This is me, in the play, famous play that we performed for our parents. And that's Gusta Dupe as a magician or a wizard or something. And I'm begging him, I don't know what for.

Q: And you made the costumes?

A: I had my -- there was a dress I had, and the co -- we made the costumes. We made everything for the play. We had several plays. I -- and I don't -- can't separate them.

Q: And this shot?

A: This is again from another play, were Ollie Dupe and Dolphie Reeshnofsky.

Q: And this photo?

A: This is my father with my brother, discussing some important subject. They always did.

Q: That was --

A: Walking --

Q: With their heads down?

A: Yeah.

Q: They talking about stamps?

A: Could be stamps, could be some math problem, could be anything.

Q: And this shot?

A: This is me, must have been 1940 or '41. One of the last pictures.

Q: Before Terezín.

A: Yeah.

Q: And this one?

A: This is my brother after his matriculation, his picture for the matriculation book, or whatever they had in 1939, spring.

Q: And who is this?

A: This is my beloved grandma. Last picture before she was deported, she already is wearing a Jewish star, and she died in Terezín in August, 1942.

Q: And she's how old?

A: Either 86 or 88.

Q: And what's this shot?

A: This is a shot after the liberation, when we all left. This is my former supervisor from head of our group, Wilma Shick, standing. Sitting is a very close friend of mine, Ene Vetrovska, one of those that was not allowed to steal. And they stayed on after liberation to harvest and work the gardens, while we all left. Didn't want to stay a day longer in Terezín.

Q: And what [indecipherable] here?

A: This is a pendant I got, or a pin I got for my birthday in 1943, with emblem of the town of Terezín, and on the back with the date and my transfer number. And --

Q: Is -- is the whole thing the emblem --

A: Yes.

Q: All right, I see. So would you say that, the whole --

A: The whole thing is a emblem of the town of Terezín, each town in Europe has an emblem.

Q: And this opens.

A: For a picture. You can put a picture in.

Q: Is this your transport number?

A: Yes, AAR647, and the date is September 24th, 1943.

End of Tape #9

Conclusion of Interview