

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**  
**RG-50.030\*0697**

## PREFACE

The following interview 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.

## **GOLDIE BUCH JONAS**

May 5, 2013

Question: This is a **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mrs. **Goldie Buch** Jonas, on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013, in **Brooklyn, New York**. Thank you Mrs. **Jonas** for agreeing to meet with us today, for agreeing to tell your story, and we will start at the beginning. So I'd like you to tell me when you were born, your date of birth, where you were born, and your name at birth.

Answer: Okay, I was born in January 17, 1928, and it was **Radów, Poland**. My name is **Golda Buch**, my maiden name. And that's as far as I remember my birth, and being – I mean, growing up – excuse me, growing up with two brothers older than I, and my father –

Q: Tell me – okay, excuse me.

A: – my mother.

Q: Tell me their names and when they were born.

A: My oldest brother was **Pinhaus(ph) Buch**. He was born in 1923, I don't remember the date. And my middle brother was born in 1925, in July of 1925. Also in the same town as myself in **Poland**, and we all attended – later on we attended I – a grade school, which is in Polish, you know [**speaks Polish**]. Every – every Jewish child, no matter what religion they was, Orthodox, or very Orthodox, had to attend seventh grade in Polish school. And if the parents could allow themselves,

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

they also sent the children to Hebrew schools, and that's where I attended after public school; after lunch from one to five, we attended Hebrew school.

Q: So you had a long day.

A: And – yes. And also my brothers attended, learning everything, Judaism and religious and every – we were religious, we were very Orthodox at home. But the kids, you know, my father was [indecipherable] he is sending his boys, his sons to learn whatever is needed to be learned, until the war broke out.

Q: Okay.

A: I finished my fourth grade just in 1939, and we also finished some of the Hebrew school, not everything, because the war started. And then the Germans came in –

Q: Hang on a minute, hang on a minute.

A: Okay.

Q: We'll get there. But in the beginning I'd like to ask you many more questions about your childhood, about growing up, about pre-war life. So –

A: Like what?

Q: About life before the war.

A: The war?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: So first I'd like to ask, beca – to make sure that we have it on record, your middle brother's name, your – the one born in 1925, what is it?

A: [indecipherable]

Q: Your older brother is **Pinkhus**(ph) or –

A: **Pinhaus**(ph), yeah.

Q: Yes. And your younger brother?

A: My – is **Boruch**(ph).

Q: **Boruch**(ph). **Boruch**(ph) was his name.

A: Yeah, **Boruch**(ph). We call him **Benny**, because he has two names, **Boruch**(ph) **Benny**.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah.

Q: And what were your father's name and your mother's maiden name?

A: **Moshe**(ph) **Buch** was my father, and my mother's name was **Brima**(ph) **Buch**.

Q: **Brima**(ph) **Buch**. [indecipherable]

A: Born **Wiesen**(ph).

Q: Born **Wiesen**(ph).

A: Yeah, married to **Buch**.

Q: Were your parents from **Rozwadow**?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Yes.

Q: So their families –

A: They were both – they both born in **Rozwadow**. Officially their parents were born not directly in **Rozwadow**, but one of the towns near **Rozwadow**. But when they got older, they all moved to **Rozwadow**. My grandfather was not a poor man, he had some business established, sh-shoe business [indecipherable] business, and that's what he learned his sons, like my father, my uncles. And my mother's family, they were also living in **Rozwadow**, the **Wiesen**(ph) family, and my grandfather was in business with agriculture, fish, fruits, all that, and he raised [indecipherable] in **Rozwadow**. And they all did get married in **Rozwadow**.

Q: So –

A: The siblings of my mother, and the siblings of my father.

Q: Do you remember your mother's and father's birthdates?

A: My father's birthday?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Yes, I remember, 1895.

Q: 1895.

A: I don't know the date.

Q: It's okay. And your mother's?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Two years later, '97.

Q: In 1897.

A: 1897.

Q: And would you say that your family was well-to-do, or –

A: Middle class.

Q: Middle class.

A: Middle class. Not well-to-do, but middle class.

Q: Uh-huh. And your father was in the shoe business?

A: No, my grandfather was in the shoe business. My father was going – when I already knew what he was doing. First he work with his father, of course, then he got married. And then he was going – I don't know how you call it, he adjust the top of the shoes.

Q: Ah, not the soles, but the uppers.

A: Not the whole shoe. Upper.

Q: Uppers.

A: Right.

Q: He was making uppers.

A: Only the upper, the leather, whatever –

Q: Yeah.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: – is needed for winter, for summer. And he developed his own business. My mother, of course, helped him when there was the season. And he had customers coming from the villages every Tuesday to order, you know, whatever they needed for their stores or for their families, whatever. My father worked very hard. And then, I grew up like every child, you know. Happy, hel –

Q: Were you the youngest?

A: I was the youngest. I had friends, I was going to school, I was going to Hebrew school. Never have time too much to be outside like running around or whatever, because my father made sure that we should get whatever education we – we can.

Q: So your father emphasized education.

A: Yeah, this was his first thing.

Q: Was he himself educated?

A: As far as I know, he finished high school.

Q: Okay.

A: So did my mother, but this was al-already in – not in Polish time, this was in [indecipherable] time. That was under ger – under Austrian occupation.

Q: Ah, I wou – I was gon –

A: And th – before the – the first war.

Q: So that was my next question, because I'm not familiar with Polish geography.



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Yeah.

Q: I wanted to know where is **Rozwadow** in **Poland**. Is it in the west, in the center

—

A: It's in **Galicia**.

Q: It's in **Galicia**?

A: **Galicia** belonged to **Austria**, and then they gave it back to **Poland** —

Q: Okay.

A: — after the war in 1918.

Q: Okay.

A: After the war finished. It was actually **Poland** before, but then occupied as Prince **Joseph**, the King of **Austria**, he occupied the all **Galicia**, all the **Ukraine**, until the liberation of the first war, and then was **Poland** again.

Q: Did your parents talk about the first World War —

A: No.

Q: — and any experiences they might have?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: No, they never did.

Q: They never did.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: I have never talked to my children about what I went through.

Q: What was life like at home? Was it – was your father and mother, were they strict, were they –

A: Well, he – he wanted the boys, mostly the boys to be very religious and have a good education, as far as he could afforded to pay for it.

Q: And your mother, what was she –

A: My mother was [**indecipherable**] she raised the children, she made whatever she could clothes. She was sewing clothes for myself, not for my brothers, just for me. She had a sister-in-law, which was a terrific dressmaker, so she used to cut material, and my mother used to sew it. So I always had nice clothes to go to school, or to go to friends, or as you could see from the picture, I was dressed like a middle class person, like a middle class child actually.

Q: Was a middle class child in **Poland**, a middle class family, the same thing as in the **United States**?

A: No, poorer.

Q: Poorer. Poorer.

A: Much poorer.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: A middle class family – I consider my son middle class, but we never could afforded what he has here, never.

Q: Okay, did your parents own your own home – their own home?

A: They owned an apartment, yes, which consisted of two rooms and a kitchen.

And of course a yard, and – and also [indecipherable] shed where they kept, you know, stuff for the winter. And –

Q: Did you have animals?

A: No.

Q: Like no horses, no –

A: No, no.

Q: Nothing like that.

A: No.

Q: Did you have a ma – an automobile?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: No.

Q: How large was **Rozwadow**? Was it a big town?

A: The apartment are big?

Q: No, no, the town. **Rozwadow**.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: The town – we had – the town was not big, but it was a 90 percent Jewish town, with a lot of youth. We had our own **Bürgermeister**, which means the mayor was a Jew, a very rich Jew. And we had a city hall, we had a jail. No hospitals, we had doctors, we had pharmacists, and of course a lot of merchants.

Q: So, it was a large Jewish community.

A: A large Jewish community, yes.

Q: Within a small town, would that – or was it a city?

A: Well, the town was not big, but you cannot consider a very small town.

Q: Okay.

A: We had three shuls.

Q: Okay.

A: In the three, we had a – the very Orthodox shul; we had the Conservative, more or less, shul; and we had – and the rabbis, of course, had their own shuls. There were four rabbis in our town. There were two brothers, and they had their own shuls, with their own people who went to them, just there.

Q: Did –

A: To pray, I mean.

Q: Yeah. Did everybody know each other, or not really?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Well, mostly like families know – knew each other, because the families stuck together, like my mother's family was quite a large family, and my father's family was quite a large family. I mean, they were not so large, like there were six, and in my mother's family there were six. And they all had children there – not married, they were still all young before the war.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: I mean, married age came during the war.

Q: That's right.

A: But before the war they were still all like 16 - 15 - 14 years old. So mostly – especially you – you knew very much your neighbors, because we were like close knit and living very close to each other. So –

Q: Which parent were you closer to?

A: Which grandparents?

Q: Parent. Parent. Your mother or your father, who did you feel closer to?

A: I think there were times when I was very close with my mother as a child. My father didn't have time for anything, cause he was always, always working –

Q: Yeah.

A: – in order to provide for the family. And then – well, this was before the war.

Q: Yeah.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: It changed differently later on.

Q: Uh-huh, okay. I-Is that it changed during the war?

A: I-It – it changed – in 1938 my father was drafted to the Polish army.

Q: Yes.

A: And everybody was very stunned because already he – that time he was in the 40s, and he was like the only Jew who was drafted to the Polish army, and nobody could understand why. So of course it was very hard for my mother with the three of us to make a living, or support us. We went to my grandfather, to my father's father. He had a big house, he had room for us, and he told us to come there. So we lived together until the war.

Q: I see.

A: And we didn't hear from my father if he's alive or not, where he is. He was fighting. When the war started, he had to fight with the Polish army, the Germans.

Q: That was – must have been very frightening.

A: It was very frightening and when they start to bomb the city, we all escaped like to a village, not far from **Rozwadow**, and then we came back. And we never went home again. And my mother stayed with us, with my grandfather, my grandmother had died just before, a few years. We stayed, and also my aunt and uncle. And their

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

children all stayed at the same house until the Germans march into **Poland**, to our city.

Q: I want to stop there. I still want to talk a little bit about pre-war.

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you have an earliest memory?

A: Excuse me?

Q: Do you have an earliest memory? Do you have, you know, as a child growing up, one of your – the earliest things that – that you can remember?

A: I could – I could remember that anti-Semitism started. I felt – not only I, the whole family, that short before the war, the **antemitism**(ph) got much more –

Q: Strong?

A: – intensive, you know, and it was scary to go out, especially at night, especially before a Christmas holiday, my father never let us out in the street, because the Polish people, they are very, very susceptible to drinking. And whoever they saw they could have beat up or something, and it was scary to go out. So this I remember very well when I got older a little bit, not when I was very young. When I was very young, I was like very free to roam around, not the city, but near the house. We had the little park, you know, we had swings. So it wasn't like I had to

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

go far away that's my mother couldn't call me in when she felt it's time to get into the house. So –

Q: So –

A: – I was – I was a happy child.

Q: Yeah.

A: And had very good friends.

Q: Can we stop for a minute? I'd – **[break]**

A: So –

Q: You were talking about some very close friends that you had.

A: Yeah, I had friends, we – we were very happy, you know. I remember I had a friend, she was rich, and they had the telephone in the house, and also a doll – a doll and a carriage. We all got together and play with her dolls and with the carriage. It was like, even for a person who didn't make a living for the family, but you couldn't afford those things. So if somebody was able to afford it, well, they had the beer factory, that friend of mine. She didn't survive the war.

Q: What was her name?

A: Excuse me?

Q: What was her name?

A: The name was **Sandrovich**(ph).



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: And her first name?

A: I don't remember.

Q: Oh, okay. And –

A: I don't remember.

Q: Did sh –

A: **Bronya(ph) Bronya(ph).**

Q: **Bronya(ph) Bronya(ph).**

A: **Bronya(ph) Sandrovich(ph),** yeah.

Q: Did you meet an –

A: It's coming back.

Q: It does, it does.

A: Yeah.

Q: So –

A: So we used to play in their backyard with the carriage, with the doll. And then one time it came to my home, we went home. But we looked forward the next time again to meet. But I had three friends. One you met on my picture.

Q: What's her name?

A: **Sonya Olst(ph).**

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: She – she's now – she's very, very, very sick. She has cancer all over, she's a doctor herself, but she's very, very sick, hardly surviving, I don't know how much longer she will survive. I speak to her once in a while. And we were close, we went always together, skating, to school, to – to public school, to Hebrew school. We were like three of us always, always together, never separating. And on Shabbas we used to go for – they had for the kids, they had like little lectures, you know, singing. And this was also gathering everything on religious basis, nothing out of the ordinary, which didn't belong to us. But there were also kids who were like in different organizations. And we always belonged to the **Mizrachi**.

Q: **Mizrachi**.

A: And the **Mizrachi** is a working religious organization, and mine brothers were also – my father made sure that's my brothers that every Shabbas go to the meetings, and so some learning for the **Polon(ph) Mizrachi**, which is working religious people. Course my father belonged to that organization.

Q: So that meant for –

A: So as children, we were raised like – with love to **Israel**, and that time **Palestine**, but that no – we knew that eventually, maybe, one day we'll go to **Israel**, that time **Palestine**.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: And so that sense, that – that mission, was something that was very conscious for you, as you were growing up, that **Israel** is a pla – is the homeland.

A: **Palestine**.

Q: That **Palestine** is the homeland.

A: Yeah, my father was a Zionist. He always attended his meetings, and he always intend that's one day he's gonna be in **Israel**. But he never made it.

Q: Yeah. You – who were – what was the name of your other friend, you had three of you.

A: Yeah, the **Olst**(ph) family, they also were – when the Germans came in, we were living with them for a couple of weeks. And one day they announced that we should get a – then the bomb stops, because they had already occupied them.

Q: Okay, excuse me, I don't want to get to the war yet.

A: Okay.

Q: We'll get to the war. I wanted to know the name of the other girl. You were three of you who were all –

A: **Shifka**(ph) rose – **Shifka**(ph) **Wiesenfeld**(ph).

Q: **Shifka**(ph) **Wiesenfeld**(ph).

A: Yeah.

Q: And do you know what happened to her?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Yes, they perished by the Germans.

Q: I see.

A: The whole family.

Q: So it was the three of you –

A: Separated, yeah.

Q: – sep – yeah, who event – yeah, were separated, but as children, you were the closest friends.

A: Yes, we were separated as children when the war – when the Germans came into the town.

Q: Okay.

A: And they occupied.

Q: I have one more question before we come to that.

A: Mm-hm?

Q: And that is about your relations with local Polish people. I know you mentioned that anti-Semitism got very strong right before the war, but –

A: Yeah, only good relation we had is with the – our teacher.

Q: I see.

A: Polish lady. She was very nice to – to all the kids, and that's the only Polish person that I really knew at home. We didn't associate with any Polacks at all.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: I see.

A: Even in school, we had our own – our own Jewish kids which we play together during the recesses and mostly we kept to ourselves.

Q: Okay. So now let's come to the war.

A: Okay.

Q: How much talk was there in your home about **Hitler**, about what was going on in **Germany**?

A: Nothing. Nothing.

Q: Nothing?

A: Nothing. It was like – it was like a bomb, you know, like an – where they were bombing us first, like I said, we had – my mother took us, we escaped to a village, maybe there would be less bombing. But they were so low in the planes, that's – I remember like vividly I seeing them now. They could have killed everybody, but somehow –

Q: Were you on the road?

A: We were on the road.

Q: Okay.

A: Trying to escape the city. But then when the bombing stopped, we came back.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Not to our house, like I said, to my grandfather's house, and we stayed there until the Germans moved in. Nobody talked about **Hitler**, nobody talked about the Germans. We only heard – nobody had the radio in those years – we heard that **France** was occupied, **Belgium** was occupied, all these countries, and **Poland** was like the next on the road. They came in, it was just before the Jewish holidays, and they settled themselves to the best houses, which they occupy half of my **zayde's** house, my grandfather's. Course, he had like a double house. And they were very – those were young, very young Austrian soldiers. They were quiet, pleasant. They said don't worry, we're not going to do nothing to you. That's how I remember it. And it was settled, you know, everything is going to be okay. Few weeks later when they took my older brother to work, he was that time already 14 years old.

Q: **Pinchus**(ph).

A: Outside the town, I don't know what to do, I have no idea. Oh, maybe I had an idea, but I don't remember. Then he came home at night a few days later, we heard the loudspeakers in the market, you know, in the city hall, that all the Jewish people should gather at this and this time in the marketplace, and there will be an announcement made. So the announcement was that every Jew has to leave **Rozwadow** immediately. You could go home, take whatever you can, and leave the town.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: What a shock.

A: It was – for my mother it wasn't a shock, because she wanted to go and find my father. She didn't know where he is, she never – we never heard from him. She had a feeling that he is someplace alive. So she gathered us, we put on like – I remember like – I put on like three dresses, or whatever and two coats, and hats. It was already September, October, something like this. And my brothers, whatever they had in a little bundle on the back. And my **zayde** went, my grandfather, my father's father. My **cante**(ph) with her three kids and her husband. We went to the **San**. The **San** is the river which divided our city in half.

Q: Ah, so **Rozwadow** was on the **San** river.

A: **Rozwadow** was on the **San**, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: And that's what – the city where my husband comes, also on the **San**, but they were on the Ukrainian side, we were on the **Galician** side, on the Polish side. So –

Q: Were the cities far from each other?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: [**indecipherable**] far?

A: Yes, because they were like, near the **Ukraine**.

Q: I see.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: And we were near – and we were in middle of **Poland**, that called **Irlitsia(ph)** in that time.

Q: Okay.

A: It still – it still is called **Irlitsia(ph)**.

Q: **Irlitsia(ph)**

A: – I think, I – I'm not sure. So everybody who was able to work, the kids, the old people, the young people, and some people didn't leave. Some people were hiding in their homes. We left. We got on the **San**, hurry across the **San**. The bridge was already bombard to pieces. So, of course if you have a little money, my grandfather got a Polish guy who had a little, like a fishing boat or something. So the family got into that boat, and many people drowned, because they were walking in the water. They didn't think it's that deep, but it was deep. Many, many people drowned. And we got to the other side. On the other side we had a small village, but it was prosperous village, where my father's brother lived, his wife and his father-in-law and his child.

Q: Wait, what was the name of the village?

A: [**indecipherable**] I'll tell you in a minute. **Justkowicz(ph)**.

Q: **Justkowicz(ph)**.

A: **Justkowicz(ph)**, yeah.



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Okay.

A: So we stayed in their house –

Q: Okay.

A: – because we were family, for a few days. And my mother saw Polish soldiers coming home from the war, every – and she knew a lot of the – a lot of the old customers of my father. So she used to ask them if they ever saw my u – my father. They said yes, he's alive, but he's in the German side, in **Premisz**(ph).

Q: Okay.

A: **Premisz**(ph) was also, one side was the Russian, and one side also was the zerc – I mean, the water in the middle – one side was the Russians occupied, one side was the Germans. My father fell in into the German side, as a Polish soldier.

Q: When – can – before I go there, just to establish, when you were in the village with your father's brother, was that occupied by the Russians at that point?

A: Not my father's brother – yeah, my father's brother –

Q: [**indecipherable**] father's brother.

A: – **Benny**.

Q: Yeah. Was that –

A: Yeah. It was occupied – was an o – was occupied by nobody.

Q: I see.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: The Russians were starting to come in.

Q: I see.

A: They were starting to come in, but they didn't get that fast to that area.

Q: Okay.

A: The Germans got much faster to the other side where we lived. So my mother said no, she's gonna take her children, and she's gonna go and walk to meet the Russians. And we were constant, constant, we saw Polish – Polish soldiers coming back from the army, which were already, you know, army that time was already –

Q: What did they look like, these soldiers, as they were coming back?

A: Tired, exhausted. And they were glad that they still were alive and coming home.

Q: Did they say anything of what happened?

A: N-No, didn't say nothing. We stayed in **Pishnison**(ph), which was the je – which were the border of the Germans, and the border of the Russians.

Q: Okay.

A: This was a cousin of my uncle.

Q: Okay.

A: She let us stay there in one room, all of us, my aunt with the three kids, an uncle, my grandfather and my – and us, my mother and three kids.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Oh my gosh.

A: Yeah. One very dark room, but at least, after walking for miles and miles and miles with the bundle and all dressed up, we finally got to **Pishnison**(ph), and we stayed there. The Russians were already occupied that town. We stayed there for awhile, maybe a week or something, til we got our strength back. My mother picked herself up, she left us with my aunt and uncle, and she took the **[indecipherable]** to **Lwów**, because she had a feeling that maybe she'll find my father.

Q: Was **Lwów** under the Germans at that point?

A: No, **Lwów** was under the Russians.

Q: Okay.

A: Under the Russians.

Q: Even though she had been told he was in a prison in a town –

A: Yeah, but we don't know what happened after.

Q: That's right.

A: After the war, or –

Q: Right.

A: – how he got out or –

Q: Right.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: – where he was. So she went to **Lwów**, she was never in **Lwów**. I don't know how she had the courage to go there, and she was walking around the whole city, asking people if they ever saw my father, if they know where he is, and if this – if he survived. Somehow, my father survived. He was kept in a camp, in a German camp for a while, and I don't know how he escaped, and he crossed the border to **Lwów**.

Q: So even though she didn't know, and he didn't know, they ended up in the same city.

A: In the same city, and somehow all the refugees at tho – at that time they all stuck together, they – everybody was trying to find somebody they know.

Q: Sounds like huge chaos.

A: In **Lwów**, yes, little – in 1939, yes, 1940. And she found him. And she came back, she said to my – to his father, my **zayde** and – and to his sister, she said, I'm taking my kids, I'm going to **Lwów**, I found my husband. So we were so happy, and took the train, we went to **Lwów** and they gave us the – like a committee, a Jewish committee. There still was a lot of – lot of Jews before the war there. They arranged something for us to sleep in a Polish cathedral, you know, we slept –

Q: Was it the first time you were in a Polish church – in a Catholic church?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Yeah, yeah, in a Catholic church. I remember even the street was

**Matskavich**(ph), the street was **Matskavich**(ph), I can – how I remember this, I don't know.

Q: Do you have a –

A: It was – it was not a church, it was like a cathedral you know, like –

Q: So it's a huge place.

A: Very huge. So the – and the Polacks there, and the priests gave us the downstairs. Not only us, where – there was a lot of refugees. We slept there on the floor for a good while. But at least we were together.

Q: Did you have any food? Did anybody give you any food?

A: I don't remember that.

Q: Okay.

A: We probably got food from the people – from the Jewish people who lived before the war in **Lwów**.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: We got some food from them probably, I don't – I – I don't remember.

Q: Okay.

A: I remem – and then my – we were still there. Of cour – of course, afraid from the Polacks. But we weren't alone, we were a lot of us there.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: But were there also Polish refugees in that basement?

A: No, no, no, no.

Q: Just Jewish?

A: Just Jews, no.

Q: Okay.

A: The Polish people didn't have to leave the city or go by themselves or anything. My parents went to look for a place where they could live with Jews together and not in a cathedral. So they found not far from the marketplace, a big house, which perl – probably belonged to Jews, and they gave out floors for those people.

Q: Yeah.

A: Now it was empty, we slept on the floors. So there was I don't know how many families. We had a little space, all five slept together and had the little [indecipherable] or whatever they gave us to cook something. And we lived there and I started Russian schools.

Q: You started to go to school in r – had you s – ah, one question I had, did you see Russian soldiers in **Lwów**?

A: Of course.

Q: Okay.

A: In **Lwów**.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: When was the first time you saw Russian soldiers, and I'd like to know –

A: In **Lwów**.

Q: In **Lwów**.

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you have it in – what impression did they make on you?

A: I wasn't scared.

Q: Okay.

A: I was too young, I thou – I thought it's funny.

Q: Okay.

A: You know.

Q: They look different, huh?

A: I – I saw – I saw the German soldiers. They were much cleaner looking than the Russian soldiers. Different outfits, different everything. But they didn't bother us, they let us roam around free. If you can buy something on the black market, if you had some money for food or something, you bought whatever you could. And that's how we survived for 1940 – 1939 - 1940. And I started Russian school. I was that time going in the – in the fifth grade, maybe sixth grade.

Q: So how old were you?

A: I was that time by 11.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: So you – as a – you were a young child when this is all happening to you.

A: When the war broke out, I was nine years old.

Q: Yeah.

A: That's why I couldn't understand all this politics. I remember now –

Q: Yeah.

A: – what will happen that – that time.

Q: But it's import –

A: But didn't – I – those years I didn't realize. I was only nine years old. What do I know about the war?

Q: Of course, of course.

A: What do I think about the war.

Q: Yeah.

A: So after my father decided in 1940, a lot of people decided that's they going.

There was a committee to register who wants to go back to **Poland**, to the – to home.

Q: Af – I want to ask a question, though.

A: Yeah.

Q: When you started school and you – i-it was Russian school, so you're starting to learn Russian, yes?



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Russian and Jewish.

Q: Russian and Jew – so you were able to study in Yiddish, or in –

A: In Yiddish and Russian, yeah, they were Jewish teachers.

Q: And it was a public school? Or was a religious school?

A: It was a – supposedly – no, no, a public.

Q: A public school.

A: Public school. And just wanted the children to do something with themselves, otherwise they would get crazy.

Q: Of course.

A: They were –

Q: And do you have any impressions of this school?

A: Excuse me?

Q: Do you have any memories of the school?

A: Not much.

Q: What would you remember from it?

A: I remember to learn Russian that time. You know, beginning. They didn't last long, maybe a few months. After my father went to register that's he want to go back to **Poland**, not only him, they were standing in the line for days. And then he came home happy that's – who knew the war is going to be for six years, nobody

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

knew. That's eventually they will let us go back to **Poland**, you know, to the home. So instead of keeping the promise that they're gonna let us go home, the Russians took over. All the people who registered to go home, they got them together from all over, no matter where you were, and that was on a Friday night, I remember like now. My mother had cooked something for Shabbas. The Russians came in, because they knew where all the refugees were living, the Russians came in and they said, get yourself together immediately. We didn't know what happened, we were sleeping. My parents woke us up, we got dressed. Then my mother took whatever she cooked, you know, for Shabbas, and they took us to the trains. Not knowing where we going, not knowing nothing. Hungry and naked and everybody get up like they know how to do it, very rough.

Q: So the manner was different from what you had ac – been experiencing up til then? The way the soldiers behaved was different than what you had experienced in **Lwów** until that time.

Q: Well, this was – this was like a – they – they had a – they were told they have to do that, but first, in one night they got together, the whole refugee or whoever – wherever they were, if they knew who they were. And when we came those trains, we met already my aunt, with her kids, and my uncle, and my grandfather and a lot of other families from other people my parents knew. And they put us in cattle

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

trains, hundreds of people in one train. You only have standing place. We stood like – worse than cattles. And then the Ukrainian, the goyim, they were the happiest in the world. They were clapping and they were dancing, and they were whatnot.

Q: You saw that?

A: Yes, we saw that before we even went to the trains. So they – they knew they'll have plenty of what to – you know, take away whate – whatever the Jews left. But they didn't take the people who did not register. They only took the people who registered they want go back. Which means you wanted to go back to – to **Germany**, to be in that – on the **Hitler** side, but **Hitler** wasn't, you know, on the other side of **Poland**.

Q: But here's a question. If – knowing that, knowing that – that it's on the German side, why did your father want to go home?

A: They didn't think it's gonna take – the war was – God knows they – they thought after the pact, you know, when the – **Hitler** did the pact with **Russia**, it's gonna be one, two, three and they're gonna divide, and you can go home and be yourself like you were before. That's what you thought.

Q: So they knew about the pact. They knew –

A: Oh yeah, we knew about the pact, you know.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: You knew the pact.

A: There never gonna be a war with **Russia** and **Germany**. They're gonna divide whatever they took, and that's how it's gonna be finished. So who didn't want to go home to their places where they were born, raised and – and worked and everything? So – and they took us to the cattle trains, and then they were filled up with different families, we didn't know who they were. We didn't know none of them.

Q: Were any refugees not Jewish? Are you saying all of the refugees were Jewish?

A: All Jewish.

Q: All Jewish.

A: All Jewish, only Jews.

Q: Only Jews, okay.

A: So – and we traveled, we traveled for a whole month. They stopped in certain places, which they let us go out in case you had to go out. Otherwise there was nothing inside that you could relieve yourself. That was crying and crying and getting sick and it was – I'll never forget that. We were only kids. My oldest brother was 15, my middle brother was 13 and I was 10.

Q: You didn't know where you were going?

A: No.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: You knew it wasn't home, however.

A: No, no, we knew right away, yeah, we knew it. Because it didn't go the side like to **Poland**, it was now the way we going my – they used to stop like maybe after few weeks of traveling, or a week, so that people came to the – to the trains, and they gave us like [**indecipherable**] like hot water to bring something. There was no food, there was nothing.

Q: So you got no food in the trains, nobody fed you.

A: Nothing.

Q: Well, how could someone survive no water and no food?

A: Nothing, nothing, just – we remember stopping, and this was already **Russia**.

We – we didn't know where we were. They came to the trains with buckets of hot water and it was like a Godsend, you know. Food? There was nothing. They didn't feed us at all, from –

Q: What time of year was it?

A: Excuse me?

Q: What time of year was it?

A: This was end of '40 – of – end of '40.

Q: So it was December? Sort of like November, December?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: No, we – when we came to the **Urals**, it was already winter, because they took us off the train with sleds, and they brought us to – in the **Urals**, which was camps and barracks, and – and the steppes, you know, steppes? I don't know if you know what the steppes are in **Russia**.

Q: Tell me, what does it – what does it look like, a steppe?

A: It's fields, empty, empty fields, around, around on the **Ural** mountains. It's like on the border with **Europe** and – and **Europe** and **Asia**, divided. This was the ur – the –

Q: Okay. So a steppe is an open field?

A: Yeah, that's what the steppes are, it's very open, you know, a lot of empty like fields. Not growing anything, nothing.

Q: So it's like just – just empty.

A: Steppe – yeah, empty.

Q: No trees.

A: No, no. No trees. Then when – when they brought us to the barracks, to the little place which was called [**speaks foreign language**] I don't remember exactly, and there were barracks, which they had kept – many years ago they kept over there like prisoners of war or something, I don't know. And they divided everybody to a barrack room.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Was your family kept together?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: We – our family, and another family, we were – we were given one room. One r  
– the room was maybe half as high as what this. So we slept on one side, and the  
other family of four slept on this side, in the barracks.

Q: Tell me, what kind of conversation – do you remember what people were saying  
to one another in the trains, as they were being taken into **Russia**?

A: I don't remember.

Q: Were the people praying? Do you remember if they were praying?

A: Everybody was praying. It didn't help, but they were praying.

Q: Yeah.

A: Praying to God, not knowing where we were going to be, or what's going to  
happen.

Q: Did your – was there much – did the guards, or did anybody official in a  
uniform or anything like that –

A: No, the guards were outside the train.

Q: They were just guarding that you don't leave it?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Yeah. No, we were locked like, you know, with the bolt. And when they stopped – when the people, like some of the people brought us hot water –

Q: Yeah.

A: – they opened up the bolt and they shoulder – they opened the doors so everybody could get some water to drink.

Q: I see. And did they say anything to you when you were brought to those barracks? So you didn't know why you were there.

A: They – no. We – we assumed, because mostly people had registered to go back, and that's why they were there, probably.

Q: Okay, but no speeches, no explanation?

A: Nothing, nothing. We came – the one of the cities, I think it was **Molotov** that time, which is like a main city in the **Urals**. I'm reading now a book about it also, from dur-during the war, and when I saw **Molotov** I rem – or **Kora Stalowka**(ph), this was a place where we were, the – the little enclave like a few barracks and on one side were the woods, with lions or with tigers and whatever. Or hyenas, you know it's scary to death. But somehow, we lived through. So [indecipherable] barracks like this, you know, and – like barracks, you know what barracks a-are.

Q: So the barracks, were they inside the woods, or on the steppe?

A: On the steppe where it was a clearing.



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: I see.

A: But the mountains and the woods were all around.

Q: Got it.

A: And this was like a clearing.

Q: Okay.

A: But we had the commando there, Russian commando. After they settled everybody in the house over there where we lived, they started to choose people for work. Of course, the work was in the woods, to cut woods.

Q: Okay.

A: You know. They took my mother, they took my older brother and my father was not well since he got out from the army, he went to a committee and they said he cannot work. And they let me and my younger brother – my middle brother, also didn't take because we were too young. They took from like 16 and up. So they took my mother and my brother. And that's where they worked all winter, sawing trees and putting them into the water for transportation. And it was 60 below zero.

Q: And what kind of clothes did they have?

A: Codes?

Q: Clothes, what kind of clothes did they have?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Whatever we brought from home, whatever we had. Everything was cold and torn, no-nothing special. Freezing to death. We survived, I don't know. I don't know how we survived.

Q: Do you remember the food? If – what kind of food you had?

A: The food?

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah, they gave us like maybe 200 gram of bread, like stone was the bread. Maybe the workers got a little bit more. And there was a kitchen, soup kitchen, so everybody had to go with a little thing to get some soup. This was our food.

Q: Were you hungry?

A: Always. But my – in the summer my mother discovered chives. You know chives, the green, between the grass? She recognized which ones are looking like chives, so she collected that when she was able to. And she also collected – there is a green grass which is very itchy, I don't know how it's called.

Q: I don't know.

A: It – it – it looks like spinach, it grows like spinach, but the leaves are very sharp and itchy.

Q: Would it be nettles?

A: I don't know how it's called in English.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Okay.

A: If you go touch it here, you would –

Q: Do you know what it's called in Russian?

A: No.

Q: Or in Polish? Or in Yiddish?

A: No.

Q: No. You don't know what it's called, okay.

A: Yeah, **pokrzywy**.

Q: **Pokrzywy**.

A: In Polish it's called **pokrzywy**. In Jewish, I don't have no idea. So she collected that, and from this she cooked soup. And this was our vitamin. And it was pretty good. Just water, washed it, whatever she could. The chives, the **pokrzywy**, little salt, water and this was the additional soup what we got from the soup kitchen.

Q: So it was bread that was hard, and this. And that's what you got to –

A: That's [**indecipherable**]. Then the summer came, my brothers were very good blueberry pickers. They went to the woods and they came home with buckets of blueberries. Not blueberries like here, cultivated, really blueberries, growing on the ground. And they used to sell it to people who couldn't go collect this. So we got a few **rubles**, whatever that time it was, and then my mother collected a few things

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

with myself, like we had a – a nice tablecloth, we had some socks what we brought from home. And we went to a village far away and brought home some potatoes, some eggs. Not much, but we – whatever we had, we [indecipherable]

Q: So you were –

A: And that's how we lived through the summer.

Q: So you were allowed to leave the barracks. It wasn't like you were imprisoned within –

A: Hel – the barracks were surrounded, you cannot get out, like out to go. You had to have [indecipherable] document if you want to go to the next village. It was the same thing. But there were Gentiles living, Russians there, many, many years. And they had their little farm, you know, and they had like what to eat.

Q: Mm-hm. But they were – the – the commandants of this commando and so on, it wasn't that you were in a prison where they wouldn't let you out at all. You ne –

A: Oh we – we could – we could walk around in the barracks whatever – I mean, outside.

Q: Okay.

A: They had to go to work and some – they weren't like going [indecipherable] you know, with the rifle, but they were going to work every single day, Shabbas and Sunday, was no question about it.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Did you go – did you were insi – were – because you and your younger brother and your father didn't go, what did you do with yourselves during the day?

A: I – to tell you the truth, there was no schools, we – the children used to play, you know, get together and play whatever, running around in the summer, not in the winter.

Q: Okay.

A: And not much, you know, it was a very boring life, scary, hungry, no food, no nothing.

Q: What were you scared of the most?

A: I'm gonna die there, because many people died from hunger. And there were people who were – mostly intelligentsia, which they weren't used to that type of life, they didn't know how to help themselves, and a lot of them, a lot of them, a lot of them died, just like in the concentration camps, from hunger. You live on – on 200 gram of bread, which was hard like the earth, I don't know, they probably baked it with – with earth or something, I don't know. Supposedly this was bread [indecipherable] my mother went to another village to be able to collect something like a potato, like whatever, you know, an egg, a potato, a carrot. So she divided it for everybody. And my father was getting more sick and sick and sick and no

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

hospitals. The only thing – and the doctor always gave him the paper that he cannot work.

Q: So the doctor didn't treat him, but he gave him a paper he can't work.

A: That he can't work, he couldn't work. He couldn't work –

Q: Was he changed, was he –

A: – he couldn't work, he was a – he was on – knocked out from the prison in **Germany [indecipherable]** he was very weak.

Q: Tell me, earlier, when I asked you which parent you were closer to, and you said, as growing up, it was my mother, but that changed. How did that change and when did that change?

A: It changed because my father was sick. Got very close to him.

Q: Did you talk?

A: And – and my mother was always upset, because she had to work, and she couldn't supply enough for everybody. So it was like – and my father couldn't help her, so we were like divided, you know.

Q: Were they – were they angry with each other?

A: No, no, my father was very good man. Sometimes he was strict, you know, and we listened to him. But my mother was the supplier of everything.

Q: He was quite a burden on her.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Yeah. To feed us, to find a grass she could cook. She worked hard to get a little bit more bread, something. It wasn't easy. This was going on until Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur my mother and my brother didn't go to work. They went to – there was a Jewish cemetery where my father was – where my grandfather was buried. I don't know, probably – oh no, this was already later, I'm sorry.

Q: Okay. It was –

A: No. No, no, no, it was still in the camps. They didn't go to work, to the woods, you know, to – it was Yom Kippur. So 16 Jewish men and women, I remember exactly the amount ...

Q: It's okay.

A: – were taken to the city of **Molotov** to be prosecuted, because they didn't work on Yom Kippur. And we went – we didn't know if we were going to see them again or not.

Q: So, included your mother?

A: Yes. Not my brother, my mother and 16 other people, men – men and women. But it took a few days, we didn't know what's gonna be, because they only let those people go under, you know, with soldiers, on the watch of the Soviet commando, whatever they were. And they were freed. It was like the biggest thing what ever happened, that time. They let them all go. They – and the judge, I don't

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

know if it was Jewish, it was a Russian Jew or some, I don't know, he listened to their story and they said they had never worked on Yom Kippur, and even if they died, they would never work on Yom Kippur. And they let them free, everybody came home. I mean, home to them. [indecipherable]

Q: Yeah. But it must have been everyone was terrified.

A: Oh yeah, [indecipherable] when they took them, we were all terrified – we never knew if they're gonna come back or if they were going to put them to jail.

Q: Had you – you said earlier that a lot of people were dying from hunger.

A: Yes, a lot.

Q: Were there – did you see any people dying from brutality, that is, of the guards to these people?

A: No, no, no.

Q: Okay.

A: No. No, only from hunger.

Q: Only from hunger.

A: The one beaten – I don't know if they were beaten when they were working –

Q: Okay.

A: – because they were working under the eye – under the open eye of the soldiers, but I don't know because I was – my mother never said it.



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Okay.

A: But not that's in the barracks they were beaten, but people just died from hunger.

Q: Okay. Did your mother talk about what – what it was like there to be in that jail before that judge?

A: No, no, mm-mm, no, no. My mother and brother also didn't talk about it.

Q: When –

A: Just – they just went to work at six o'clock in the morning, they came home before dark, or dark in the winter and they never – just be glad to be home and go to that magazine, whatever they had, get their **payok**(ph) they called it, you know, the grams of bread, whatever, and the soup. And they came home and this was it, there was nothing specific. I know I remember I was learning how to play cards, you know the regular, you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: And there was a gentleman, he was a doctor from **Kraków**, me and him got very, you know, he was a very nice young man. He taught me how to – how to play cards, so we – and he also didn't work. So we played cards all day, you know. And now I don't know how to play cards at all. I didn't proceed with it, so this was my entertainment.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: What about your father? How were things going with him?

A: And after June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1941, when the war broke out with **Russia** and **Germany**, all the Polish people who were in camps, were liberated. Liberated to go to any place in **Russia** you choose.

Q: How did you hear about it?

A: Excuse me?

Q: How did – how did that news come to you?

A: I don't –

Q: I mean – so that's – that's the event that happened. Was it that somebody came and announced it in your barracks? Would – did the soldiers come?

A: Yes, yes, they announced it, they announced it, that's all the prisoners in the camps are liberated because the war started to **Germany**, which they thought, and they hoped that a lot of the people who were in the barracks and the prison will join the Russian army to fight the Germans. Which a lot of did. Which my uncle did, my cousin did, and they both – they both died in the **Warsaw** from the fighting, both of them, father and son. A lot of people joined the army, and they went to fight the Germans, because in **Ural** was very quiet, we didn't feel the war.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: In 1942, the Polish – they organized the Polish army in **Russia**.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Yes.

A: From Polish Jews and Polacks, wherever they were, and they also joined the Russian army. So is –

Q: Did anybody from your family do that?

A: No, they were too young.

Q: Okay.

A: And my father was sick. But then we started to get food, just the Polish people who have lived in **Poland**, we started to get food from **America** through the Polish army.

Q: Okay.

A: That time, was a lady by the name of **Anda(ph) Vashalewska(ph)** who organized this Polish army with the English.

Q: Okay.

A: And they were fighting from **[indecipherable]** they went to the front, the Russian front. A lot of j – a lot of Jewish boys joined the Polish army, and they started to feed the Polish people much better. We used to get also like a pay – like an amount in – in the boxes, milk, some tuna fish, some flour, some sugar. 1943 we started to be able to eat a little bit better. So people came to themselves much stronger. This was al – this was already when we left the **Urals**. On the way

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

already, being freed from the camps, the family who lived with us, their name was also **Buch**, but we no – were no family, the parents died in the sled, both of them, the husband and the wife. The two girls were left alone. They – they are a – still alive in **Israel**, I know they were in **Israel**. Had to come back and bury them, and then we were freed. I don't know, somehow my father got in touch with his sister.

Q: Where was his sister living?

A: His sister, the one we were together in – in the [indecipherable] you know, in the Russian occupied territory. And we, through letters, or through people, I-I don't remember all the details, that's we're gonna go towards [indecipherable] by

**Troitsk.**

Q: **Troitsk.**

A: Which was near **Chelyabinsk.**

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And not far from **Molotov.**

Q: Okay.

A: So we – we settled in – not many settled there. A lot of people went to the warm countries, the [indecipherable] to **Kazakhstan**, to all these republics, you know.

But my father said he doesn't have the strength to travel that far, he's going to go to the nearest town which is free. I mean, we were free.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: So tell me –

A: We could do whatever we wanted. And this was from 19 – end of 1942 til the end of the war in 1945. I went – I went to a normal school –

Q: Hang on. I'll ask you questions, but I want to –

A: Yeah.

Q: – go back a little bit. Those two girls, what happened to them after their parents – you buried their parents?

A: They – I don't know where they went. I have no idea.

Q: Were they teenagers, were they young ladies?

A: Teenagers, yes, teenagers.

Q: So they weren't children?

A: No, no, they were not – they were teenagers like 18 maybe, 19 –17.

Q: Okay.

A: They were teenagers, yes.

Q: How had it been, living with that family in that one room, in that barracks?

A: You know, you sleep like this.

Q: Yeah.

A: And you can't turn. If you turn, the whole group had to turn. It's like you go to sleep on the floor, and you are close to each other, and that's how you slept.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Very difficult, no privacy.

A: Privacy, forget about privacy. And if you had to go out, you had to go out on the outhouse. It wasn't like a house, it was like a hole in the ground. And you were afraid, because there were the monsters, some animal shouldn't come out and – you know. But we lived through, I ge – I guess God gave us years to live, so we lived through.

Q: But you were the youngest.

A: An-And – so after we were freed, we got – which was very hard, it was, again, everything was rationed. We got even a little bit more than the Russian people. But the Russian people had their cows, their – their whatever, chickens. But we didn't have anything, so we lived whatever we were able to buy on the black market. My father got a job.

Q: In **Chelyabinsk**?

A: In **Troitsk**.

Q: In **Troitsk**, excuse me.

A: In **Troitsk**, yeah. **Chelyabinsk** was the main city.

Q: Okay.

A: He got a job in a factory making, like I said, the top of the shoes.

Q: Same thing as before.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Yeah.

Q: Uppers.

A: Upper, only the upper. My brother got a job – my older brother, together with my father in the same place.

Q: Okay.

A: So they got a little bit, you know, paid. I started school.

Q: Did you know Russian by this point?

A: Yes, yes, I did. Not maybe perfect, but I had the beginning in **Lwów**, and of course in the – in the camps, they spoke only Russian, you know, in – when we were **incarcerated** in the camps. So, I started school, and until the end of the war I was in school. My younger brother learned how to – my middle brother learned how to make the – not letter, but from some type of material, like the Chinese are wearing, you know, those very – it looks like – it looks like a house shoe you know, like a – I don't know how it's called.

Q: Slippers of some kind?

A: It's like from material and a very thin sole.

Q: What are we **[indecipherable]**

A: I don't know how it's called.

Q: How in Russian? How in Russian do you call them?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A2: **Tapochki, tapochki.**

Q: **Tapochki?**

A: **Tapochkis**, yes. Yeah, **tapochkis**, right.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: He learned how to make those by hand.

Q: Okay.

A: And I was selling them. I was going to the market with my mother, she held them, and I – one pair at a time.

Q: Do you remember how much you used to get?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: And one day I was caught by the **NKVD**.

Q: That must have –

A: That was black market.

Q: Yes.

A: You not allowed to sell it. So I left – I throw away that – my mother, thank God wasn't near me, I throw away, and I started to run. I started to run, I was running like crazy. This was after school. And I got in – into a tin factory. You know what tin is?



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Mm-hm, yes.

A: [indecipherable]

Q: Yes. Is it – yeah, tin.

A: Tin, you know, tin.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: He was making like ovens, he was making like – from tin everything. And I was hiding there. And he was ow – a Jew from our people. I was hiding there for a long while between the tin. And they were running, and there was a big park near the – near the market, and they were running, running and looking for me. But thank God they never got into the store. I was shivering like crazy, I was afraid, and the guy was afraid too, because he was hiding me. Well, thank God evening came. Somehow I got out, I went home and I never went to sell them again, never.

Q: Did you tell your mother what had happened?

A: Oh yeah, they knew what happened, my mother knew. My mother was there when I started to run, so she hide everything under her, whatever she had, and I never went out to sell them again, never. I continued –

Q: What kind of – yeah, what kind of – what kind of information did you have about the **NKVD**? Why were they so scary?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Why they were so scary? When my brother worked in a factory, you know, my older brother, from coconut. This was before he got this job where my father worked. So he used to bring home once in a while the **carket**(ph), the shell, from the coconut, the shell. It was like sugar and milk and everything else. Before he left the factory, he threw out some through the gate. And then he went to collect it, and they caught him, and they took him to jail. We didn't know why he didn't come home, I mean, they didn't let us know where he is, nothing. And we had a friend, a good friend of the family, he was like dealing with the **NKVD** all the time, you know, trying to – you know, to **[indecipherable]** the money, to help people out, or whatever. So we went to him, and maybe he could find out where my brother is. And he did find out he was in jail. My father begged him see what he could do. And he promised, you know, for money, of course. And that time they kept him a whole night **[indecipherable]** we went home. We lived in a **zimlanka**(ph), you know what a **zi-zimlanka**(ph) is?

Q: No.

A: It's made from mud, like a little – little thing from mud. It had one room. This was already in **[indecipherable]** were liberated. So my brother slept – it's me, my mother and my father, we went to this person to see what he could do. After we came home, my brother slept so hard that no matter what we did – we knocked on

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

the window, we knocked on the door, we knocked on the everything and he couldn't wake up.

Q: This is the bro – he was released then?

A: And – no, not yet.

Q: No, this is your younger brother?

A: This was my middle brother, yeah, the one who worked on the shoes. We couldn't wake him up, we didn't know – this was almost wintertime. So my father broke a window, and we got in through the window. It was [indecipherable] I mean, this was the height of the **zimlanka**(ph), and the **zimlanka**(ph) – and the window was from here, up to here, like the little window, we climbed in. And he doesn't know why he couldn't wake up, he – he – we – we woke him up, we thought he's – something happened to him. And the next day my brother was freed, he came home. And he's – and he continued working in the factory, but he never brought home a – a shell of coconut any more.

Q: Did he ever talk about what happened in the prison?

A: Excuse me?

Q: Did he ever say what the **NKVD** asked or did to him?

A: No, they didn't – they – they just kept him overnight, they didn't – why did he steal, or maybe they ask him, he said it's for my family, they don't have what to

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

eat, you know, maybe he said that. But my brother never talked. He was a very quiet man.

Q: It sounds like –

A: He was too good. He didn't want to hurt anybody.

Q: Yeah.

A: So, and then he got this job with my father.

Q: Okay.

A: So he worked until we were liberated in 1945. We were told that we could go home, back to **Poland**. This was after the war. And of course after the war it was – I was finishing up my seventh grade, which was a big deal at that time. And in March of '46, we were already in **Poland**, the whole family, also [indecipherable] hot, it was more comfortable.

Q: What had happened to your grandfather? You said that –

A: To what?

Q: Your grandfather?

A: My grandfather passed away in **Troitsk**.

Q: I see.

A: Yeah, in the middle of the war. We buried him there.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: There was a Jewish cemetery. My father's father.

Q: Did he live in that **zimplanka**(ph) with you?

A: He lived with – with my aunt, uncle and her three kids.

Q: Okay.

A: He lived, and they had one room. With – he didn't live in the **zimplanka**(ph), no, we did. But later my mother found a room, one room, so we lived in one room.

This was already a palace, one room with three beds, my brother slept with another **[indecipherable]** she was also from the – you know, from us, from our Jewish people. And we slept six people in one room, we had three beds.

Q: Yeah.

A: So I slept with my mother, and my older brother slept with the **[indecipherable]** and my middle brother slept with my father **[indecipherable]** bed maybe this – this width.

Q: Oh my gosh.

A: But that was already a palace, you know. We had – we were able to get a package from **Poland** with rice, which the rabbi said you could eat rice on Pesach. My mother was making matzos at somebody's house, under – under the watchful eye of the **NKVD** because the judges were upstairs and the oven was downstairs in the same house. But somehow we survived with potatoes, you know, and laid

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

around, and we were happy to get back to **Poland**. We never went back to our home. We never back to **Rozwadow**.

Q: Why not?

A: We – our train stopped in **Brandenburg**, which is called [**indecipherable**] in Polish now. And right away the organization started to try to get, you know, the people being organized, like my parents joined the **Mizrachi** again, with **Betas**, we were all the – and didn't stay long. At least I didn't stay long. I was the youngest of the family. At that time **Ralph Herzog** was the chief rabbi of **Palestine**. He came to **Poland** and gathered 600 young children, and the English promised them 600 certificates to be able to bring to **Israel**. So he came, and his son. He was the chief rabbi, later on, of **Israel**. And he – his son was the president of **Israel** later – later on, when **Israel** was established. And he took 600 children from the **Mizrachi** and from the **Aguda**.

Q: Uh-huh. What's **Aguda**?

A: And they still – another religious organization.

Q: Okay.

A: And he gathered them on the – in **Katowice** in **Poland**. I went, my cousin, my younger cousin, all three of us were chosen from the **Mizrachi**, because we were the youngest. And much, much younger children, up to 16 - 17 years. And they

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

took us to **Katowice** and [indecipherable] and we were traveling to **Czechoslovakia**. Supposedly in **Czechoslovakia**, he is supposed to get the certificates for the kids to go into **Palestine**, that time **Palestine**. This was 1946. But certificates never came. We came to [indecipherable] which is now part of – not part of **Czechoslovakia**, and we stayed there over Shabbas because he didn't travel Shabbas. The people there brought us food. They divided us in different hotels. We stayed over Shabbas, Shabbas night we went to **Prague**. In **Prague** there was a camp for the children, you know, not far from **Prague**, which was called **Jablitz**(ph).

**Q: Jablitz**(ph).

**A: [indecipherable] Jablitz**(ph). And he left us there, and Rabbi **Ralph Herzog** and his son went back to **Israel**, to **Palestine** that time, to request why he didn't get the promised cer –

**Q: Certificates.**

**A: –** you know, affidavits or certificate. And we never were able to go to **Palestine**. They left us in **Jablitz**(ph) and the **Aliyah [indecipherable]** took over, another Jewish organization, and then divided us into two groups, which were the **Mizrachi** and **Aguda**. They took us, after six weeks being in **Czechoslovakia**, they took us to **Strasbourg** in **France**, and **Aguda** they took to **Cassada**(ph), which is on the

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Spanish border in **France**. And in **France** already, we had **Madrafeme**(ph), which were organizing the kids; the younger kids, the older kids, the middle kids. And we stayed in **France** from 1946 to 1948.

Q: You were with your brother?

A: We were in **France**. **Strasbourg**, and I was in **Paris**, and I was in **Roazhon**, different places.

Q: But no school at this time, or were –

A: Excuse me?

Q: – were you going to school of some kind?

A: Yes, in – in **Strasbourg**, yes, we went to learn French and also we learn – they te – they taught us to sew. You know, it's [**indecipherable**] this school. Mostly – not the regular school, but the French school, just to learn French.

Q: Okay.

A: Which we learned, of course, and then you forget it, if you don't use it. So after I found out my father passed away in 1948, in **Salzburg**, they also emigrated from **Poland** to – to **Austria**, to the camps in **Austria**. I – my father was working with the po – with the Polish council for me to come back to be with them together.

Because we couldn't go to **Israel**, there was no **Israel** that time, and the kids who went to [**indecipherable**] were turned back –



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Yeah.

A: – and they couldn't make it. So my father worked I should legally be able to leave **France** and come to **Austria** and be with them. But by the time the papers were ready, he had passed away in March of 1948. By the time [indecipherable] was, and my brother had joined th-the illegal **geose(ph)**, this is the Israeli army, which was illegal one. My oldest brother, he joined with his oldest cousin. After he joined, of course, he went to fight. They went to **Italy**, first in **France, Italy**. From **Italy** they went by boat, by little boat, and they got into **Palestine**. And he was fighting in 1948 for **Israel**. I have a picture with his rifle [indecipherable]. They took them off the boat, they gave them rifles [indecipherable]. No exercise, no nothing. He didn't know how to use a rifle, but that's what it was. And then I met my husband in 1948, he was from the ma – through a friend.

Q: **Strasbourg?** In **Strasbourg**?

A: No, no, in [indecipherable] **Salzburg**.

Q: In Salz –

A: In **Austria**.

Q: So you had gone back, you –

A: I was gone back finally.

Q: – you had gone back.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: In June I was gone back.

Q: So your father died in March and –

A: Yes, and in June I was gone back and I had all the papers ready and everything.

I already – my oldest brother, like I said, had really gone to **geose**(ph).

Q: And your youngest?

A: And only my mother and my little brother were still in **Salzburg**.

Q: Okay.

A: I stayed with them until I got married.

Q: And you met your – you met your future –

A: Husband through a friend of mine, **Joseph Jonas**.

Q: Okay.

A: We were going out for years and then we got married. In 1950, we got – we were on the American zone. They did – when they were closing the camps, because our camp was in the city –

Q: What was the –

A: – **Bradenburg**(ph) was in **Salzburg** but in the city.

Q: What was its name?

A: It was a camp fo-for soldiers, you know? So they were liquidated and they had to put the people someplace. So some people went to **Israel**, some people went to

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

**America**, some people went to **Canada**. And my husband's family, they wanted to go to **America** because they had family here. My father-in-law had family here, so he registered for **America**. He didn't have any papers. Because we were on the American zone, they had to let you go where you wanted, because supposedly you are an American already. So when we came here, we got the green card right away, and the minute we got off the bus – the ship – the ship was coming here was like half dead. We came here on military ships. I remember the name of the ship was General **Blatchford**. And we almost drowned, it was in December. We came in 1950, in December – 1950, just a day before Christmas.

Q: So tell me, why did you almost drown, and why was it half dead?

A: Because it was that – it was – don't forget, it wasn't **Atlantic**, it was the **Pacific**, and it's very rough. The ship was rolling. It was a military ship, you know. It wasn't a big boat. It was a boat.

Q: You were going on the **Pacific** Ocean?

A: On a military ship.

Q: No, I know, but you were on the **Pacific** Ocean, not the **Atlantic** Ocean?

A: We were on the **Atlantic** Ocean coming to here.

Q: You were on the **Atlantic** Ocean?

A: Yeah.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Okay.

A: But in that time was December. It was like, you know, the storms, the winds, the – it was very scary. So we came here and of course they s – **HIAS** took over, they settled us in – in a hotel, some of them in **HIAS**, wherever they had place.

Q: I want to ask a few things.

A: Mm?

Q: One of the reas – why was it that you never went back to **Rozwadow**? What was the reason for that?

A: Why I went back what?

Q: Why, when you came from **Russia** to **Poland**, why is it that you never went back to **Rozwadow**?

A: To the city where we came from?

Q: Where you – yeah, yeah.

A: There was nobody left. There were no Jews, only Polacks, and my father never wanted to see the place he was born.

Q: I see.

A: There was nothing there. All the Jews were brought in to that area, which was occupied by **Germany** before the war, but after the war they gave it back to **Poland**, which was **Brandenburg** [indecipherable] a few cities. And that's where

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

they brought all – if somebody wanted to go back, nobody did go back. And then when the riots started, in **Brandenburg** and in other cities, there were a lot of riots, a lot of Jews killed, then everybody decided to leave **Poland**. Nobody went back to their own city any more.

Q: When did you find out?

A: We even had killings early in 1946, after the war.

Q: What kind of killings?

A: The – the riots from the Polish anti-**Semitin**.

Q: I see.

A: Yeah.

Q: And when did you find out of what had happened to the Jews in **Poland**?

A: Excuse me?

Q: When did you find out of what had happened to the Jews who remained in **Poland**? Did you know about that when you already returned?

A: Yes. My father had a friend who joined the Polish army.

Q: Okay.

A: And he wrote to us where – while we were still in **Russia**, before we left, he wrote to us what happened to the city, to the Jews, to everything. And he wrote us – that's my father's brother's son, who was alive, he was that time [**indecipherable**]

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

when the war s – excuse me – when the war started. And he heard from the goyim he knew, that my uncle's, my **Benny's** son **Joseph** is alive and he's now five years old or six, and he's in **Lublin**. The gathered all the kids they knew who are Jewish and they could find them, they brought them to **Lublin** –

Q: I see.

A: – in **Poland**. And that's – and that's how we knew this, what happened. And when you came home, you found out more.

Q: Yeah.

A: But we knew in the last – in the beginning not so much – in the last few years we knew what was going on. We knew that my uncle was killed, my aunt was killed, her father was killed. All the family from my father's, the sisters, the children, the husbands. All my family from my mother's side, whoever was left in **Poland**. Nobody survived. Only the only cousin survived. He was a baby and the parents gave him to Polacks, of course for a lot of money, and they – after the war they just said go, go, and some of the Jews picked him up and they brought him to **Lublin**. And then he came here to this country with his sisters, his mother's sister, his mother's father. I mean, they came, he was – I don't know how – how old he was, maybe five, six years old. He grew up in this country already.

Q: Yeah.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: And he was very, very **[indecipherable]** the only cousin I have from the family who survived from **Germany**. Nobody survived from my father's side, or my mother's side. They were all killed **[indecipherable]** killed in the same town where we were crossing the **San**.

Q: Yes.

A: They were in **Justkowicz(ph)**, they made – I have a cousin who – it's not a cousin actually, she's part of the family like from grandmother's side. And she – she knew everything what was going on because she was with them, but she survived. She saw how my uncles were shot, everybody in one grave, the sons and everything, the children, everybody put to one grave. As a matter of fact, they have a Polack who takes care of the cemetery in **Justkowicz(ph)** and **[indecipherable]**, another little village. They send the money every year, the people from here who survived, and they take care of the –

Q: That place.

A: – graves.

Q: Those graves

A: After so many years. So this was my story til I came to **Austria**.

Q: I have a – a couple of other questions. You s –

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: After we came to – when I married, then after we came to this country, it wasn't easy. We came without the language, without a penny. After two weeks I found a job. I found a job working in a factory. That time was – we were in **Korea**, I think, or – yeah, in **Korea**. I was working for the **Eisenhower** jackets, you know, in a factory for many, many months until my **Moshe** was born. We lived in a furnished by somebody in – in a one room apartment. And then my husband found a job with his – in his field, dentistry, you know, he was working as a technician. And slowly, slowly, he – we lived – I lived with my in-laws for five years when my both children were born. And my father-in-law had a brother here, only one brother, which was alive at that time. He made sure he helped me find an apartment on top of a bakery, on [indecipherable] Parkway in **Brooklyn**. And that's how I lived my life til **Moshe** was Bar Mitzvahed. I worked in the bakery from four o'clock in the morning til 10 every single day except Shabbas.

Q: Wow.

A: My [indecipherable] was two years old, he was left alone in the house – well, I worked downstairs in the same house every time I was able, if – and the boss was not here, I opened the door and I made sure that he's all right. He was sitting on the bed and watching – somebody gave me a very old television that you didn't see what it is, but that time it was good. He was two years old. And until he was five



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

where he started kindergarten. And then, of course yeshivas. They finished, both of them in grade school yeshiva, high school yeshiva. And then they went to **Brooklyn** College, and then my oldest son decided to be a doctor, after he finished college.

Q: Okay.

A: He went to **Downstate** Medical School –

Q: Okay.

A: – for many years, and then became a doctor. Of course, I worked. I started in 1965 in the bank, and I worked til I was 73 years old, like for 38 years.

Q: Wow.

A: Yeah.

Q: Wow.

A: A very hard life.

Q: Yeah.

A: Finally I retired. Husband passed away, he was [**indecipherable**]. He was sick for five years. And my youngest son also wanted to go to medical school, so I worked, worked, worked, and this was it; now I'm retired.

Q: What was the hardest for you through those years?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Now I have time to go to doctors. Yeah, every time to another doctor. But thank God, I still could walk around a little bit [indecipherable]. I had – I have some help from the Holocaust twice a week.

Q: Okay.

A: And – which is a big help, which I didn't have before.

Q: Whi – from which organization?

A: Excuse me?

Q: Where do you have this help from? From –

A: I can't [indecipherable]

Q: You said you have help twice a week.

A: Twice a week for five hours from sel – from – from the Holocaust people. They call themselves –

Q: Is it claims conference, is it someplace that –

A: No, it's the – it's the Jewish Council of **Coney Island** something.

Q: I see.

A: From that counsel, they have like little organizations, which they have, and they send you help.

Q: For – for Holocaust survivors?

A: Only for Holocaust survivors, yeah.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: I see.

A: Which they help you with go a little bit shopping, go to the doctor, clean a little bit, light cleaning, shopping –

Q: It makes a difference.

A: Excuse me?

Q: Such things make a difference.

A: The things makes a lot of help, especially now, I can't walk. I walk with the cane, I walk with the carriage, I don't go out myself. And the children grew up, they're no more small. I mean, the grandchildren. And one lives here, not far, and one lives on **Staten Island**. I don't see them much. On the [**indecipherable**] we get together and go to one or to the second one. But the life was hard in **America**.

Q: It sounds like you never had a break.

A: It was very hard.

Q: Yeah. Can you –

A: Without –

Q: Yeah, go ahead.

A: Without the language and without money and without where to live, without help, and not – not having any money with you.

Q: Yeah, yeah. How did – can I ask you –

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Yeah, you can ask me whatever you want.

Q: A couple of other questions. You say –

A: But a little louder please.

Q: I'll try.

A: Yes.

Q: When you were still imprisoned in where – in the steppe, where your mo –

A: On the steppe is in the **Ural** – in the **Urals**.

Q: In the **Urals**, and you say you got closer to your father then, you know, cause your mother was out and she had to support everybody. Di – was it that you had conversations with him? Did he talk to you more?

A: No, I – I – I had like pity, because he was so sick.

Q: I see.

A: He had tuberculosis.

Q: Oh.

A: He was very weak, yeah, every time.

Q: Yeah.

A: As a matter of fact, when he was in **Austria** after the war, he was in a sanitorium all the time.

Q: I see.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Which was full those type of people, but I – I never saw them.

Q: Okay.

A: Because I wasn't there. So I wouldn't say I – I abandoned my mother or anything, I was seeing my mother very often, as often as my – as the minute came I was able to bring her here, and I had some money saved, I brought her here to this country, but she didn't like it here, because my brothers were there, they had already families.

Q: In **Israel**.

A: And – and she was used to it already.

Q: Yeah.

A: So, and we were never home; I went to work, my husband went to work, the kids were in school. She was left alone in the house. So she was very lonely.

Q: Yeah.

A: Over there she had – they lived in **Hassan Bek**, like in **Jaffa** on top of a hill, near the ocean. They – all the women used to go out and talk to each other from home, from the kids, from the grandkids. And here she didn't have no one to talk. So after one year, she left – I mean, she went home.

Q: I have a – another couple of questions.

A: Hm?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: I have a couple of questions still.

A: All right. No problem.

Q: When it all started, when all of this started, so unexpectedly for you, you were nine years old.

A: Close to 10.

Q: Close to 10. And when the war ended, you were already 15 - 16 years?

A: 16, yeah.

Q: How did you change, what happened? Were you the same person?

A: I grew up too fast. I didn't have teenage years, so I didn't know what it means to be young, because between '39 and '45, it was like a period you didn't know where it went. Was very hard times, especially the winter times. When you were healthy, then it was like you appreciated that because you were healthy. In the teenage years, when you were the teenage years, you always had to do something to help the family, you know. So I learned in **France** how to sew, when I got married. We didn't have anything, I just went to work right away. I was sewing clothes. We had the little factory in the camp. And then, because I knew a little Hebrew, and I was a little bit educated, I was working in the kindergarten with kids, and for a while, until we emigrated to **America**.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: I have another question. Your experience, what you went through is different from that of most Holocaust survivors because you were in **Russia**.

A: Right.

Q: Do you think – it's a bit of a provocative question –

A: Yeah.

Q: – do you think people understand that experience enough –

A: You mean the experience we went through?

Q: Yeah.

A: Not so much.

Q: Why would that be?

A: Not – not so much because they consider us being the lucky ones, the Holocaust survivors, which were – which officially, no matter how much we went through, we were the lucky ones, we weren't shot to death.

Q: That's true, yeah.

A: You know, if we didn't accomplish anything over there, but many people, many, many people that died from hunger.

Q: Yeah.

A: And this was like – just like in the concentrations, not being shot, but dying from hunger.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Yeah.

A: I know my mother's brother and his wife, they died in [indecipherable] on the street from hunger. And they were rich people at home, rich. I wouldn't say like here somebody rich, but in our standards, in my home, this was a rich family. And they died from hunger. There was nothing they could buy, even they had some money.

Q: And –

A: So, I saw a lot of dead people in the camps.

Q: Yeah.

A: Not being shot, but being able to work and not having what to eat.

Q: Yeah.

A: So they just gave up and died. But we were the lucky ones –

Q: Do you –

A: – because we didn't – my – my mother didn't go to work with the big s – you know, with the [indecipherable] on her back. The commanders there made them work very hard.

Q: Yeah.

A: And that was – and it was 60 below zero, you know what that is?

Q: I have no idea.



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: The snow was that high, and you walked just – you made like a – how do you call a **shareskai**(ph) like?

Q: A li – small path?

A: Like a little bit walk through, and both sides the snow was higher than you. And that's how we lived. No transportation, no nothing. You walked to school like this. There were no days off because there was a snow, there was no such a thing. You had to be in school.

Q: Yeah.

A: This was already where you were freed from the steppes – from the steppes, from **Ural**.

Q: And is there a reason –

A: And the worst thing was, when you became older, after 13, you had to join the **Komsomol**. You know what the **Komsomol** is?

Q: Tell me.

A: **Komsomol** is the youth communist party.

Q: Yeah.

A: And whenever – me and my cousin were in the same class, and they were after us to join, and my father said no, no, no. And I couldn't say my father said no, because they would put him to jail. So, we were trying to avoid it, not to be forced

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

into it. So they – in the summer they send us to a camp where we could help, you know, with the harvest or whatever, to work there, or do something. That's how the few years went back, and by the time they made me already join, we were free to go home.

Q: So it was just on the edge.

A: Just on the edge, for a whole year and a half, and I wasn't able to open my mouth, that's my hu – father is not allowing me to join the **Komsomol**. They didn't –

Q: It must have been a lot of stress, a lot of stress.

A: No wonder you get sick, you know. Yeah, but somehow you don't realize, when you are so young, you know, you don't realize that s – that stress, you don't know what it is. Later on you find out that's stress, it's – it's punishment, it's this and that, but when you young, you don't think about those things.

Q: Yeah.

A: You think that's how it's supposed to be, and that's how it was.

Q: Wh-Why – huh? You said –

A: And that's how we lived through.

Q: You said earlier that you never really talked about your experiences.

A: No, never.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Why?

A: With children, never. We didn't – I didn't want them to burden with what I went through. I figure less they know, better it's for them. So –

Q: Did they want to know?

A: Hm?

Q: Did they get – did you ha – did they ask you questions?

A: Not much, because they saw we don't want to talk, so they didn't. We always used to, when we used to come for Shabbas [indecipherable] their house, she always used to go on **zayde's** lap, she said, **zayde**, tell me [indecipherable] story. He meant this is a story. So he used to tell them how we were up in the woods, how – and he was looking for his mother, she got lost in the woods, she didn't have a good organization how to get out of the woods. He went at night with all the wolves and everything, and – and he found her and he put her on a sled and he brought her home. She hardly was alive, you know. She was so frightened and afraid. And you know, stories like this, but not like what happened after, or before, you know? And they were like – especially [indecipherable] was like every time until they grew up, **zayde**, tell me a **massen**(ph), tell me a **massen**(ph). He was fascinated with those stories. And that's why he went after me two years ago, **Bubbe**, why don't you want to – it's good for us, we'll know what happened, you

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

know? My other grandson called me up, **Bubbe**, it's going to be for – not only for the first generation, it's going to be for the second generation, for our kids. At least they'll know where you're coming from. I said okay. I never talked so much in my life.

Q: I'm grateful that you did. I'm very grateful that you did. I know it's costing, I know there's a price to pay for it, but we're very, very grateful.

A: I never, never – I never had – let's put it this way, I never had the time, I worked very hard, I used to come late, and I had to cook for the kids, and I had to go to the meetings, I have to go to parents' meetings, and I have to – and then my husband was sick. I mean, they – and I dealt with a lot of people during the day in the bank, a lot. And I heard so much horrific stories how children are treating them, you know. And they were all rich people having business and jewelry and the children want them already to take a day of it, and I – and I had to listen to it, you know, cause I was a banker. So like I came home, I was like **stim(ph)**, you know what **stim(ph)** is? Quiet.

Q: Yeah.

A: I did my work what I had to do home, I cooked, I [**indecipherable**] made sure they have what to eat and make sandwiches for the next day to go to school, and I went to work. My children worked very hard because they went to school from

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

seven to seven. They came home very late. They never had time to flounce around outside and play with the [indecipherable] with the other boys. They were – on the Shabbas they went to shul, and Sunday they had school too, a half a day.

Q: That's a lot of school.

A: So they were like more restricted than other kids, you know. But thank God, I can't complain. I made sure I would never need for my kids anything. I saved whatever I could, we bought the house. Which I don't need it now because it's a – now I have three tenants in the house.

**End of File One**

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

**Beginning File Two**

A: – have to take care of it. That's my home. I work for it a lot.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: And it's spacey, and it's all – everything is there. And I don't need anything from my children.

Q: I think this is a real –

A: I was able – I saved and I saved and I saved and sometimes now, why did I do it?

Q: You ask yourself that?

A: It took away too much strength to do it. So, you know, parents from **Europe**, they always – even when my parents were not rich, middle class working people, they wanted their children to have the best they could give them. And of course, us, even we didn't have anything. Of course, and the war took away so much. We wanted our children to be something. So you worked. If you didn't work, you didn't have money to pay the schools, because they always went to private schools, yeshivas. So we worked and we saved and you worked and you paid, and whatever you could, you put away for a birthday, or whatever – whatever's gonna come. But thank God.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Well, is there something that you would want people outside your family, outside your grandchildren, other American children, or young Polish people, or young Russian people, what would you want them to understand about what you went through?

A: Well, mostly people who I knew and know, they went through the same thing what I did. Most of my friends, younger, older, they passed away. I have two more friends, which one is still very, very sharp. She went through a concentration camp and everything. But she doesn't want to do an interview because she says she's gonna sit and cry a whole day. I spoke to her another day, and another friend is getting a little bit of **Al-Alzheimer's**, so – and that's what's left, you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: Not many people my age are here any more.

Q: Well, as I said before, I know there's a cost, and my colleagues at the museum know that there is a cost, and that it – it's not an easy thing to talk about. And that's why we're doubly appreciative that you have agreed to do it, agreed to tell us your story, and have it available for many people who you'll never know, but who will have a better understanding of what a young, nine year old girl had to face when the war started, you know, and what she lost.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: I – I remember now, I see the airplanes flying so low. That's – we just, you know, lay down on the ground with the heads down. How we weren't shot, I don't – I don't – I can't understand it. This is like a miracle.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: They were – you – you could see them – you could see the pilot, you could see the – the whole thing, you know. It was like unbelievable.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I think God wanted you to live, so you live. I think so.

Q: Did your faith help you?

A: Excuse me?

Q: Did you think your faith helped you?

A: I think so, yeah. It – it – I think so.

Q: Well, Mrs.—

A: See, my whole family is religious. My brothers are religious, my cousins which I still have in **Israel**, most of them – not all of them, but most of them are religious. My husband's family, they all religious, very strict religious. So we have faith. I don't say I am a [**indecipherable**]. I'm not a [**indecipherable**], but I have my beliefs, yeah.

Q: Can you explain to me those words?



**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Because I had many accident here, which I fell off an escalator, I don't know how I stayed alive. I fell in the street, and all right I have a good mem – I – I have a good – my hand doesn't – you know, my shoulder still – I have broken ribs, I have this and that, but I'm still here. So I pray every night, and I talk to my parents every Shabbas when I light the candles. And this give me hope. I don't know how long, but –

Q: Well, thank you for talking to us.

A: My grandchildren tell me, you're gonna be here for our weddings. I don't believe it, but maybe.

Q: You never know. Is there anything you would like to add to what we've spoken about already?

A: I would like to add that I was lucky with jobs. Wherever I worked, especially in the bank for so many years, and 10 years in the bakery, I was well liked because I worked, I produced. And I wanted to better myself, so I went for courses, I took all kinds of courses, you know; in the bank, they send you. And – and I retired, they gave me a beautiful bonus. I have a pension from the bank and they made a very big party. And this was not for cause I didn't work, I worked. And – and I liked my work because I was with people all day, talking to them and trying to help them and whatever I could in my capacity. And mostly I'm glad that the children, my

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

grandchildren grew up to be good children. For this I thank God, cause they didn't go that way, but they went the straight way. No – no marijuana, no – no smoking, no all these, you know, they all educated, they all got jobs and working hard. For this I'm very thankful. This I really wanted to add.

Q: Thank you.

A: And if I live to their weddings, it'll be okay, if not, it's time.

Q: I hope you do. I hope you do, and once more, thank you very, very much. I appreciate that you've speak – spoken with us and shared the story and shared the tough bits as well. This concludes the **United States Holocaust Memorial**

**Museum** interview with Mrs. **Golda Buch Jonas**, on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Thank you.

A: Thank you very much.

Q: Thank you.

A: If I ever talk again like this, I don't think so.

Q: I appreciate that you did. Appreciate that you did. **[break]**

Q: Okay, So, Mrs. **Golda**, tell us about the various photographs you've brought.

What is this a photograph of?

A: This is a photograph of our Hebrew school on Purim.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: [**indecipherable**] Everybody celebrates, it's supposed to be a very happy holiday. Just before the war, before th – it's a picture of 1939, March of 1939, the whole class, which is not the only class, but the school, the whole Hebrew school.

Q: What was the name of the school? Do you remember?

A: Hebrew Academy.

Q: Hebrew Academy of **Rozwadow**.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And are you in that picture?

A: Yes.

Q: Where would you be?

A: Right here.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Right here, this is me, and I have my two brothers also here.

Q: Do you know where they are?

A: One is here, my yo – middle brother. And here, look, you can see it, here is my older brother, right on the top.

Q: And did this mean all grades in this school, too?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: So this was the whole school there?

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Yes.

Q: Okay, all right, we'll go onto the next picture, hang on a minute. Okay. And what is this a photograph of?

A: This photograph is taken in **Rozwadow** in 1939, after we finished the third grade. I was nine years old, and this is my best friend, **Sonya Olst(ph)**. I'm **Goldie Buch**, and this is **Sonya Olst(ph)**.

Q: Who is on the left, and who is on the right?

A: I am on the right side, with the coat.

Q: I see. And **Sonja** is next to you.

A: Yes, with, I think without the hat, or something, is she.

Q: Yeah. All right.

A: Yeah, without the hat.

Q: All right. She was your age as well?

A: Yes, we were both the same age.

Q: Okay. And now I'm going to put up another photo. **[indecipherable]** can you see this well? And this is also the two of you?

A: Yes, this is also the two – also th – made the same time, just before the war.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: We didn't go to school any more since the war started, so we didn't start the next grade, but this is just before the war, 1939.

Q: August probably, huh? Probably summertime. August.

A: It was September.

Q: Mm-hm, okay.

A: Yeah, just before the Germans walked in.

Q: Okay.

A: We were still able to have a little bit of freedom.

Q: Okay.

A: And we were happy not to go to school.

Q: Of course.

A: This was the best thing.

Q: Yeah. Okay, we've got this photo. And now I'm going to hold up another photo.

A: Yes.

Q: And that – explain who this is.

A: Oh, know what, I'm missing one photo.

Q: No, there's one here.

A: From my –

Q: Oh, okay.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

A: Oh, here it is, my –

Q: We'll show that one too.

A: Yeah.

Q: So this one –

A: This is my parents in 1947.

Q: Okay.

A: Before my father passed away.

Q: And his name was again **Moshe**?

A: **Moses**.

Q: **Moses**.

A: **Mo-Mo-Moshe Buch**.

Q: **Moshe Buch**. And your mother is –

A: **Brima(ph) Buch**.

Q: **Brima(ph) Buch**.

A: And this is the Purim af – before she died, where she was – in 1987.

Q: 1987.

A: Yes. And this is '47, both of them.

Q: Okay. Okay. And she died in **Israel**, is that correct?

A: Yes, she died in **Israel** in '87.

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**

Q: Okay. Have you got it [**indecipherable**] Yeah? Okay. I'm going to tape another one. So, I'm gonna take this off, and then we're gonna put this one up. Rolling?

Okay, and this is a photo –

A: This is a photo right after the war, before – after we were liberated. I'm in the middle, I'm **Goldie Buch**, and **Pinhaus**(ph) is on the right side, and **Benya**(ph) **Buch** is on the left side. Is my two brothers.

Q: Okay, so the three children in the family.

A: Yeah.

Q: Was this taken in **Poland** or in **Russia**?

A: In **Russia** bef – after we liberated.

Q: Okay, so in 1945 in **Russia**.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Okay, thank you for that. Any other photos?

A: No.

Q: Okay. So now –

**End of File Two**

**Conclusion of Interview**

**Interview with Goldie Buch Jonas**  
**May 5, 2013**