

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Interview with Fred Jarvis  
June 9, 2009  
RG-50.030\*0530**

## **PREFACE**

The following oral history testimony is the result of a recorded interview with Fred Jarvis, conducted by Peggy Frankston on June 9, 2009 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took place in Bristol, Tennessee and is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The reader should bear in mind that this is a verbatim transcript of spoken, rather than written prose. This transcript has been neither checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy, and therefore, it is possible that there are errors. As a result, nothing should be quoted or used from this transcript without first checking it against the taped interview.

## **FRED JARVIS**

### **June 9, 2009**

Question: This is an interview with Mr. **Fred Jarvis**, conducted by **Peggy Frankston** from the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum, with the **Rivesaltes** Internment Camp Memorial, on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in **Bristol, Tennessee**.

Good morning, Mr. **Jarvis**. Thank you for speaking with us today. Could you present yourself?

Answer: My name is **Fred Jarvis**. I was born in **Freiburg, Germany** in 1935.

Q: What was your name?

A: My wa – my name – my – I was born **Manfred Judas**.

Q: Could you tell us a little about your parents, and your family, please?

A: My father was a businessman in **Freiburg**, he was a horse dealer, which would be the equivalent of today's automobile dealer. He sold horses to the city of **Freiburg**, and he was a World War I veteran, and he was a well-known businessman, my mother was a stay at home mom. And I had many friends in **Freiburg, Germany**. I remember my father taking me sled riding in the – in the wintertime, and I played in the spring and summertime with the neighbors on the streets. I had many toys. I was of a well – middle class family, and we had the cars that you – pedal cars that you could ride along on the streets and – and – and which we shared with each other. And we had played pranks, my friends and I

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played pranks, we put pistol caps in the trolley tracks, and the trolley came along and it made noises, it cracked them, and so, that type of thing. So w-we had – had a good childhood in **Freiburg, Germany**.

Q: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

A: I had an older brother, nine years older than me.

Q: What was his name?

A: His name was **Irving Joseph Judas**.

Q: Did anyone else live with you in the house, or the apartment?

A: Well, we had the guests from time to time, but it was just our family of four.

Q: Do you remember when the war started?

A: No, I do not remember when the war started, I only remember when the Gestapo knocked on our door, and said get out, at gunpoint. And they gave us time to pack a suitcase per person, and I was five years old, and my mother ha – packed for me a child's rucksack, which I carried with me to this central staging point, a railroad station, where they took us to at gunpoint, where we met several hundred other German Jewish people like us, who huddled in fear, not knowing what to expect, and ate what little food we thought to bring along, and then there was none.

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Q: When the Gestapo arrived, was it the morning, the evening? Was it summer, winter?

A: Best of my recollection – recollection it was in the morning.

Q: Was it cold out?

A: I – I don't remember the temperature, or anything like that, that – the –

Q: Before you left the house, what happened besides everyone packing a suitcase?

A: Well, I remember my grandmother flushing paper money down the toilet, and it – it took me 40 years to find out why she did that. It was because they had told us that we could only take the equivalent of 10 dollars per person by order of death if we found out to have more. So she flushed down – decided to flush down whatever money she had in the house so they wouldn't get it.

Q: Were you afraid?

A: I n – I wasn't really afraid at that point. I really didn't know what was going on yet.

Q: So you went to the central – central holding place, and did you wait outside?

A: No, they brought us inside, and with several hundred other people that were already there.

Q: Did they tell you where you were going?

A: Didn't tell us anything. That's when we started to become afraid.

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Q: And what happened after that?

A: They – there was a long space of time, I guess, that appears at – at – at such occasion, and then sometime that evening, they loaded us into cattle train cars and shipped us to southern **France**, near the **Pyrenees** mountains, to a concentration camp called **Gurs, g-u-r-s, Gurs**. It was at the foothills of the **Pyrenees** mountains, a range of mountains that separates **France** and **Spain**.

Q: When you left – **[interruption]**

A: She did live with us.

Q: Well then, I asked you that and you said – and you said no.

A: Oh, and I – yeah, yeah –

Q: We just lived the four of us, okay.

A: Well, I – I – yeah, yeah.

Q: So that's why I asked that to you, okay, okay.

A: Okay, all right, okay.

Q: Okay.

A: Thank you for pointing that out to me.

Q: So when you – when you told me that, I figured she must live with you, but sh  
– okay.

A: They took her to **Rivesaltes** with us and she died there.

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Q: Okay. She died there, or in **Gurs**?

A: In **Gurs**, she died in **Gurs**, yeah.

Q: She died in **Gurs**, okay, okay. So that's – I want to – I want to start again, okay?

A: Right, okay.

Q: And – and I don't want to have to point out discrepancies of things that you told me, cause I'm not here to challenge what you say on tape.

A: I – I will try to do better. This is new to me, you know that.

Q: I know, I know.

A: Okay.

Q: But also, it would be good if you could look at me. I know it's sometimes hard when you're – you're remembering something you – you want to look at something else.

A: I'll be happy to look at you.

Q: I mean, I'm not that great to look at, but if – if you need to look off just because, you know, you're – you're trying to rememb –

A: Well, if it's a contest between you and me, you win.

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Q: No, it's not a question of that, it's that yo – sometimes I have that trouble too, if I'm trying to remember something, I can't look at the person in the eye, I look somewhere else. But if you can come back to me, okay, I'd appreciate that, okay.

A: Yes, indeed, yes.

Q: Can we start again **Steve**, is that okay? Okay. This is an interview with Mr. **Fred Jarvis**, conducted by **Peggy Frankston** from the **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum, with the **Rivesaltes** Internment Camp Memorial, on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in **Bristol, Tennessee**. Mr. **Jarvis**, thank you for coming today. Could you introduce yourself please?

A: My name is **Fred Jarvis**. I was born in **Freiburg, Germany** as **Manfred Judas** in 1935. I – my father's name was **Leo**, my mother's name was **Hilda**, and my brother's name was name – was **Irving Joseph Judas**. And my grandmother lived with us in our garden apartment in **Freiburg, Germany**.

Q: Tell me a little bit about your family and about your life in **Freiburg**.

A: My father was a businessman, my mother was a stay at home mom, and our life in **Freiburg** was very comfortable. My – Jews have been safe in **Germany** for several thousand years, and there was a pretty good sized community of Jewish people. I remember my parents taking me to synagogue, and I remember playing with the – my neighbors' children, and my father taking me sled riding in the



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wintertime. In the spring and summertime I would play with my friends outdoors. We would play pranks by putting a – the caps in the trolley tracks and having them explode as the trolley went by. That was lots of fun. And we had all kinds of toys and i-it was a great life at the time.

Q: Do you remember the be – **[interruption]** Could you tell us a little about your family?

A: My father was a horse dealer. My – he sold horses to the city of **Freiburg**. He was a well-known person in town, and he was of middle class. And my mother was a stay at home mom, and my grandmother lived us in our beautiful garden apartment in **Freiburg**.

Q: Did you live in a Jewish section?

A: I have no idea if it was a Jewish section or not. I was too young to realize or know – know that.

Q: Did your family practice Judaism?

A: Yes indeed, because I remember them taking me to synagogue, and playing with my neighbors and taking me sled riding, and –

Q: What are your first memories of the war?

A: Actually, once we arrived at the concentration camp **Gurs**, of the horrible conditions that we were facing. The starvation –

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Q: Could we go back a little please, and – and tell me about leaving **Freiburg**.

A: Well, I remember the train station.

Q: What happened when you had to leave **Freiburg**?

A: Well, they put us in a train station with several has –

Q: Mr. – Mr. **Jarvis**, you don't remember it, but we st – we're having to start again, so all the stuff you told me about the Gestapo and all, we have to go over that again.

A: Okay.

Q: Okay? So, that's what I was trying to lead you into. You told me that your first memory of the war was when the Gestapo came to your house.

A: Yeah, but I didn't know there was a war then, I just saw these people –

Q: Okay.

A: – with guns in their hands and –

Q: Okay.

A: – telling us to get out. I didn't know – I – I –

Q: That it was a war.

A: – didn't know that it was a war already.

Q: Okay, then I phrased my – my question in – incorrectly. How can I lead into this? How can we make –

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A: Any way that you want, because I know what you're looking for now.

Q: Okay, okay. Okay ... what was the first memories that you have that something was different than usual?

A: When the Gestapo knocked on our door and came in with guns and told us to get out, at gunpoint.

Q: Did they tell you where they were sending you?

A: They didn't tell us anything, they just told us to pack a bag, and my mother packed a child's rucksack for me, which I carried on my back, and the adults each carried a suitcase. And we took just a little bit of food that we thought of. And they escorted us at gunpoint to a central meeting point, a railroad station in town, where we were thrown together with several hundred other Jews like us, who were huddled in fear – fear and not knowing what to expect. And we ate what little food we brought, and then there was none.

Q: Before you left the house, what did – did you do? Did you say goodbye to somebody, did you hide something? What – do you remember what happened before you left the house?

A: There – there was nobody left to say goodbye to. I do remember my grandmother flushing paper money down the toilet, and it took me 40 years to realize what she was doing when I was just five years old. And that was because

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we had been told by the Gestapo that we're only allowed to take the equivalent of about 10 dollars of money per person by order of death, if we were caught with more. So my mo – grandmother decided to flush the paper money that she had in the house so the Nazis wouldn't get it. They got everything else.

Q: So you were taken, with other families, to a central holding point, and how long did you stay there?

A: We stayed there the rest of the day, and that evening they forced us into cattle train cars and shipped us to southern **France**, near the **Pyrenees**, a range of mountains separating **France** and **Spain**, to a concentration camp called **Gurs, g-u-r-s**. Camp **Gurs** was a very primitive and diseased. Hard labor and starvation killed many people, including my grandmother.

Q: When you arrived, how long did it – first of all, how long did – do you remember the train trip from **Freiburg** to **Gurs**?

A: Not very well.

Q: Do you remember being cold, being hungry? When you got there, what happened? You got out of the train?

A: We got out of the train, and it was like – they had like a train depot or something like that there. And people got out and they were assigned barracks, wooden barracks. And mud, boy, probably 12 inches of mud, and when you

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stepped into that mud, the mud sucked the shoes off your feet and more often than not people couldn't find their shoe any more.

Q: Were you separated from your family?

A: No, I was with my mother.

Q: And your father was where?

A: My – my father was in a – in a nearby camp, also **Gurs**, separated by barbed wire.

Q: Could you see him?

A: I could visit him, yes, I could go through the barbed wire and visit him, and negotiate or communicate between my father and mother.

Q: Were there other children with you, and –

A: Yes, there were many other children.

Q: They were in the barracks with your mother?

A: Yes.

Q: And other women?

A: Yes.

Q: Were they all German?

A: I imagine so, yes.

Q: Do you remember playing with them?

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A: No, we – we had nothing to play with. We had no games, no – the – the game was survival.

Q: Do you remember what the barracks looked like inside?

A: Yes, they – they were wooden barracks with windows and we had – there were bunks to sleep on, and was no-not anything comfortable, everything was very primitive. But – but we had bunks in **Gurs**.

Q: Do you remember what season it was when you arrived?

A: Winter.

Q: Was it cold?

A: Yes.

Q: What was a typical day like?

A: Wa – I found it to be a very lonesome day, a very aggravating day. There was no happiness, there was always hunger and thirst. We had very little access to water, we had no change of clothes. We lost our shoes in the mud, and there was nothing for a child to do, but hang onto their mother.

Q: Did the other internees set up impromptu classes for you, or tried to t – organize activities for the children?

A: Eventually, yes.

Q: Do you remember what some of these things were?

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A: Not really. I was just five years old.

Q: Did you learn songs, or –

A: Not in **Gurs**.

Q: How did a day go by, when did you go see your father? You said you slipped through the barbed wire.

A: At various times, vary – various times of the day. I ca – I can't give you an hour by hour description.

Q: Do you know whether your parents were trying to get visas to emigrate?

A: Yes, they desperately tried to get visas to emigrate, desperately, but to no avail.

Q: Your father had a sister in **United States**, were –

A: That's correct.

Q: Was it through her they were trying to get –

A: That was one of the venues that they tried to get, they were not able to help.

The **United States** would not admit Jews at that time.

Q: So, you were at **Gurs** for a certain amount of time.

A: Probably about a year, or thereabouts.

Q: And then what happened?

A: Well, **Marshal Pétain** decided to show us the sunny side of **France** and shipped us to another concentration camp, closer to the mediterranean – **Mediterranean**

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Ocean, called sunny **Rivesaltes**. **Rivesaltes** was not always sunny, but it was windy, and it was close to the ocean, but we could not see the ocean, but we could feel the torrential wind that was forever blowing to almost hurricane forces, coming off the ocean, and which lifted and – and rattled our barracks roofs, which was made out of corrugated tin, and made very eerie sounds that I remember to this very day, very eerie sounds. **[interruption]**

Q: Do you remember how you were transported from **Gurs** to **Rivesaltes**?

A: No, I don't.

Q: You don't remember if it's a train or a bus or a truck?

A: No, I don't.

Q: Were you together with both parents?

A: Yes.

Q: And was your – was someone else in your family with you?

A: My father's brother and his wife, and their son, **Kurt**. **Kurt Judas**.

Q: What about your grandmother?

A: My grandmother died in **Gurs**.

Q: What happened?

A: And I remember she died of disease, and old age at **Gurs**, she was 90 years old, and probably starvation as well. And I remember her funeral. I remember her



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casket being carried to the cemetery and I followed it, and I remember that to this day. And I had the opportunity a couple years ago to visit her grave, and I found it with no problem.

Q: What was her name?

A: Her name –

Q: She was your mother's mother?

A: Yes.

Q: **Sussman**?

A: **Sussman, Sussman.**

Q: Okay. What was it like arriving at **Rivesaltes**, apart from the wind?

A: I really do not remember the arrival of **Rivesaltes**, I just remember the life at **Rivesaltes** –

Q: Were –

A: – which was absolutely horrible, and th-the wind was just a part of it. The starvation diet that we were on and the – it was much like **Gurs**, it was starvation, disease and hard labor killed many people.

**End of Tape One**

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**Beginning Tape Two**

Q: Let's go back to **Gurs** for a moment. Could you tell me a little about how the day went by?

A: The day went by very slowly. We're always looking for mealtime, which was very little food. And we – several times during the day we had to fall out for **appell**, which was a head count to see if everyone was present. And that was a very dramatic time every time. Everybody got very excited, and lot of hullabaloo and you fall out in front of your barracks and get counted.

Q: Do you remember being ill at any moment?

A: No, I was a healthy five year old at that time, when I arrived.

Q: Is there something that happened, that you remember particularly?

A: Yes, my grandmother passed away of a combination of disease and malnourishment. And she was 90 years old, and her name was **Bernadine(ph) Sussman**. And I remember her funeral very well. It was probably half dozen people that attended her funeral, and I followed behind her coffin, and remember the internment. I was privileged to go back a couple of years ago and visit her grave. And the only thing left of **Gurs** at that time was they planted a forest where the camp was, and it was a full grown forest by now. But the cemetery was taken care of and well cared for and I found my grandmother's grave.

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Q: So, when they decided that you would go from **Gurs** to **Rivesaltes**, did they give you any warning?

A: No warning at all, just get on the way.

Q: And what happened when you arrived? You and your mother were separated?

A: I – my mother and my father were separated into two adjoining camps separated by barbed wire. I remained with my mother, I was only about six years old when we arrived at **Rivesaltes**, and I learned to negotiate the barbed wire, being a small child I could squeeze through the barbed wire without getting cut, and I could communicate between my father and my mother. And other children my age were able to do the same thing.

Q: At that point were you speaking German with your mother and speaking French with other people?

A: I do not recall the separation between German and French, but I – at that point, I spoke German with my parents. At a later time I forgot German altogether and spoke only French.

Q: Did your father have an assigned activity?

A: My father was in charge of horses in the concentration camp **Rivesaltes**. And one of his jobs was to take a team of horses into the neighboring town of **Perpignan**, a ca – several times a week, to pick up the – the mail for the camp at

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the **Perpignan** railroad station. So that gave him an opportunity to get out of the camp, and it gave him an opportunity if he had any money, or if anybody else gave him a little money, to buy a little food along the way. Morsels of food, and a morsel of food was better than none.

Q: How long do you think you stayed in **Rivesaltes**?

A: About two years.

Q: And was a point where you left **Rivesaltes**?

A: Yes, I had a cousin named **Erik Forst**(ph), who was born in **Germany**, but he moved to **France** in 1939, so he was not a prisoner in any of the French concentration camps like his family was. So he, his mother and his sister lived somewhere in **France**, I do not know where. But all of a sudden he started showing up in **Rivesaltes**, and he was dressed brilliantly, he was dressed like an undercover Nazi or something. Now what do I mean by that? He was dressed in – in boots, high thigh boots. He was dir – dressed in – in flowery pants, horseback riding type pants. He was dressed in a shirt, and tie and a jacket, and wearing a French beret. And people in concentration camps were just not dressed like that, this was immaculate dressing. So over the years as I got older, I-I've always want – I remember every time he took a step that his boots creaked, the leather in his new boots creaked, I remember the sound 65 years later. And I wondered over the

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years, you know, what was this all about? But cousin **Erik** came to see us frequently in the camp, and he could have sa – he had safe passage in and out of the main gate and no one stopped him or challenged him. So I got to thinking, you know, maybe he was acting the part of some Gestapo agent or something, and nobody wanted to mess with him. But actually what he did, he came to visit us in the camp, and his plan was to plan an escape for us. So one dark night, my parents and I and my father's brother **Leopold**, and his wife **Carrie** and his son **Kurt**, who was a year and a half older than me, we all headed to the back of the camp, and my father gave the French – the French guard two packs of cigarettes and he turned his back. And we went through the barbed wire, down a short ravine and to a dirt road where my cousin **Erik** had an automobile and a driver waiting, and we piled into that car. My parents and his brother and his wife and **Kurt** piled into the back, that was five people, and cousin **Erik** jumped in front next to the driver, and I jumped in front next to cousin **Erik** and the door. So that was eight people in – in a car, I'm sure we were a tight fit. And we took off in the dark of night without lights and my cousin **Erik** kept barking, **ouvrir les lumières, fermer les lumières**, meaning open the lights and close the lights, and we drove like that all night long according to what cousin **Erik** called for, and the driver obeyed him. And we drove for two nights, in the daytime we hid. And eventually we reached a

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small town by the name of **Caussade**, where cousin **Erik** had picked out a small farm for us to hide in and live. And we had, on this small farm we had, which was on top of a hill, we had one horse, one cow, one dog, chickens, ducks, geese and penned rabbits, which were our dinner. And we grew food, we grew – grew corn, we grew potatoes, we grew all kinds of vegetables, we grew grapes, and we subsisted on that farm. And we were on that farm about seven months before all of a sudden, a number of different French police types started to show up. And my parents, seeing them come up the hill from below, ordered me to go lay in the corn field and hide, they shouldn't count all – be able to count all of us. And one day there was so many of them that came, that – and they were stay there so long that I fell asleep in the cornfield, and when they had left, my parents couldn't find me and they were on a hunt calling **Manfred, Manfred**, you know on the – finally I woke up. But soon after that, they came with the German police, the Gestapo, and they rea – rearrested all of us and sent us back to Camp **Rivesaltes**. The men were so dangerous, obviously, that within this concentration camp they had another jail. Within the jail they had another jail, and they put the men in my family in that jail. And it was extraordinary and I remember that very well.

Q: Let's go back to **Caussade** for a few minutes. You lived on the farm and you – and your parents farmed it?

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A: Yes, my parents and my – **Kurt's** parents, we farmed it.

Q: Did you have any duties, as a child?

A: No I did not, really. But I – I – I did small things or whatnot, you know.

Q: Were you in contact with the local population?

A: We went into town on a daily basis. My parents and **Kurt's** parents lived on the farm. My cousin **Erik**, his mother and his sister lived in town and they rented the apartment type thing. So cousin **Kurt** and I, we had to do the ob – driving him into town with our horse and wagon, and picking him up in the morning on the daily basis. So that was our contact in the town. We also wa-wandered into town occasionally, and sat along the general park area where men had outdoor restaurants or – or tables. And we sat among them, we didn't buy anything to eat, we didn't have any money. But, we really didn't talk to them. The only one that talked to any of the local people was cousin **Erik**. He was very friendly with the local police. And over the years, after they rearrested us and send us back to Camp **Rivesaltes**, I was always wondering, you know, would cousin **Erik** have anything to do with getting us rearrested, because he was so friendly with the local police there. I mean, you mind wanders, and you think – but no, that was not the case, they – they just tracked us down. And cousin **Erik**, apparently, I learned many years later, got warning from his friend in the police that the Gestapo was coming

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to pick us up. And in those days there were no telephones to call the farm, or any communications, so cousin **Erik** hightailed it and – and they – we got caught. So – and as I re-revisited **Caussade** 60 years later, the chief of police told me that **Erik** had been told that they were coming for us, and that he escaped and – over the Spanish border, and came back after the war. How true that is, I – I can't vouch for, but that's what the local chief of police told me.

Q: Do you remember what it was like when the local police and the Gestapo came to get you from the farm?

A: I-It was just desperate – des-desperate situation.

Q: Did they give you a minute to pack a bag?

A: Nothing, nothing, nothing. They just grabbed us and put us in a wagon or something, and send us off, back to the train station, and back to **Rivesaltes**, just that fast.

Q: And when you got there, you heard that they sent your father to the prison, you saw him?

A: I saw him. I saw him. The prison had a – a yard and – and they – covered by barbed wire, and I saw him in there.

Q: What were the conditions inside the prison inside the camp? Were they –

A: Very desperate.



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Q: They were worse than regular conditions?

A: Mm-hm.

Q: In what way? They had less to eat?

A: I have no idea what they gave them to eat. We got precious little, I would suppose they got even less.

Q: And how long did they stay there in –

A: They stayed there until they sent them to **Auschwitz** via **Drancy**, in June, 1942.

Q: After you came back from **Caussade**, how – I know it's hard to remember lengths of time, but you – you s – remained in **Rivesaltes** for – for a certain amount of time.

A: It was actually a short time.

Q: A week, or two weeks?

A: No, it was probably a month or two. **[interruption]**

Q: I'd like to talk a little about life at **Rivesaltes**. Do you remember playing with other children, do you remember Spanish children, or children from the **Roma**?

A: The only thing I remember about Spanish children is I got sick in **Rivesaltes**. I had some kind of a chest disease, where I was being treated, where they put bottles, heated with cans, and put them on – on my back. I have no idea what it

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was, but it must have been pretty bad at the time. And in that hospital they gave me a little bit of milk, which was very difficult to get in – in the concentration camp. And I was somewhat weak, so I didn't finish my milk, and I put it at the head of my bed on the floor. And had this Spanish boy who was also in the hospital, and he made his way on my bed, and tried to s-steal that milk. And that was the very first fight that I ever remember being in as a boy. I smacked that boy in the lip, and I said, get out of here, that's mine. And that's what I remember of any Spanish boys in there. The Spanish mainly were people who hung around the perimeter of the barbed wire around the outside of the camp, who at times provided food for us, if we had a little money to purchase it, such as perhaps a can of beans, or if you were lucky, one egg. And – and nobody had a lot of money so the-they – but there were a lot of people there, so they had a ni – a – a chance to sell small pieces of fruit to people, a piece of fruit. And people were able to cook it like a boy scout over la – over a fire made over rocks, and we can put a tin can on the rocks and – and boil whatever it was. I remember my mother was cooking a can of beans one time over such a rock system, which a – rather a lot of people were able to do. And I was playing around that, and I knocked that can of beans over, and that was a disaster. And it was – it was just – just – just a disaster. That can of bean would have been a feast for us. Also, these combination of French and

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Spanish people, since we had no beds to sleep on, we slept on the concrete floor with a little bit of straw under us, if we could find some. They built a primitive wooden beds for someone who had a – a few cents, I-I have no idea what they sold it for, but they were – sold quite a few of them, so – and they were nothing that you would want to sleep on, but for an inmate to sleep off the floor, you know, like 10 inches off the floor rather than on the floor was a – was a – just awesome.

Q: It was made out of wood?

A: Out of wood, yes.

Q: And what was inside, was there a mattress?

A: Oh no, there was – there's no such thing, there were just wooden slots, and I guess you could put a blanket or something over it, it just kept you off the floor.

No one had a mattress.

Q2: Oh, we're fine, I'm sorry.

Q: Oh, we can keep going?

Q2: Yes.

Q: Okay. What were some of the things you ate in **Rivesaltes**?

A: Oh, we had quite a wonderful menu. We had probably, I would estimate about two ounces of bread twice a week – I mean, no, twice a day. And then, in the middle of the day they brought you dishwater soup, which was nothing more than

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dishwater with one or two carrots sliced into the soup. My mother would fish out the carrots that she got and feed them to me because that was the only nourishment that was available. And to show you how much I liked those carrots, when I was grown, later on in life, for the next 40 years I could not eat a cooked carrot. I could eat raw carrots, but I could not eat cooked carrots, although I'm able to do that now. It – it shows the power of negative thinking, I think. But it wa – it was just awesome, 40 years I couldn't eat a carrot.

Q: Do you remember any of the different organizations that came into the camps to help people? The **Secours Swiss**, or the **OSE**? Do you remember any of these people?

A: I remember the Red Cross coming, and I remember **OSE** coming. **OSE** and the Red Cross managed to provide for us young children, what I seem to remember to be about a cup of milk every other week, and that was a lifesaver. We would hoard our br – two ounces of bread, and break them into this cup of milk, and this would be mush, and that was like a feast. And so that was – that was quite an event. We would have to queue up and line up to get into this barrack where they would feed that to young children.

Q: Do you remember if they had any activities planned for you, games?

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A: **OSE** and organizations like that had some planned activities, but I was too young to participate in those things, so I didn't.

Q: Do you remember any official visits by German or French officials coming to the camp?

A: We had constant traffic, or – I didn't know who specifically came by, but we were constantly called out on **appell** in **Rivesaltes** also, whereby we had to fall out of our barracks and they had to have a head count of everybody several times a day. And this was very annoying because it disrupted our activities of doing nothing.

Q: Did you stay with your mother most of the time?

A: I stayed with my mother all of the time.

Q: Were you – were – what was her – her general mood?

A: Displeasure, and despair. This was a very non-comporting existence, and there was no – no bright shining star ahead. There was no hope. It was a hopeless situation. It was – it was just very tragic, and we just carried on a-as best we could. We just hung onto dear life.

Q: Do you remember some of the conditions of life in the camp that you remember especially, that were especially difficult?

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A: Well, the bathroom facilities for one were extremely difficult and extremely negative. We – we had a bathroom which was maybe 30 - 40 feet long with several stalls for people to use, which was nothing but a hole in a piece of wood and they had some great facility below which would catch the waste. Which my father and his horses and his team of people would have to empty every so often, which was a disgusting thing in itself. But the bathroom facilities you had to go – were made out of concrete, but you had to go up a s – a set of wooden stairs to a certain level, and there you had a – a bathroom facility and there were maybe 20 of them in a row, such – and it even had a door for privacy, which was very surprising. But you really didn't want to close that door, although you had to, because the smell and the odor was just inescapable, and the – there was no such thing as toilet paper, and you would have to wipe your tail with your finger and then wipe it on the wall. And there were many people ahead of you who had already decorated the wall. And so it was like finger-painting. And – and it – it was – the smell and the stench stayed with me for many years afterwards. And it – it – it was a very crude situation, but there it was, you know.

Q: Was it far from your barrack?

A: No, it wa – that wasn't the issue, it wasn't that far from the barracks. They had several of those at several given points, but they had a lot of people there, so all

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these facilities were overused. And especially since most of us had diarrhea from what we had – the he – these were conditions, so it was very, very primitive.

Q: What happened in August –

Q2: I'm sorry, we need to change tapes.

**End of Tape Two**

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**Beginning Tape Three**

Q: – point when your mother was contacted by somebody concerning your fate, whether you might be able to be taken away from her and put somewhere else?

A: No, I do not remember any of that, but I do remember my mother speaking to me. She had taken me aside on a corner of one of the barracks and told me to escape, and she told me a-about my beha – what my behavior should be, and how I should behave. And I do not remember specifically – she charged me with a number of things that I should do, and I had no clue that anything else. I was later contacted by a 17 year old girl to – who helped me to escape from concentration camp **Rivesaltes**. And I ran away from this girl, and they chased me all over the camp, as a – as a seven year old boy, they're kind of fast on their feet, and I had several people chasing me. So I was finally caught, and this girl took me to a barrack, along with my cousin **Kurt** and locked me up for the night in that barrack. And then, early in the morning sometime, she helped us to escape.

Q: Did you know when your mother took you aside, that you were going to be separated from her?

A: I didn't accept it as such, but that's – that was the case. In later life I looked at it as, in the loving manner that my mother dumped me for this 17 year old girl, because she had an indication where she was going. Where she was going was not



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going to be good, and that she did this in order to save my life, in which she – she succeeded. My mother had two boys, one nine years older than me, and myself, and through all this deprivation or everything, she managed to save both her children.

Q: What happened to your brother **Joseph**?

A: My brother **Joseph** was sent – who was older than I, was sent on the last **kinder** train to **England**, which was a refugee train to save children in **Germany**, and he spent the rest of the war in **England** without his parents. And he survived to – to this very day.

Q: So there was never a moment when you said goodbye to your parents?

A: No, I would take that as the time that my mother spoke to me in telling me to escape. That was the long goodbye.

Q: Do you remember any of the other things she said, to – to only speak French, or something else?

A: No, I – I – I remember the gist of what she said, I don't remember the exact words. It's been 65 years.

Q: When you and **Kurt** were hiding in the barrack overnight, what were your feelings at that point?

A: Our feelings were very wet, because we both cried all night long.

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Q: You were afraid?

A: Yes, indeed, we were.

Q: Did you have an idea of where you would be going?

A: I had no idea where we were going, or what – what – what our future was. We were in the hands of this 17 year old girl who worked for the **OSE** [indecipherable] the **Secours Enfant**, who managed to save 10,000 children out of the concen – various concentration camps, 5,000 of which were recaptured, and 5,000 of us who managed to survive the war because of their help.

Q: The next morning, what happened?

A: We were on our way to a orphanage by **OSE** in the mountains, and this young, 17 year old French German Jewish girl, working for the **OSE** took us to this huge castle, which probably had between two and 500 boys, all of Spanish origin, from – survivors from the Spanish civil war. And we were deposited there in this orphanage, and since they all spoke Spanish, I learned to speak Spanish from them. I learned to go to s – s – mathematics in Spanish, table – multiplication in Spanish, and when I left there several months later, I was speaking fluent Spanish.

Q: Where did you go a few months later?

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A: To another **OSE** home in the **Alps**, which was in a mountain area. It was a closed orphanage where we were given food and health care, and – and loving care from other children like us, only older.

Q: They were German refugees?

A: They were German refugees and refugees from various countries.

Q: And did you end up going to another **OSE** home?

A: Yes, after that they took us to an **OSE** home called **Montantan**(ph), which again was a castle in the **Limoges**(ph) region. And they probably had five - 600 children there before we arrived, my cousin **Kurt** and I arrived there. And they gave us loving care. They gave us food and health care and li – as much love as an older child could give you. And they were older children, mostly girls that looked after us until we got comfortable in there. And it was a very good – probably spent my coldest winter there.

Q: Did you go to classes? Did you go to the local school, or were there classes in the chateau?

A: No, no, no, there were religious occasions and things in the chateau, and we learned Hebrew songs in French. And it was a – for the time and the situation, I would say a happy go lucky a – place, where they tried to make you feel at home as much as possible under the circumstances. And there were some very

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interesting people, **OSE** people in charge of that home, who really took good care of us. When this **OSE** home became untenable because of Nazi designs upon it, then they took us out of there and dispersed us among the countryside, either in singles or in pairs. And my cousin **Kurt** and I were paired off, and we were taken under the **OSE** – we were sent to the countryside, we were given new names.

Mine name was **Maurice Julia** and **Kurt** was [**indecipherable**] **Julia**. And we were given a whole repertoire of where we were born and why we c-come to this area. And they sent us to a small town called **Neyron** in **Ain**, about 10 miles outside of **Lyon, France's** second largest city. We were hidden on a small farm in a rural area, with – this was a very small farm amid homes. We had Madame – the woman, the ca – the Christian woman who took care of **Kurt** and me at the risk of her own life was named Madame **Burra**. She had five goats, a small farm area where we planted various assorted food, and grapes, and we had the – the fruit trees. I had to climb the cherry tree to pick cherries for market. And I was very good cherry picker, I put one in my mouth and one in the basket. And it was delicious. And she fed us well. She made – she sent me out in the forest after a rain to collect escargot, and she made wonderful escargot if I brought her a basketful. And Madame **Burra** provided food and shelter for us from the Nazis. We went to church with her on Sundays and she even sent us to school. So we

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spoke well enough French not to be able to be found out as Jews, and when – in the French school system.

Q: Do you remember some of the things you were told that you were supposed to do, or what you were supposed to say about why you ended up in this town?

A: Yes, yes, our cover story was that **Kurt** and I were born in the north, near **Dunkirk** where fight – a lot of fighting had occurred, and that my supposed parents had sent me to Madame **Burra**, my aunt in central **France**, for safety. And that was our cover story and – and we went to school with that, and the n- neighbors accepted us with that, so Madame **Burra** protected us at the risk of her own life.

Q: Apart from going to church, did you go to catechism? Did you go to get any religious education?

A: None.

Q: And were there other Jewish children hiding in that same area?

A: Most probably, but not known to me, although about 21 – 20 miles away, there were about 40 children that the **OSE** could not find any homes for, and they were called the children of **Egieu**. And a nice Nazi fellow by the name of **Klaus Barbie** was informed by a local farmer that these 40 children were in this house, and they had about three or four **OSE** workers with them to look over them. And **Klaus**

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**Barbie** took two trucks full of gendarme with him, and raided this – this home, and arrested all 43 children and sent them within two days to **Auschwitz**, where they were killed on arrival. And on my return to **France**, I had the opportunity to visit this home, since it was so near to Ma-Madame **Burra** that I went and took photographs of – of – of this – this home had been turned into a museum 60 years later. And it wa – it was just earth shaking, and so close to where we lived during the war.

Q: During your time with Madame **Burra**, you were – were you and your cousin following the progress of the war? Were you aware of what was happening?

A: We – we had a radio in our attic. Radios were forbidden by order of death. If they caught you with it, they'd shoot you right on the spot. But we listened to that periodically, and we had some semblance. And we listened to the invasion in **Normandy** when the allies arrived, and we were all full of joy and tears at that time. So, we were there.

Q: Do you remember if there were any resistance networks operating?

A: Oh yes, yes. **France** was full of **FFI, Forces Françaises de l'intérieur, Maquis**. They were all the same thing, they were underground fighters of various religions and including many Jews, and a lot of communists, and – but they fought the Germans bravely, and mostly were massacred by – by the Germans when they

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tried to fight in – in groups, in massive groups, because they had no artillery but small weapons. But the **Maquis** was very much around us and dear to us, because often they protected us.

Q: You told me about a song.

A: Yes [**sings in French**]. And that's 65 years later, I still remember that.

Q: You and other schoolchildren sang that?

A: Yes indeed, yes indeed. We were very careful where we sang it, but – but we did, among other things.

Q: Madame **Burra** was a widower – a widow?

A: Madame **Burra** had a husband. He was sick when we arrived, and died while we were there.

Q: Did she have any other children?

A: She had a son who worked and lived in **Lyon**. But I only met him once, and did not know his first name, and I knew he worked in some kind of a plastic factory, whatnot, but know very little about him.

Q: Tell me of your memories of the liberation.

A: Liberation came in **Neyron** in September 1944. It was probably the most joyous day in my life. The **G.I.s** gave us everything that we had never seen before. Canned food, chocolate, chewing gum, and one great phenomenon, peanut butter.

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Chunks of it. And they were very good to us, and they – the **Maquis** at that time quickly arrested collaborators, mostly women that slept with the Germans, and clipped their hair and as outcasts, and whatever else they did to them afterwards, and some lived and some died. So it was a time of revenge.

Q: When liberation occurred, what happened? Did your life change?

A: Well, th-the thing that I loved most about liberation is seeing the Germans flee. They fled ahead of the – they didn't stand and fight. They fled ahead of the Americans coming in, and they grabbed anything that had wheels. Bicycles, if you had a bicycle, they took it from you, and they just wheeled out of town. And life changed tremendously because **OSE** came back and reclaimed their children, their hidden children, and my c-cousin **Kurt** and I were split up for the first time in the war. My cousin **Kurt** was taken back by **OSE** to **Lyronde**(ph), an orphanage in **Lyon**, and I was sent to the **Hotesowa**(ph) in **La Chaumiere**, another orphanage, because I had a respiratory ailment still, ailing from **Rivesaltes**, and they sent me in the – high in the mountains with the clean air and tried to cure me there. And then my cousin **Kurt** was Bar Mitzvahed at **Lyronde**(ph), and then eventually they had me join him there at **Lyronde**(ph), and I got my first lessons in Hebrew and the Bible and Judaism, and they educated me in the Jewish way there. And they – and – and then I was found by my Aunt **Hannah Ramsfelder**(ph) and my



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brother **Joe**, from **England**, and they both want – want – my brother **Joe** wanted to bring me to **England**, my aunt, sister of my father – my father had 12 brothers and sisters and she was the only survivor. So she wanted to bring me to **America**, so I had a choice between **England** and **America**. I said, give me Uncle **Sam**. And so, in November 1946, we boarded the **Ile de France**, **France's** largest luxury liner and headed to **New York City**. We took about six days to cross the **Atlantic**. The **Ile de France** was **France's** largest luxury liner. The only problem was, it was outfitted as a troop ship during the war. So on its first maiden voyage, it was still so outfitted. So we slept in **G.I.** racks and ate **G.I.** food, but who cared? We were safe, and free and on our way to **America**, the land where the streets were paved with gold.

Q: Did you try to find out what happened to your parents?

A: More than anything else. My parents did not surface, nor **Kurt's** parents did not surface after the war. And so we had not – no choice but to presume that they were dead. Where did they die and how did they die, we did not know. It took me 40 years to find out that they had gone to **Auschwitz** via **Drancy**, and that they were gassed and burned in the crematorium the same day that they arrived in **Auschwitz**. And the fact of not knowing what happened to them was the most excruciating pain of all, which in – I endured for over 40 years. It was not until

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1983, that at a survivors' meeting I found a book by the French lawyer – by a French lawyer who had found German records and reconstituted them and wrote a book, and this book was in French. And since I had not spoken French for 30 years, I had lost the fluency of it, so I waited another year, I was told there would be a – book would be translated into English, and purchased it. And found my father and my mother in that book, into which transport they arrived to, and what happened to them from these records from this French lawyer. And – and that gave me some sort of closure about my parents, if there is such a thing.

Q: Tell me about your arrival in the **United States**.

A: I arrived aboard the **Ile de France** in **New York City** in May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1946. I was met at the pier by my aunt, **Hannah Ramsfelder(ph)**, who brought me – who, she and her husband brought me to **America**, and my first cousin **Inga(ph)** **Furlish(ph)**. **Inga(ph)** had survived the war in nearby **Switzerland**. She had come to the **United States** briefly before me, and she spoke fluent French and fluent English. Therefore she became my translator and close friend, as well as first cousin. When I came to **America**, I spoke only French, I came to a household that spoke mainly German, and I went to a school that spoke only English. You talk about being screwed up? I was it. I started school in **America** in the elementary school level, had no help from anyone in the languages. I then went to junior high

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school and after that I went to high school, to a – a school named **[indecipherable]** Vocation High School. Every morning session we studied baking and baking technology. In the afternoon sessions we would get our – our other lessons. And after four years I graduated as a pastry chef. I worked as a baker and cake decorator for 40 years, 18 hours a day, standing on my feet, no lunch breaks, nothing. But I was a talented baker and – and well in demand. I ran into trouble with the unions, because I never got a raise, never got a Christmas bonus, so I quit the union, and I started as a baby photographer. After about a year I opened my own photography store, and I managed to be a photographer in **New York City** for 10 years.

Q: You were taking – you were specializing in pictures of babies?

A: Babies. I answered an ad from an organization that did – gave free baby pictures by the diaper service. And the – the managing manager of this came and met me one morning, and I went around with him and I watched him work one morning, what kind of equipment he used, you know, and see what you use, and how you do it. And we went to lunch. At lunch I excused myself, I said I had to go to the bathroom. I went through the bathroom window and left. I had just learned the photography business.

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Q: Let's go back a little to your time when you first got here. Did you have any religious training with your – with your aunt's family?

A: The synagogue that I belonged to in – in **New York City** was – provided free Hebrew lessons for me and **Kurt** because we were Holocaust survivors and my aunt didn't have the money to pay them. So you get what – whatever you get for free is – is free, so I didn't learn anything. So all the learning that I have goes back to **OSE** in **France**.

Q: How much more do we have on this tape?

A: This is a good time to stop.

**End of Tape Three**

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**Beginning Tape Four**

Q: We were talking about your religious education with your aunt in **New York**.

Were you Bar Mitzvahed?

A: Yes, I was Bar Mitzvah. I was Bar Mitzvah in 1948 in **Shaare Hatikvah** synagogue, an Orthodox synagogue apart from where we lived in **Washington Heights**. I was specially tutored by one of the Orthodox gentleman in the synagogue who – who – who prepared Bar Mitzvahs. He didn't charge my aunt for it because she couldn't afford it, and – and we had a wonderful Bar Mitzvah with a synagogue full of people, and they made a small party for me afterwards. It was very, very rewarding and very exciting. And here I was a man, after I'd been a man for 12 years before that, cause I always considered that I was a man in a boy's body, throughout the war. That –

Q: What was your feeling about Judaism and – and believing in God?

A: Well, **OSE** indoctrinated me for that, first in **France** and I have a firm belief in God. I've not given up my – my belief in God because of the Holocaust. It has strengthened and reaffirmed my belief, and I feel that the – the – the Holocaust was the cost for the Jewish people to reclaim **Israel**. It's my justification.

Q: So you graduated from your vocational school with honors, and you were going to become a pastry chef, but you were 18.

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A: And I joined the Marine Corps. The Korean war was on in full blast, and I wanted to serve my country, my adopted country, and I joined the Marine Corps, **United States** Marine Corps. I came to **Paris Island** when I was yay – eight – 18 years old, and went through boot camp over there, which was another hell, but I survived that and became a full pledged **United States** Marine.

Q: What was your specialty?

A: I was artillery, 105s and 155 **Howitzers**. Boom, boom. It made – it made a lot of noise.

Q: Did you have –

A: I was also a rifleman, an expert rifleman. Every Marine is an expert rifleman.

Q: Were you sent to **Korea**?

A: Yes.

Q: And what happened?

A: It was a picnic because they sent me there after the armistice, so I was not involved in any of the fighting.

Q: What were some of your duties?

A: I became a chaplain's aide, because I was always attending synagogue on Friday nights and whatnot, chaplain picked me out to be his aide.

Q: For the Jewish soldiers?

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A: For the Jewish Marines. When I returned to Camp **Lejeune, North Carolina**, and I became acting Jewish chaplain, by order of the commanding general, and I had 2,000 Marines in my congregation. So I had to lead services, had to conduct Passover services, had to conduct Passover services, I had to make arrangements, I had great responsibilities. I wore sergeant stripes on my shirt, chaplain's bars o-on – chaplain's tablets on my collar, and a – as I walked back and forth around the camp, they didn't know if I was fish or fowl. I had officers' plates on my car, I slept in the officers' quarters, ate in the officers' mess, and people saluted me as I passed me. So it was a – I had a great deal of authority on that base. So it was very interesting and very challenging and I had to do everything on the camp for Jewish people except marriage or burial.

Q: Tell me, when you came to the **States**, your name was **Manfred Judas**?

A: Yes.

Q: And when did you become **Fred Jarvis**?

A: I became **Fred Jarvis** when my u-uncle sent me to school, which was probably a week after I arrived here. And I was very upset that he changed my name, because I very much wanted to have my father's name. I didn't know the meaning of **Judas**, I didn't understand it at the time. And I fought vehemently to get my – my name **Judas** back, and when I went into the Marine Corps, I reclaimed my

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name, **Fred Judas**, and I served as that in the Marine Corps. When I came out, I was sent to the south. When I went in the Marines I first saw black don't drink from this water fountain, you have to drink from here. Discrimination, all that.

And I was taunted by a lot of people in the Marine Corps because of my name and being a Jew. So when I came out of the Marine Corps, I legally changed my name, when I got married and raised my family to – back to **Jarvis**.

Q: How long did you spend in the Marine Corps?

A: 14 years. Four years in – in active duty and 10 years in the reserve.

Q: And then you became a pastry cook?

A: No, I – I – I was a pastry chef when I went into the Marine Corps, right, but I came back into civilian life, I had to make a living for my family, I went back to being a baker, pastry chef, and I was a good one. I made cakes for the **Ed Sullivan Show**, I made ca – birthday cakes for **Ed Sullivan's** family. I made cakes from scratch that tasted wonderfully and decorated them into brilliant cakes. I was taught by one of the leading artists in **New York City**, and became very proficient at my trade, and worked at it for 40 years. I made cakes for stage, screen and television.

Q: All this time you were in **New York City**?

A: All this time I was in **New York City**.



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Q: You met your wife where?

A: I met my wife in my local synagogue in **New York City**, and I raised two children.

Q: I know that you went back to **Rivesaltes** recently. Why did you do that?

A: Well, I – **Rivesaltes** had been a very deep part of my life. It's where I escaped twice, with my parents and without them, and where I spent a very desperate time of my life. And I never had the money to go back, but I understood no one could go there because the French army had built a rifle range and they – if you tried to get in there, they'd lock you up. So later on in life, as I was able to accumulate money, I decided I wanted to go back, I want to see first **Gurs**. **Gurs** is only – **Gurs** – my grandmother's grave is in **Gurs**. The only thing standing of the concentration camp in **Gurs** at this time is the cemetery. Everything else was planted into a forest. So I went there to see my grandmother's grave, and as we Jews do, we don't leave flowers, we leave a stone on the grave. And so I paid my respect there. I wanted to go to **Rivesaltes**, which it was only a hundred miles away, but couldn't get in. So instead, I went to **Caussade**, where we were – where we were headed on – hidden on that farm. Came back to the **United States** and in 19 – in 2008, I found an article on the internet by the **New York Times**, that the French government had purchased something like 40 acres of the **Rivesaltes**

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concentration camp, and was planning to build, in conjunction with the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**, a 40 million dollar memorial to the people who went through there. And I wanted to see what this camp looked like today before they built a memorial. So I booked passage over there, and not having spoken French for over 30 years, I was no longer fluent in it, so I hired a driver with an automobile who would speak French and spoke fluent English. And my travel agent was fortunate to hire such a person for me. I flew to **Perpignan**, and took a hotel there, and I decided to stay there for eight days, because I didn't want to spend two days there and not achieve what I came to do, and I brought my – being a professional photographer, I brought my camera along, and this gentleman knew just the way to the camp, and I was able to get in to the camp, and I took between 1500 and 2000 photographs over a period of eight days, I photographed everything that I could find in this concentration camp, so that I could show myself and my children and my family where I actually was in 1942. That's why I wanted to go back there.

Q: When you arrived at the camp and saw it now, did some of the memories come back, or did it –

A: The memories co – did not come back, they were always with me.

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Q: Did you see the barrack where you had lived with your mother, or were hidden?

A: There was nothing recognizable in **Rivesaltes** after 65 years. Several generations of people besides Jews had been put through this camp, including the ar – **Harkis** and Gypsies and – and German war – World War II prisoners after the war. And there was no street recognizable, everything was in decay, barracks were falling apart, in various stages, which is why I photographed it so intensely. And there was really – I mean, the camp itself was recognizable as a camp, but there were no actual locations recognizable, no streets, no areas. The **ilos(ph)** themselves were barely recog – there was no markings for **ilo(ph) E**, **ilo(ph) B**, **ilo(ph) A**. You couldn't recognize anything. But I had such a vivid memory of our bathroom system, that I looked for the bathroom, this – this very – it was – had made such a negative impression on me, I've – the smell, the sight, everything. Now I remember it exactly, I could make a drawing of it. And – and – but the bathrooms were of different modification and design, so I could only believe that they were – the old bathrooms were torn down over the years, and new ones rebuilt. I couldn't even find the area where we escaped from, and I looked very – very hardly for that. So – but I'm very happy that I went back, that I was able to see what there was, and so I can visualize it and discuss it with my children and

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family. I'm – they – I – I barely speak of this, but speaking and seeing in a photograph are two different things. A photograph will speak a thousand words to you. So, i-it was – it was something that I felt I had to do. I also went into **Poland**, to **Auschwitz**, to see **Auschwitz** where my parents were murdered, and photographed everything I could there. And I stood there when it's – I saw the sign that – **Arbeit macht frei**, and I cried like a baby. Sixty year – a 70 year old man at that time, crying like a baby. But that's the emotion that's tied to all this.

Q: You now live in **Tennessee**. How did you get to **Tennessee** from **New York City**?

A: Well, from **New York City**, I moved to a – they – they pi – my photography business was mainly in the **Bronx**, and they burned the **Bronx** down, which means they burned down my business. I tried to start businesses in other boroughs, the competition was too steep. I mean, if you can't make it in **New York**, you can't make it anyp – if you can make it in **New York**, you can make it anyplace. But, y-you know, if you have a hundred photographers in one place, in **New York** you got a thousand, you know, and you know how hard it is to get business, right? So I moved to **North Carolina**, and I bought a bakery in **North Carolina**, and a restaurant, and I worked that for 10 years, and then my wife decided to leave me. And so I moved from **North Carolina** to meril – **Rockville, Maryland**. I met my

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present wife there, a nice **goysa**(ph) lady, and eventually we got married. She had six children, I had two. Their – **Mary**'s children started a house – had a business in **Tennessee**, and they spent 10 years trying to talk their mother and me to come down to **Tennessee**. After 10 years we said fine, we'll retire there. We built a big house in **Withville**(ph), **Tennessee**. And after we moved in, about two weeks, they came and said, Mom, we're moving. We bought a business in **Bristol**. And she said no, I'm not moving. So I worked in – in **Withville**(ph) until I lost the business there. And then **John** told me working for **King** pharmaceuticals. So I traveled 200 miles round trip every day to come to work in **Bristol, Tennessee**, and one day I had an accident in a – on a winter day on ice, on the interstate, a rather dramatic accident. I was not injured, because God was looking out for me, and my wife said, we're moving. The very next day she said, we're moving. I rented an apartment here in **Bristol**, and I never went back to – to – a hundred miles up the road to **Withville**(ph). My wife came down, lived with me in the apartment, we sold the house in **Withville**(ph), and built a new house right here that you're sitting in. And I worked for **King** pharmaceuticals for a total of about 20 years. And I was very well rewarded, and it was a very exciting, I was a – I saw that the photography and media department for a **Wall Street** business, which was very rewarding to me. I managed to travel the world in that capacity, managed to do

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world class photography, and it was a very war – worthwhile work experience for me. And that's how we came to **Bristol**.

Q: There's a Jewish community locally?

A: There's a small Jewish community locally.

Q: Are you connected to it?

A: I am connected to it. I was the – this community just five years ago celebrated its centennial, and it was my privilege, as chairman of the centennial committee to bring **Elie Wiesel** to **Bristol, Tennessee** to speak, along with a Holocaust valet, believe it or not. And a Holocaust opera singer, and **Elie Wiesel**. And all three acts, so to speak, got standing ovations in our biggest local theater. And I was able to present the – a Holocaust performance, **Oskar Schindler's, Oskar's List**, in my son's newly renovated post office downtown, which hundreds of local people first saw Holocaust exhibits. And so we had a very worthwhile centennial, and we exposed our congregation, people telling me, oh, we never even knew that you had a synagogue down here. And so it was very worthwhile, and very rewarding.

Q: And have you been active in testifying locally?

A: Well, in the – within the last five years I've been asked to speak at local schools and churches about my Holocaust experience, and I – experiences, and I have done so.

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Q: Who, or what encouraged you to speak out after so long a time when you were silent?

A: **Elie Wiesel**. He said, it is your duty and your obligation as a survivor to be a witness, and to testify what happened to you, and – because there are many people who do not believe that the Holocaust happened, and you know only too well that it did. So I'm taking his challenge.

Q: Thank you, Mr. **Jarvis** for letting us interview today.

A: You're very welcome. **[break]** That is a photograph of my family. On the right is my father, **Leo Judas**, on the left my mother **Hilda Judas**. In the back is my older brother, **Irving Joseph Judas**, and in the front me, **Manfred Judas**. This photograph was taken in **Freiburg, Germany**, in 1939, shortly before my brother was sent on the final **kinder** train to **England**. I want to know how the train made it across the English channel.

Q: I think you can probably say anything you want to say as you look at **Steve** do the picture. I think you can talk about anything you want while he's photographing.

A: **[break]** – it was a photograph that was presented to me ma – by my aunt shortly before she died. So that's how I acquired it. And it had a shadow, my

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father's face was in complete shadow, we were able to remove the shadow, which is a wonder in any time.

Q: Okay, we're – we're rolling [indecipherable] talk more about it, we're rolling.

A: Okay, the gentleman in the front on the left hand side is my father, **Leo Judas**. He is a horse dealer in **Freiburg, Germany**, and this is some type of military parade after the war. My father was very much in demand, and you can see the selection of horse flesh, that he understands horses thoroughly. It's a beautiful horse.

Q: And he's the one on the left horse, or he's down, standing? He's on the left side on the horse, or he's on –

A: On the left side – there's a horse on the right side.

Q: Yeah.

A: I have no idea who he is, and my father's on the left side, so it's a – he's the first horse.

Q: Okay, cause there's a man standing there, and I thought he might be –

A: No, on the horse.

Q: Oh, it's on the horse, okay. That's shortly after World War I. Okay.

A: This is my cousin **Erik** on the right, and his sister **Ilsa** on the left. Can you pan down to show their names? ... That's good.



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Q: Now, we're gonna do –

A: [indecipherable] Oh yeah, yeah, **Erik**. That's [indecipherable]. Can you – yeah, right, can you do a little bit more to the right, to lose that line? Oh – okay, all right.

Q: They – they can –

A: Yeah, that'll be good.

Q: – fix that later [indecipherable] if they want.

A: Yeah, they can mask it out.

Q: Right.

A: Oh, this is good. This is a photograph taken in **Rivesaltes**, probably sometime in 1941. And the left hand side is my father, **Leo Judas**. On the right hand side is his brother **Leopold Judas**, and in the center is my dear and beloved cousin, **Erik Forst(ph)**. **Erik** was dressed like a super Nazi or something. He came in and out of that concentration camp like he owned it. And he wore brand new boots, every time he took a step they creaked. And he wore a jacket and pants and shirt and a tie in the concentration camp, and the French beret. He looked like Superman himself.

Q: Did **Erik** survive the war?

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A: No. Not that we know for sure. ... Look at my father's face in the first picture you took. Can you take that first picture out and show them?

Q: **Rivesaltes.**

**End of Tape Four**

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**Beginning Tape Five**

A: This is a photograph of Madame **Burra** in **Neyron, France** at her small farm. Madame **Burra** hid **Kurt Judas** and me during the war, from the Nazis. This is her and her five goats. **Kurt** and I had to take these goats grazing on alternate days, **Kurt** one day, I the next. These goats were just such a bother to me because each one wanted to go a different way constantly. But they provided milk for me, and the big one I rode like a horse. Plus, we got to eat one of them at Christmastime. This was life in the fast lane in World War II, **Neyron, France, Ain.**

Q: Do you remember which one you ate?

A: The one that's missing there. Now, there she is become a complete mystery. This again is Madame **Burra** with her goats, in **Neyron, Ain, France. France. ...**

Q: That was taken in **Lyon**, cause the – the photographer is – **Lyon** is – is marked, it's your bro – it's your cousin.

A: Okay, okay. This is a passport photograph of my first cousin, **Kurt Judas**. This photograph was taken by a professional photographer in the city of **Lyon, France**. This is a picture of me and my aunt, **Hannah Ramsfelder**(ph) afin – after they fattened me up in the **United States**. That is in front of a – oh, my gosh, can't

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remember the name of the car. ... I – I look a little bit like my aunt there, don't I?

Family resemblance.

**End of Tape Five**

**Conclusion of Interview**