

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Eva Desrosiers
June 17, 2013
RG-50.030*0707

PREFACE

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EVA DESROSIERS

June 17, 2013

Question: Okay. Hello, this is Betsy Anthony doing an oral history interview with Eva Desrosiers on the 17th of June 2013. So, first, I have to start with basic biographical information.

Answer: Okay.

Q: For example, what was your name at birth?

A: Eva Johanna Fisch.

Q: And how -- could you spell that for me? Eva --

A: Eva is E-V-A:

Q: Yeah.

A: Johanna is J-O-H-A-N-N-A: The last name Fisch, F-I-S-C-H.

Q: Okay. Thank you. And where were you born?

A: Vienna, Austria:

Q: And your birth date?

A: June 10th, 1930.

Q: June 10th, happy birthday. And do you know which hospital you were born in or where?

A: No, I don't know the hospital.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I was -- I had -- I think I gave a copy of my birth certificate to the museum.

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Q: Okay.

A: I was registered at the Jewish community.

Q: Okay. Is there any significance to your name? Does it relate to a family member or -

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A: I think the Johanna is some great grandparent. I really don't know.

Q: Uh-huh. Okay. And so where in Vienna did your family live?

A: We lived in the 12th District, Meidling.

Q: Nice.

A: On Wolksenfeld (ph) Drive.

Q: Okay.

A: Wolksenfeld (ph) Number 3.

Q: All right. And did your -- how many siblings do you have?

A: I had one brother, older than I am.

Q: And what was his name or is his name?

A: He died three years ago. His name was Heinz.

Q: Heinz. And your parents' names?

A: My father's name was -- he was a doctor. It was Dr. Gaza Fisch.

Q: Yeah.

A: And my mother's name was Margarite Fisch. Her maiden name was Gotzl, G O

_____ T-Z-L.

Q: Okay. What kind of doctor was your father?

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A: A general practitioner.

Q: Did he have a practice --

A: Yes. In fact, at the address where we lived was a new building at the time and it was built for a medical practice. The apartment we lived in, there were two entrances, one for the waiting room and his -- where he saw his patients and the other for the family. And when I went back to Vienna many years later, there was still a doctor living there.

Q: Could you see the apartment when you went there?

A: I couldn't get myself to ring the bell.

Q: I can imagine that would be nerve-racking.

A: I just couldn't. I stood there like I was frozen, but --

Q: I can understand.

A: But it was still a doctor's office.

Q: I see. Did your mother work?

A: No, well, she had two kids. She worked with -- Yeah. And she was a typical house frau.

Q: Uh-huh. Did you have household help?

A: Yes.

Q: I know a lot of people in Vienna did.

A: Yes, we did. We had -- we had a cook and we had a fraulein, a nanny.

Q: I see. Did they live with you?

A: I don't think so, but I'm not sure.

Q: Do you have good memories of them?

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A: Oh, yes.

Q: Nice. Do you have any -- anything specific or --

A: I know the fraulein was really nice and she took us to the park and she took us -- she walked us to school and/or at least me. My brother was older, so --

Q: What was her name?

A: Fraulein.

Q: Fraulein. I understand. So your father was a doctor and he was able to be close to home?

A: Yes. Well, he would visit his patients but he would --

Q: So you saw him a lot?

A: His practice was at home. Oh, yes.

Q: That's good. And I understand you were -- so 1930?

A: Yeah.

Q: So you were in Vienna for the first eight years of your life?

A: Yes.

Q: And can you tell me about school and --

A: Well, I was -- we were in a school -- we were the only Jewish children in the school. I was in second grade when the Anschluss occurred, and I remember the principal of the school came to our house crying that we could not stay at that school. We had to go to another part of the city to go to a Jewish school because of -- and she was very upset about it because she liked my parents and she liked me and --

Q: How soon after the Anschluss did that happen, that you had to leave school?

A: Well, the Anschluss was in March and school ended in the summer, so it was -- I'm not exactly sure. It wasn't very long that we went to the other school, and I have no memory of it.

Q: Really?

A: But I remember that we had to go to this other school and we had to take the street car to get there.

Q: Do you know where it was?

A: In a completely different area, but, no, I don't remember the name or the street or anything like that.

Q: I know that today young children move about Vienna on the subway and on the trans by themselves, which we would never do here. Was it that way when you were a child?

A: I think we went by ourselves after -- to that school, my brother and I, but I -- I really - - somehow I don't have a lot of memories about it.

Q: Sounds like you only attended that school for a short time?

A: It was for a short time, yes, because we left in August. I mean, and school was out, I think, in June, so.

Q: Yeah. So you said you were the only Jewish children in your first school?

A: Yes.

Q: And do you recall an awareness of Judaism as your religion or --

A: I knew I was Jewish, but I don't think -- I think I went to the temple once with my mother, but I don't really remember.

Q: Do you know which temple?

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A: No.

Q: At that time there were many.

A: There were many, but I don't think there were too many in Meidling.

Q: No?

A: I don't think there were any in Meidling.

Q: Maybe not.

A: I assume it was near where my grandmothers lived, but I really don't know.

Q: So that's actually a good -- what other family members in Vienna?

A: My two grandmothers both lived in Vienna, and they lived together. They were very good friends.

Q: How nice.

A: So I felt that was what everybody did, that they went to see their grandmothers.

Q: That's wonderful for children.

A: Yeah.

Q: And did they live near you?

A: No. They lived on Mariahill Fortash (ph).

Q: Okay.

A: But I don't know exactly.

Q: But and was that -- today it's a shopping area? A: Was it a shopping area then too?

A: I really don't know.

Q: That's okay.

A: I didn't do much shopping at that time.

Q: No, I guess not. And so does that mean that your grandfathers were no longer living?

A: I never met my -- both my grandfathers had died before I was born.

Q: I see. Were your grandparents also from Vienna?

A: My -- on my mother's side, yes. On my father's side -- well, my father was born during the Austrian Hungarian Empire in 1894, and he was born in a little town in what we thought was Hungary. His name was Gaza, which was a Hungarian name.

Q: Yeah.

A: And but he went to Vienna for the -- for his schooling and he lived in Vienna: He considered himself a Viennese.

Q: Did he speak Hungarian?

A: Yes.

Q: I see.

A: But we didn't. My mother didn't and we didn't.

Q: Yeah, well, I guess German is most important in Vienna:

A: And I don't remember my grandmother having a Hungarian accent whereas other people, other relatives that, you know, not close relatives had -- did.

Q: Yeah. Were there other relatives in Vienna?

A: No, but they visited. Both -- obviously the families of my mother and my father were very close to each other and so we had relatives from both sides visiting us.

Q: So did the close relationship between your grandmothers bring your parents together or did your parents come together -- bring them together?

A: I think they had -- they brought them together, but we had a very close relationship after they were married. Like my mother introduced one of her best friends to her brother-in-law.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Who, you know, so -- and then later on my other uncle was the one who saved -- saved our lives, I mean, let us come -- get out of Austria, so --

Q: When you said that they brought them together, the grandmothers brought your parents together or --

A: No. I think my parents got the grandmothers together.

Q: I see.

A: But they were both widows, I guess, by then. As I understand, as far as I know they lived together.

Q: That's okay. Yeah. That's really lovely for children.

A: Yeah.

Q: That's really -- and both families were Jewish, mother's family and father's family?

A: Yes.

Q: Were your grandparents -- grandmothers religious at all?

A: I don't think so.

Q: Yeah. It's typical for Viennese Jews.

A: Viennese, we're very much assimilated.

Q: Right. Yeah. Do you know, were your parents members of the Jewish community?

A: I don't think so, not in Vienna. I mean, when we lived in Ecuador later on, yes, but -- I know -- well, let me take that back. They were both Zionists. In fact, they met in a hiking club, Zionist -- what was it called? I don't remember. They always mentioned it, but I don't remember what it was called.

Q: So they met through their common interests in Zionism --

A: Yes, yes.

Q: -- and hiking?

A: Yes.

Q: All right. Sounds very Austrian and Jewish, Zionism and hiking.

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Yeah. And so then other than -- or in addition to Zionism, do you know what your parents' political affiliations were?

A: I would think they were very liberal sort of socialist.

Q: Probably, yeah.

A: Yeah.

Q: Sometimes young people have memories -- people who were young at that time have memories of being in the socialist youth group or the communist youth group and --

A: No, we were not -- I was in no -- in any -- not in any group of any kind.

Q: I see.

A: I got -- I guess I was -- as I said, I was -- I had just turned eight.

Q: Right. Very young, yeah.

A: In fact, I hadn't turned eight yet when the Anschluss occurred. It was a few months later.

Q: Of course, yeah. On June 30th. And how do you recall your neighborhood and the surroundings before the Anschluss?

A: We had -- it was a nice place and people were very friendly and they loved my father. They all -- they all were very close to -- most of them were his patients.

Q: Sure, yeah. And so he had many non-Jewish or maybe even all non-Jewish patients?

A: I'm sure he had some Jewish patients, too, but, yeah, most of -- yeah.

Q: I know you were young, but do you recall any kind of antisemitism or discrimination before the Anschluss?

A: No, no. I never -- I never felt it.

Q: That's good. And do you recall your parents talking about it or later?

A: They didn't talk about things like that.

Q: Yeah. I understand. Some questions might seem silly, but I have to --

A: But I mean, you know, they -- as I said, we had a fraulein who sort of -- so I wasn't participating in my parents' life as much as American kids do, you know.

Q: Well, yeah. Gets -- it's changed a lot, too.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you -- I know you were young, but did you know anything, were you aware of Hitler or Naziism before the Anschluss?

A: I remember the Hitler Jugand marching, and I thought that sounded really neat.

Q: Really? Where did you see them or hear them march?

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A: I saw them from my window.

Q: Before the Anschluss?

A: No.

Q: After?

A: I guess it was after.

Q: I guess, yeah, of course.

A: I guess it was after.

Q: Yeah. So it was impressive?

A: Yes.

Q: Yeah. And do you -- do you recall -- again, I feel like I should preface everything with I know you were young.

A: No, that's okay.

Q: The day of the Anschluss, do you recall the day?

A: No, no, I don't know exactly the day.

Q: Do you know any stories your family had about that day?

A: Not about that day.

Q: But then --

A: I know later on my father was picked up and was put in a jail with -- they picked up all the men, the Jewish men and he was in a -- in a jail cell, and I assume the next day or soon after they would have been sent to a concentration camp; and the guy who was the night guard at that jail was a former patient of his and he let him out.

Q: Wow.

A: And I know that -- I assume my parents had talked about leaving before that because then he came home and he told my mother, see, we have friends, we don't have to worry; and my mother said no, and we left either the next day or very soon thereafter.

Q: Wow.

A: And we had passports and we left by an airplane in 1938.

Q: That's so unusual.

A: And I saw that airplane or one like it at the museum here in (inaudible).

Q: Really? Do you know -- I have no idea about airplanes, but what kind?

A: It's a Fokker trimotor. I -- I have a picture of me standing in front of it.

Q: Really?

A: I mean now, not as a child.

Q: That would have been --

A: With my great grandchildren.

Q: That's great. So before we get to that, because that's the big piece of the story --

A: Yeah, I know. That's a lot later, yeah.

Q: So you just mentioned, though, that after the Anschluss you remember being impressed with the Hitler Jugend marching?

A: Yeah. I believe they had flags and they were marching and sounded like it should be fun to an eight-year old.

Q: Yeah, sure. And maybe it was.

A: Yeah.

Q: Not in the context that we know it now of course.

A: Yeah.

Q: What about adult Nazis, adult officers and officials do you recall?

A: I don't remember -- I remember after the Anschluss my father would go and whenever he visited his patients at their home, the owner of the garage would take him and would drive him instead of having my father drive, and once he took me along. I remember while I was waiting downstairs while he went to see somebody and I saw the sign owned by Arians and I asked, what does that mean, and the guy shushed me up and told me not to ask those questions.

Q: Oh. Interesting.

A: That was, you know, one of the vignettes that I remember.

Q: Do you remember other -- seeing other signs, these sort of --

A: Oh, yes.

Q: Yeah.

A: I mean, we weren't allowed to go several places and --

Q: How did your parents explain that to you as a little girl? Do you recall?

A: I don't -- they didn't. We just didn't -- they just didn't talk about it.

Q: Yeah. I think sometimes --

A: And they tried to protect us, I guess.

Q: And also I think sometimes in such dire situations, parents think, okay, we have to do this, this, and this and --

A: Yeah. They didn't discuss those things in front of us. Like, I don't know how the plans were made for us to leave.

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Q: So you -- you said that when your father was arrested within a day or two of his release you were packed and leaving?

A: Yes.

Q: When was his arrest? Do you know?

A: I don't know the exact date.

Q: So sometime between March and August?

A: And August. I --

Q: If you left in August --

A: I don't know if you have a copy of my passport there, because I know they took pictures of it.

Q: I don't have your passport.

A: I -- I have it at home.

Q: Well, if we have it here I can look at it too.

A: Because I -- you know, the day that we left is stamped on it, but --

Q: In your letter to your granddaughter --

A: I don't think I had it then.

Q: -- you said you -- but you said you left in August of 1938?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: So that means --

A: I know it was August, but I have the date stamped.

Q: That's fine.

A: On the --

Q: That's fine.

A: On the passport.

Q: We can look that up if we need to.

A: Yeah.

Q: I have heard many Austrian historians and other historians now like to say that the Reich Programna (ph), the Cristnauf (ph) in Vienna began in March 1938, and they refer to it as months of the kind of persecution that Germany started to see --

A: Yes.

Q: -- on that night. Do you recall that kind of activity?

A: Well, I know that we were told not to -- not to go out, you know, to stay home or else go to school and just come straight home and --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And as I said, we had to go to another part of town to go to school.

Q: And was that the only time you would go out of the house?

A: We would go visit our -- some friends. I know the night before we left I spent the night at a friend's house.

Q: To say goodbye? To have a --

A: I didn't know I was saying goodbye.

Q: Did you know you were leaving?

A: No.

Q: Oh. Wow. Do you remember that morning?

A: I remember, you know, that we went. It was a stormy day and we went -- I don't know how we got to the airport, and we each were allowed one suitcase, and I remember that my father's suitcase was lost.

Q: Oh, no.

A: But we flew from Vienna to Rotterdam in Holland where we had an uncle.

Q: And did you pack your own suitcase or did your mother do that for you?

A: No, I didn't pack my suitcase.

Q: Do you remember what --

A: I remember --

Q: -- you brought?

A: -- talking on the plane to people saying oh, you know, we're going to -- and they kept shutting me up. They kept telling me not to talk to the other people.

Q: Did they tell you we're going on a little vacation, honey, or --

A: No. They just said we're leaving, we're going to see, you know. They didn't want me to blab about it.

Q: Yeah.

A: I was a chatterbox.

Q: And so you mentioned this uncle was in Rotterdam?

A: Well, actually, he was in another town near there.

Q: And he was able to help you to escape?

A: Well, no. This was the one -- we went to Rotterdam -- we went to Holland and we were staying in a little town called Oss where my uncle, he worked for a big

pharmaceutical company, Organon, which I think still exists because I've seen Organon at least several years ago in South America:

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Medicines. But he was well established there and he and his wife lived there. He eventually was sent to a concentration camp but he was -- he survived it.

Q: So they didn't end up leaving the Netherlands? They --

A: No. They stayed there.

Q: They stayed there. A little bit earlier you referred to as an uncle saving your life.

A: Well, that was the other brother.

Q: Okay.

A: Of my father -- my father had two brothers.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And the other uncle was a resident in the United States.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And he sent us the affidavits that we wouldn't be a burden to the United States.

Q: I see.

A: So we came to New York, actually, and we stayed here for a while, but that's -- that comes on later.

Q: That comes later. So the first -- the first leg of your journey out of Austria --

A: Was to Holland.

Q: -- was to Holland. And as you said before, your mother and father seemed to have that planned and ready when they needed it?

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A: I figured they must have, yes.

Q: Yeah. But you don't recall the plans or anything --

A: No.

Q: -- going on.

A: I know that my mother insisted we got to leave and my father saying -- I mean, that I heard later, him saying that we don't need to leave because we had friends.

Q: But she convinced him?

A: She convinced him. She was bound and determined that we should leave.

Q: She was right.

A: She sure was.

Q: She was definitely right. And do you know if the Jewish community had any involvement in your papers or paperwork or anything like that?

A: I have no idea. I wish I knew because I didn't even know she had all these papers for us. I had a passport, and I remember I had to sign it in cursive, and I had learned to write the German script which was different.

Q: Yeah. I can't read it.

A: I can't read it either, but at that time that's what I -- so I remember signing Eva Fisch.

Q: Uh-huh. Just as a side note, the Holocaust Museum in our archives has the majority of the Jewish community's documentation on microfilm from about -- this is not exact, but something like 1937 to 1947, something like that.

A: Uh-huh.

Q: It's possible that that could be researched. I don't know how easy it would be, but it's possible that that could be researched.

A: Yeah, but I do have the passport, the actual passport, as I said.

Q: Yeah. It's -- because of the way things were set up and operated in Vienna, often the Jewish community would become involved or people who had not been affiliated --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- just might be --

A: Yeah, but I don't --

Q: No, no, I'm just -- for your --

A: And the worst thing is, there's nobody I can ask. I'm the only one still living.

Q: Yeah, yeah. So when you left, did your grandmothers stay in Vienna?

A: Yes, but they both ended up living somewhere else. My -- my grandmother Fisch actually went -- ended up going to Oss to be with her son.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And she died before he was sent to concentration camp.

Q: Okay.

A: So she --

Q: Of natural causes?

A: Of natural causes. And my other grandmother went to South America to her son to Chile and then came to live with us. She died in Quito, Ecuador with -- at our house.

Q: I see.

A: But --

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Q: So that's good fortune. They were able to --

A: Yeah. They were both able to get out.

Q: Yeah. So -- so your uncle in the United States provided the affidavit --

A: Yes.

Q: -- so that you could make the first part of the journey to the Netherlands, to Rotterdam?

A: I -- I assume -- yeah, I assume so. Or while we were in Holland.

Q: Okay.

A: We got the papers, again --

Q: Somehow?

A: I'm not --

Q: How long were you then in Holland; do you know?

A: Three months.

Q: Three months?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you have memories of that time?

A: Very little. I remember that I was -- I learned a little Dutch, but -- and now I can't understand a word of it, but we played with the kids that lived near where we were staying, but I don't really remember much about it.

Q: It was a short time and you were young.

A: Yeah.

Q: And so what was -- was your father -- I mean, was it always considered to be a temporary stop on the way?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Okay. So he didn't start working --

A: No.

Q: -- there?

A: No, he wasn't.

Q: And so what was the next leg?

A: Well, then my mother, my brother and I left for the United States. My father could not come to the states because the United States had a quota system and they -- they put him on the Romanian quota. As I said, he was born in this little town that was on the boarder of then Hungary and Romania, and the immigration authorities in their wisdom decided that he was Romanian and couldn't come in. So he went -- he left and I don't know how. He did not come with us on that ship. He went on -- he went to Canada, supposedly, to attend the medical congress and then he crossed -- he came to New York illegally and was caught.

Q: Oh.

A: And then my uncle, who was a resident, started going from one consulate to another to see where we would end up; and then we all, including my uncle and aunt, went to Ecuador.

Q: The ones in New York?

A: Yes.

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Q: Oh, really?

A: So we -- I mean, family helped each other in those days.

Q: Yeah. So you and your mom and your brother --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- took a ship from Rotterdam to New York?

A: Yes.

Q: And there did you join up with this uncle and aunt?

A: Yeah. We lived with them.

Q: Immediately?

A: Yeah. We lived with them.

Q: And how soon after was your father then able to go to Canada?

A: Well, he must have gone there about that same time.

Q: Okay.

A: And we were -- we were in New York only six months, and then we -- but I had gone to school those six months.

Q: In New York?

A: In New York. At first I was -- they put me in first grade because I didn't speak a word of English, of course.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And I was -- by then I was already eight.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I was tall for my age, and I was with these five- and six-years old and it was pretty bad, and I remember coming home the first day of school and saying I'm not going back to school. I'm going to go and get a job. And my mother convinced me that I should go back to school. And I remember my brother couldn't go -- they put him in his regular class because he was really big for his age and he wouldn't fit in the desks of the little kids.

Q: Did he speak any English?

A: I think he had taken a little bit of English in -- he was in like fourth or fifth grade, and I think he had taken maybe some -- but he really didn't speak it either.

Q: What about your parents?

A: My mother spoke a smattering of English, but -- my father -- I guess they knew a little bit, but not enough to really do much about it.

Q: Uh-huh. Did your aunt and uncle have children in New York?

A: No. The Fisch family, we were the only children.

Q: I see. The only little Fisch?

A: We were the only little Fisch.

Q: And so do you know anything about your father's illegal entry into the United States?

A: No. All I know is that he was caught and was told that he would be deported back to

Austria. And my uncle, as I said, got us visas to Ecuador.

Q: Did the U.S. officials detain your father?

A: They didn't detain him. He was -- he was -- but he was there for just a very short time.

Q: Yeah. And so your uncle went to the different consulates looking for who could take you?

A: Who would give us a visa, yes.

Q: And did he run into the same problem that the other foreign consulates saw as Austrian quota and your father as Romanian or --

A: No, no.

Q: No?

A: But many of them did not want us, but Ecuador -- we had to come in as industrialists. We were going to -- had that -- I mean, the girl -- the adults were going to set up a business, an industry in Ecuador. They wouldn't allow my father to practice medicine, but he did. That, again, is another story.

Q: That's coming?

A: Yeah.

Q: So you mentioned -- I'm sorry. I'm going back a little bit.

A: Yes.

Q: But you mentioned that you were each able to take one suitcase and your father's was lost?

A: Yeah.

Q: And that you had no idea you were leaving so your mom packed the suitcase?

A: Yeah.

Q: And did you have any toys with you or any --

A: I think I had a couple of books with me, and I must have brought my doll, because I always had my doll.

Q: Yeah?

A: Yes.

Q: You kept her all the way to Ecuador?

A: Yeah. I still have it somewhere.

Q: That's great. That's nice. That's really nice.

A: Maybe I don't have it anymore. I haven't found it lately, but I brought it with me.

Q: Yeah. So did you -- after a few months in New York, did you achieve a level of English?

A: Oh, yes. I was speaking perfect English by the time we left. In fact, they put me into second grade while I was there.

Q: Good.

A: And I had -- yeah. I spoke it very well by then.

Q: Did you, in that short time, make any friends?

A: Yes. I had a boyfriend.

Q: And a boyfriend. Advanced for your age.

A: Yeah. I think his name was Richard, but I'm not sure.

Q: We'll just call him Richard. So you in a quick time really --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- got into American life.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. And so your memories, they're good of that time?

A: Yes.

Q: Once you learned English?

A: I learned English and I was fine. Then I found out we were going to South America and my brother and I were fantasizing we were going to go into the wild jungle with wild Indians and --

Q: Yeah. And another new language for you to learn?

A: And another new language for me to learn.

Q: Do you remember your impressions of New York? Was it overwhelming or --

A: No. I mean, we lived in a little apartment with my uncle and aunt and -- and my aunt was an artist, and she had some very interesting friends and --

Q: And is that -- well, I guess you passed your days by going to school?

A: Yeah.

Q: And being with family?

A: Yeah.

Q: And then your uncle found that Ecuador would take you --

A: Yes.

Q: -- on the condition that you say you were opening an -- some business?

A: Yes.

Q: Industry. And what do you think made him and your aunt choose to come along?

A: I guess they -- I've never quite -- you know, I just thought that families just helped each other and he -- they had the money. We didn't.

Q: Had they been in New York a long time?

A: They had been there for a while. In fact, my aunt had just been offered a job, a good job with Vogue magazine, and she had had -- she was -- she had an exhibit of her paintings at the time somewhere in New York, but they left with us and we lived together for first few years in Ecuador.

Q: And so how did you travel from New York to Ecuador?

A: The first part of the trip from New York to Panama we went on a banana boat, an empty banana boat called a melsha (ph) which was owned by the United Fruit Company. And it was a cargo boat, but they took a few passengers on the way to Panama, and then they loaded it with bananas to come back to the states.

Q: Do you recall the trip?

A: It was -- it was -- yeah. I remember that one because, again, there were very few people on board and my brother and I were the only children.

Q: Oh.

A: And the captain let us come in and see the -- steer the -- _____ held the --

Q: The steering wheel?

A: Yeah, whatever they call that, yes.

Q: Yeah. And how long --

A: And they spoiled us a lot during those few days that the trip took.

Q: So it was just a few days?

A: Yeah. I don't remember how long it was.

Q: Did anyone get seasick?

A: Oh, yes. Well, I know my mother got seasick on all those trips. But I didn't and my brother didn't, so we always ate everything in sight.

Q: Yeah. That's actually a good point.

A: And we even on the trip to New York.

Q: Through this time, you always had enough to eat and --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- food wasn't an issue?

A: Food wasn't an issue, no. We always -- I've never been hungry in my life.

Q: Lucky.

A: Yes.

Q: Me, too. We are lucky.

A: Yes. No. That's why I've always said, you know, I'm not sure if I can be considered a survivor because I really didn't suffer.

Q: But surviving doesn't --

A: It changed my life --

Q: Absolutely.

A: -- completely.

Q: You should never have been forced to leave your home.

A: Right.

Q: And you survived by escaping --

A: Yes.

Q: -- from the persecution.

A: Yes, I know, and, you know, that's what -- that's one reason I've never approached the Holocaust Museum until now.

Q: Well, whenever you feel it's time, that's fine. And I understand that many, maybe, people who lived in exile or refugees or those who escaped, however they --

A: Yes.

Q: -- term themselves, sometimes have difficulty with the word survivor.

A: Well, I mean, you know, I never, thank goodness, was into a concentration camp. I never --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- suffered the horrors that these people --

Q: But you still should not have been forced to go through what you went through.

A: No. I realize that, but, as I said, that's why I've always felt kind of guilty.

Q: Guilty?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: Yeah?

A: Survivor's guilt is right there.

Q: Yeah. So you can feel or see that clearly in your mind?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: Do you think the rest of your family felt that way?

A: I'm sure they did.

Q: Sometimes people say there's no such thing as survivor guilt.

A: I wouldn't.

Q: I wouldn't either, but --

A: No. I mean, I feel -- I remember the first day I went -- many years ago -- several years ago I went to the museum.

Q: This is the Holocaust Museum?

A: Yeah. The Holocaust Museum, and there's a -- there's this great big picture of children waiting for the train to take them to concentration camp, and in the front of that - - among the first children there's a little girl there that looks just like me, and I saw that picture and it just hit me really --

Q: Could have been you.

A: I'm sorry. I shouldn't have been --

Q: That's okay. Gives more emphasis. Yeah. It could have been you.

A: It could have been me. Yeah. Very easily could have been me.

Q: Yeah.

A: And so I --

Q: And I think I --

A: Yeah.

Q: I think I understand without being able to know it myself, of course.

A: Yeah.

Q: I could see how that would feel. So to return to your family, on the banana boat to Panama --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- it's mother, father, you and brother?

A: And my uncle and aunt, yes. And we arrived in Panama, and we stayed a few days in Panama and then we got on a ship, an English ship called the OrdunA:

Q: Orduna?

A: Orduna O-R-D-U-N with a tilted A, and we -- and there we went -- they had first, second and third class, and we were in third class; but some relatives of my aunt were coming from Europe, and they were in second class and they -- and they came with their two little boys and they would smuggle (inaudible) or something to my brother and me once in a while during that trip.

Q: So they met you in Panama, and then you took the next --

A: We -- we got on the ship that they were on.

Q: I see.

A: Yes.

Q: And --

A: And, again, how that was -- I mean, that was my uncle and aunt had made those arrangements to -- with her family.

Q: But do you think each leg from New York to Panama, Panama onward was planned before you left New York or do you think they figured it out --

A: I think it was planned from New York, yes.

Q: And so where did this next ship take you?

A: That took us to Ecuador.

Q: I see. And so that's when you --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- arrived --

A: By the time we arrived in Ecuador, we arrived in a little Port of Salinas which is now a very fancy resort, but we arrived and we had to take these little boats from the ship to the landing because there was no pier there.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And by then it was -- the six of us and my aunt's family, her brother, sister-in-law and two boys.

Q: Uh-huh. So that's six --

A: So there was --

Q: -- ten of you?

A: Ten of us that arrived in Salinas, which when we stayed in Salinas maybe one or two days then we went to Guayaquil. Then we took the train to Quito.

Q: So was Quito always the final destination?

A: Yes.

Q: So you were still making your way?

A: Yes, uh-huh.

Q: So I wonder if I might ask to pause for a minute.

A: Sure.

Q: Since we're now we're in Ecuador to your new life.

A: Yes.

[Interview was interrupted for a break.]

Q: Okay. Thank you for that short pause. We've arrived in Ecuador, but before we go on, is there anything --

A: I'm trying to think, and I don't think so. I think -- unfortunately, my memory of those days is not that clear.

Q: Well, it's that of a little child, so, yeah.

A: Yes.

Q: If someone asked me about when I was eight years old --

A: Yeah.

Q: But if things come to you, like I said --

A: Yeah, okay.

Q: I'll keep us on track.

A: Yes.

Q: But you --

A: Okay.

Q: -- stop and tell a story, whatever you want.

A: Yes.

Q: So this trip from New York to Panama, then Panama to --

A: Ecuador.

Q: -- Ecuador, and then through Ecuador, you were at a couple of stops before Quito?

A: Yes, uh-huh.

Q: How long do you think that whole journey took?

A: Oh, like starting from New York?

Q: Yeah.

A: I would say -- I would think that about a week on the ship and we were in Panama a few days. I would say about two, three weeks.

Q: And the land portion, once you were in Ecuador?

A: It was hairy.

Q: Hairy, how is that?

A: Well, we arrived on the coast. Quito is 9,000 feet and the trains were very primitive. I remember that. And the rails, there's a section of the rail going up the mountains where it's very steep and the train goes up and then it backs up and then it goes back up again, and the place is called La Nariz Del Diablo which means the devil's nose because it's very steep and very --

Q: Was it scary?

A: Yeah.

Q: I would be scared.

A: It was scary.

Q: Yeah.

A: And it took a long time to get there, at least 24 hours; but, again, I'm not sure about that.

Q: Do you recall arriving in Quito?

A: I know we got there -- oh, when we arrived in Salinas I remember, as I said, it was on these little boats that took us from the ship to the landing. The purse of one of the

relatives fell into the water and some guys dove in and brought it up because it held all her papers and everything.

Q: Wow.

A: And somewhere I've seen -- I don't have it, but I've seen the manifest of that ship saying that it landed in Salinas and --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And that some -- and the people who disembarked.

Q: That could be something Bill --

A: That can probably be found, yes.

Q: Found for you too. And -- and then you arrived finally in Quito by train?

A: Yes. And we stayed for -- in a hotel -- oh. We arrived in Quito on June 8th.

Q: Oh, good.

A: Which was two days before my 9th birthday.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: So there's a time schedule, because this was June 8th, 1939.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And we were in this very dark pension (ph) and somebody, some relative had sent me for my birthday, which was June 10th, a Spanish version of Anderson's Fairy Tails. And I remember on my birthday my father was sitting in this dark room with me and the dictionary trying to read the book to me. And I didn't want to stay there. I wanted to go out with my brother and some other kids who had -- some other refugee kids were playing and I wanted to go play with him, and my father insisted that we read that book.

Q: So were there other refugees there with you?

A: Yeah. We met some other people there. In fact, the pension (ph) where we stayed was run by -- I guess they were German Jews. It was called pension noeman (ph). And we were there a few days.

Q: Mension (ph)?

A: At the pension (ph) and then we moved into a house with my aunt and uncle.

Q: Do you know how they found that? Just once they arrived they found it or --

A: They found a house. They said they had a lot of -- I remember them telling me later that they had found it was hard to find a house that had indoor plumbing.

Q: I see.

A: But we did get one with indoor plumbing.

Q: And do you know, were your parents able to take their savings with them or any assets with them?

A: Not right then. Later we -- my grandmother who had stayed in Vienna before she went to Holland was able to send some of the stuff. I remember a doctor came to take our apartment in Vienna to take it over and he seemed very friendly to us, and so he said that we shouldn't worry, that he would make sure that all our stuff would be shipped to us wherever we ended up at; but when my grandmother came to insist on some of the things he said she better not come back or the Gestapo would be called.

Q: Oh, my.

A: And I do know that they got some stuff sent to them. I remember the cabinet that had -- with silver knives and forks was there, was empty.

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Q: Do you think it was emptied in Vienna or emptied along the way?

A: I think it was emptied in Vienna:

Q: Yeah.

A: By that doctor, but I'm not sure.

Q: Yeah. So I'm sorry. I sort of skipped that detail.

A: Yeah.

Q: When you left --

A: Well, I'm sorry I just remembered that.

Q: No. That's perfect. That's why we record it so we can keep it.

A: Yes.

Q: So part of the plans your parents had put into motion to leave included someone taking over his practice?

A: I don't know if that was their decision or the government's decision.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Because I think my father would not have been allowed to work anymore.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Not there.

Q: And so this non-Jewish doctor --

A: Yes.

Q: -- claimed he would keep your things safe and send them to you?

A: Yeah. And we did get some of the stuff. I did get -- I still have some of that stuff.

Q: Do you think the doctor that is there today is related somehow --

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A: No.

Q: -- to the other?

A: No, no.

Q: Okay.

A: I mean, this was 70 years.

Q: Well, I mean, maybe it's his son or --

A: I don't think so. I don't remember the name, you know.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: But there is -- it's still a doctor's office there.

Q: So do you remember the -- so when you were in Quito and one day some of your things --

A: Arrived there.

Q: -- arrived?

A: Yes.

Q: With some things missing?

A: That was after we moved -- no. That was while we were still living with my uncle and aunt, yeah.

Q: Probably if they were going to get something out it would have had to have been pretty soon.

A: Yeah, yeah. Yes. It arrived while we were still living together.

Q: Kind of surprising that even that made it.

A: It was funny even when we were still in that pension (ph), word got around that there was a doctor and people would come to my father and he would say, no, I can't see you. I cannot see you. I cannot see you. I cannot work here.

Q: Right.

A: Because -- and then slowly he started getting people coming and he couldn't say no. One of -- and then while he was trying to get his -- he had to take all the tests of the medical school in Spanish, five years of tests and so he was studying at night and working. And while he was working illegally, he was the private physician of the president. Only in Ecuador.

Q: Wow. And eventually did he pass those?

A: He did. He did.

Q: Wow.

A: But it was several years later, but, no, he was -- I mean, he was a graduate of the Medical School of Vienna which was at that time the best medical school in the world.

Q: Right.

A: And one of his professors was Freud, so --

Q: Wow. So the president heard about him?

A: Yes. And --

Q: And decided --

A: Yeah. And, in fact, since my father could never send him a bill because he was working illegally, he went on a state visit to Mexico, the president and brought back a silver tea service which is in my house now.

Q: Really?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you have any of the other -- the furniture and things that went to Ecuador?

A: I have the clock that belonged to my grandmother. I have a clock and I have a lot of pictures, albums.

Q: That's fortunate.

A: Yeah. I don't have too many -- but I know that my parents had some of their furniture, actually, in Quito, but --

Q: And so you mentioned that there were other refugees there too?

A: Yes, oh, yes. And we became very active -- the family was very much involved with the Jewish community in Quito.

Q: And was it mostly German and Austrian Jews who had fled?

A: There were some -- most of them were, yes, came about the same time we did and they -- there was -- they decided that there would be a little thing for the children, eugenput (ph). You speak German.

Q: Yeah, yeah, sure.

A: And it was mostly older kids. I think I was one of the youngest ones in that group, but we were, you know, we did -- we learned about Zionism and about a little bit about our backgrounds and -- and we became very good friends and, in fact, we had a reunion a few -- about ten years -- about -- more than ten years ago. About almost 20 years ago.

Q: A reunion where?

A: In Miami.

Q: How nice. How many people came together?

A: About -- I have an album where we took the pictures. It was about eight or ten of us.

Q: That's nice.

A: And we had all done well. We had all done really well in our lives, so that was --

Q: That's nice.

A: That was good to know.

Q: Now that you bring up the Zionism again, I should ask, did your parents ever want to or try to go to Palestine?

A: No. They were -- but they were very Zionist. My father ended up being -- I don't think he was -- my uncle was the president of the Zionist organization in Quito, and shortly before I married I was the secretary.

Q: Oh. Did you ever think of going to Israel?

A: Oh, yes. In fact, I was planning to go. I was beginning to study Hebrew.

Q: Wow.

A: And I was all set to go to Israel and go to Kebut (ph) when I met (inaudible).

Q: Yeah, those guys. They'll throw all your plans off.

A: I met an American.

Q: How old were you?

A: I was 23 when I married.

Q: I see. So wait. I don't want to skip too far ahead, but --

A: That's --

Q: First I want the love story, too.

A: But I was planning to go to Israel. I was very much enthusiastic about it.

Q: Yeah. And --

A: And I've never been.

Q: No?

A: No.

Q: You should go.

A: I know.

Q: Yeah. Maybe wait for the summer to be over.

A: Well, the friend who made me go to the Holocaust Museum last month or whenever, she's been after me for -- she's a colleague. She told me you've got to go to -- and she goes to Israel every year because she has family there and she says she wants to take me there.

Q: You should go.

A: And I know I've been talking about it.

Q: Yeah. Did you come to the 20th anniversary events?

A: No.

Q: But you came to the museum last month?

A: I came after. No. I didn't think I should participate in this because, as I said, I hadn't --

Q: Yeah. So --

A: Okay.

Q: Back to Ecuador.

A: Back to Ecuador.

Q: At childhood, so you've arrived?

A: Yeah.

Q: And you're living in a home with your aunt and uncle?

A: Yes.

Q: And what about the other aunts and uncle and the two boys?

A: They came too. They had -- they were the ones who had all their money.

Q: Okay.

A: Because they were able to -- they came from -- I think they came had from Hungary and Hungary at that time was not involved in the --

Q: Right.

A: -- in the trouble yet.

Q: So they could bring a lot with them?

A: They were able to bring their money out at least, yeah.

Q: And so they had their own home?

A: Yes.

Q: And were all of those cousins, were those two cousins also involved in the Zionist group?

A: No, they were not Jewish. They had been --

Q: Okay.

A: They had been baptized at birth. I mean, they originally were Jews, but they had been -- they were not brought up as Jews.

Q: Okay. So they didn't --

A: Yeah. So they -- and we were close. They were younger than we were and we -- and they had bought -- their father bought a big farm and we used to spend our vacation there.

Q: Was it near Quito?

A: Yeah. Not too far.

Q: So your father even illegally started practicing medicine?

A: Yes.

Q: Did your mother work when you were in Ecuador?

A: No.

Q: No. They were able to --

A: No. We did -- as I said, we were very, very lucky. Our family did very well. My father was loved by all his patients. My aunt was an artist and she got really interested in the artist and folklore of Ecuador and she promoted Ecuador all around the world. She -- the government of Ecuador, she decided to -- she would travel. She had always been a world traveler and she traveled all over at Indian chiefs and --

Q: And did it influence her art?

A: It influenced her art very much, and she started designing rugs that were exported, and when the United Nations were founded, Ecuador donated a huge rug that had been made by -- designed by her and made in her shop.

Q: Wow.

A: To the United Nations.

Q: Wow.

A: So I mean, the Fisch family name was very well known in Ecuador.

Q: And so as a newly turned nine-year-old, did you start school immediately or I guess it was summertime?

A: It was summertime, so in October I started third grade in Quito.

Q: In Spanish?

A: In Spanish. By then I had picked up a little bit of Spanish. It wasn't as traumatic as coming to the states.

Q: Yeah.

A: Because I had made some friends and I had picked up some Spanish.

Q: And what about your school there? Were there a lot of other refugee children there?

A: There were several, yes. And I was in a public school the first few years, and then when my parents got more money, I was sent to the American school where I relearned my English.

Q: Did other refugees kids go to the American school?

A: Oh, yes, yeah. In fact, all through my life I've been surrounded by Evas.

Q: By Evas?

A: Eva was a very popular name in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Germany.

And Vienna: My best friends -- I had three best friends and they were all called Eva:

Q: Three Evas.

A: So there were four Evas.

Q: The four Evas, yeah.

A: And, in fact, the one friend was -- her parents and my parents went to this hiking club together and they were friends from before they got married, and we were -- and our mothers were pregnant at the same time and the other Eva was three months older than I am.

Q: Were all four Evas from Jewish families?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: And were they able to escape as well?

A: Yes. They all escaped -- this particular Eva came to the states and we renewed our friendship when we came to the states.

Q: Great.

A: One went to -- and the other one went to New Zealand and the other one, I think they went to London, and her parents got divorced and her father ended up in South America in Utawi (ph) and I saw him once, but I didn't see the other two Evas.

Q: Did she stay in England?

A: I think so.

Q: Yeah?

A: Yeah. We lost -- we lost contact with them, but Eva that came to the states, she died last year.

Q: Oh.

A: And we -- we renewed our friendship ended with like we had never been apart.

Q: That's so nice. Where did she live in the states?

A: She grew up in -- first they all arrived in New York, and then she was in Atlanta, but then she ended up in California:

Q: Not a bad place to end up.

A: And I visited her and she's visited me, and her husband and I were friends for -- I mean, we became friends when my husband was still alive.

Q: That's so nice. So you said through your life you've been surround by Evas. Were there Evas in Ecuador, too?

A: In Ecuador, the American school there were three Evas in my class, me and two others, and they both were from Czechoslovakia: So, yes.

Q: And --

A: And there were other -- about -- oh, there were about -- through my school years I -- there were oh, always at least six or more refugee kids who --

Q: And then the rest of the kids, were they international or were they Ecuadorian?

A: They were Ecuadorian. One or two Americans.

Q: Yeah.

A: -- whose fathers --

Q: Diplomats' kids and things?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. And so is that the high school you graduated from?

A: Uh-huh, yes, uh-huh.

Q: And -- I mean, I don't want to skip anything.

A: No, no, but, I mean -- no, we were very much involved in the Jewish life in Quito, much more so than we had in Vienna:

Q: And so probably -- that probably was the first place you really started learning about your culture?

A: Yes.

Q: Jewish culture?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: In Quito?

A: Yeah.

Q: Were there Ecuadorian Jews as well involved or was it all a refugee organization?

A: There were no Ecuadorians. I mean, we all became naturalized Ecuadorians.

Q: At what age did you become naturalized? Do you know?

A: I didn't -- I waited until I was 21 because my parents got naturalized while I was still in school, while I was still -- while I was like 14, but they didn't want to get us naturalized because my brother would have had to do military service.

Q: What an irony.

A: And that was -- Ecuadorian Army life was not exactly what they wanted for him.

Q: No.

A: So they waited until each one of us turned 21, and we each became citizens on our own.

Q: Right. And --

A: And I became an Ecuadorian citizen in 1951. Then I married in 1953 and became an American citizen in 1956 because they waived the residency. My husband worked for the U.S. government.

Q: I see.

A: So I didn't have to wait five years to become a citizen.

Q: So you met him while he was on business --

A: He was working for the U.S. government in Ecuador in the same office where I was working as a secretary.

Q: Oh. I have to rewind.

A: That's way back.

Q: So just back to your school years in Ecuador, did you -- did you mix with Ecuadorian kids too?

A: Oh, yes. I had friends among the Ecuadorian kids, yes, very good friends.

Q: And what language did your family speak at home?

A: At home we spoke German.

Q: And in the neighborhood?

A: I spoke Spanish.

Q: And at school?

A: Spanish and English.

Q: Spanish and English?

A: And when I went to the American school, but I had forgotten my English for the first few -- you know, I never had chance to practice until -- then I got it back when I went to the American school.

Q: And I guess you hadn't studied it?

A: No.

Q: Or learned it as a kid learns in school or something?

A: Well, I had learned to read and write.

Q: Uh-huh, but as far as grammar and all the crazy --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- structures and things?

A: Yes, yes. And then I really learned it, yeah.

Q: Yeah. And so you graduated from the American school?

A: Yeah. And then I went -- I went to Chile and I went to secretarial school.

Q: Okay. You needed to leave Quito to do that?

A: I didn't need to. I -- my uncle came to visit us and he thought that I would have a better chance to meet a husband in Chile. Which I didn't, but I was bailingwheel (ph) secretary. I studied to be a bailingwheel secretary and I started working when I came back to Ecuador, and that's --

Q: How long were you in Chile?

A: I was there two years.

Q: And then back to Ecuador?

A: Yeah.

Q: And who did you work for in Ecuador?

A: I -- I worked for the -- what is now an agency for international affairs, but at that time it was the Inter-American Institute -- Institute Americano -- well, yeah, and their cultural section of the Inter-American Institute, the predecessor of AID.

Q: Sure, yeah. And so actually I should ask before we get to 1951 or '53 --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- I should ask, do you recall the end of the war?

A: Yes.

Q: Because you would have been 15 years old?

A: Fifteen, yeah.

Q: Do you recall learning about the end of the war?

A: Oh, yeah.

Q: What do you recall?

A: I remember -- oh, my father was the president of the free Austrian association or whatever.

Q: Free Austrian Movement, yes.

A: And the day that Vienna was liberated he was supposed to give a speech at that -- at their meeting and that was the day that Roosevelt died, Franklin Delano Roosevelt died. And I remember he was in the shower getting ready for his -- to go to that meeting and I was listening to the radio and I heard that Franklin Roosevelt had died, and I banged on the bathroom door and told him. I remember that.

Q: Did he go forward with his meeting?

A: Yes. And he made -- you know, but he changed his speech.

Q: Yeah. This is maybe not a question for a childhood memory, so I understand if you don't --

A: Yeah.

Q: But in some of the more -- how do I say this? Some Austrian Jews who fled in earlier time and who were active politically in these different ways had different ways of viewing what had happened to Austria: Do you recall -- not now. We know now.

A: Yeah.

Q: But at that time do you think that your family viewed it as an invasion in occupation by --

A: Germany.

Q: -- by Germany?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: Yeah? And do you think they really blamed Germany --

A: Yes.

Q: -- for what happened?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember discussions about that and --

A: Not specifically. Well, as I said, my father was very active with the free Austrian.

Q: Right.

A: There were -- and there were mostly Jews.

Q: Right, right. I know that --

A: But he was -- I mean, among his patients, he had -- he was -- he had German -- there was a group of Germans, not Jewish, but real German and Nazis in Ecuador.

Q: Uh-huh. After the war?

A: No. Before -- during the war too.

Q: Even during?

A: Yeah. And some of them were his patients.

Q: Really?

A: Yes.

Q: I know that I'm -- I'm more familiar with the Free Austrian Movement in England.

A: Yeah. Well, I'm sure that they were much more active.

Q: They were bigger and stronger.

A: Yes.

Q: In a sense geographically closer to --

A: There weren't that many Austrians in Quito.

Q: Right. But I know --

A: There were some.

Q: The Free Austrian Movement was very -- was pushing the idea of -- at least if it's the same organization, to some extent it was pushing the idea that Austria was the first victim of the Nazis and the first victim of Germany, and they wanted that recognition with the allies.

A: Yeah, I guess so -- I don't know. It's hard to tell.

Q: Right.

A: Another thing that happened, I mean, after -- this happened, actually, just before my father died. He was approached by Israel that they wanted to name him Honorary Council in Quito.

Q: Wow.

A: Because he had been very active in the Zionist movement.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But the appointment arrived after he died.

Q: Oh, no.

A: He died of a heart attack.

Q: Oh, no. How old was he when he died?

A: He was one month before his 61st birthday.

Q: Much too young.

A: Yeah.

Q: That's interesting.

A: So, I mean, he was -- he was quite a well-known person and very active.

Q: And so at the end of the war when you learned that -- so you learned that Roosevelt died and then you learned that the war, you know --

A: Yeah.

Q: Ultimately the war ended.

A: Well, at least Vienna had been liberated.

Q: Right. And did you -- did your family ever consider returning?

A: No.

Q: Not a question?

A: No, they didn't. No. They -- they were -- they were doing very well in Ecuador. There was no -- they didn't want to leave.

Q: And you? Did you ever think of returning?

A: No. And when I went back the two times I went back, I felt like an outsider. I --

Q: You didn't have any feeling of home or nostalgia?

A: I recognized certain things and, you know, but I wouldn't want to live there.

Q: I understand.

A: No. Well, right now I'm happy in the states and I have my family here.

Q: And so had Ecuador become -- Quito had become home?

A: Quito had become home very much so.

Q: And so not only did your family not consider returning to Austria, but they wanted to stay put?

A: They wanted to stay put, and as I said, I wanted to go to Israel.

Q: Uh-huh, right.

A: After the war, most of the young people of my generation, the ones that were a little bit older than I was, they all wanted to come to the states, and I didn't want to go to the states. I went to Chile to go to school, and then I went back to Ecuador and then I was -- my idea was to go to Israel.

Q: And you said you were planning that?

A: I was very serious.

Q: Studying Hebrew?

A: I was very seriously considering it.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I hadn't made any specific plans yet.

Q: And then what happened?

A: I met somebody.

Q: Yeah. Happens to the best of us.

A: I met somebody and he changed my life completely.

Q: Yeah. How did you meet your husband?

A: At work.

Q: Oh, that's right, yeah. So you were working in the office that he came --

A: Yeah. I was the secretary of his boss. I was a bilingual secretary and he -- he was a flad (ph) pathologist and he was working in an experiment station in the jungle, and he came up to Quito and -- oh, and he came up to Quito and he stayed with friends of mine at one of the guys who was working there, an American.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And he was sick, and so this guy said you should go see Eva's father.

Q: And he did?

A: And he did and he would see my father in the morning and then date me in the evening.

Q: How did your father feel about that?

A: Well, he didn't think much of it but he was there for -- and the day before when he was cured and he was going to go back to the jungle he asked me to marry him.

Q: Wow?

A: It was a very quick --

Q: Yeah. How long between meeting and engagement?

A: Well, I met on Christmas Eve and -- but he went back to the station then he came to Quito like on the 15th of January and we got engaged on the 27th of January.

Q: Wow. And so what did your parents think -- so he was non-Jew?

A: He was non-Jew, and he was quite a bit older than I am, and he -- he asked me to marry him and I got home and I -- my parents were in bed and I told them. I said Russ just asked me to marry him, and I was thinking they're going to say he's too old, he's not Jewish, we don't know him; and my father jumped out of bed, I'll never forget and said, you can't marry him; and I said why not? And I was ready to throw my argument. I sent him a bill and he already paid it. How can I -- what do I do now? He's going to be my son-in-law.

Q: Oh, that's sweet. That's sweet.

A: So -- then we had to wait to get married because I had to get clearance from the U.S. government to marry a foreign service officer.

Q: I see. And was he stationed in Ecuador for a period of time?

A: He had been there several years and he had gone back to the states to get his Ph.D. and I met him when he came back from -- from that.

Q: I see.

A: I didn't know him when he first -- when he had been there for -- he was there for nine years in total.

Q: And so you lived together -- you got married in Ecuador in Quito?

A: Yeah. Yes we got married in Quito.

Q: And was that a special -- did you do a special kind of ceremony or --

A: We got a civil ceremony, but it was -- it was at my aunt's. She had a big store which it was very well known, and she emptied the shelves of the store and all the wedding presents were --

Q: How nice?

A: And -- we had quite a reception. There was a sitting president, the ambassador, the U.S. ambassador, several other dignitaries were there.

Q: Wow.

A: It was mostly patients of my father.

Q: Like you said, you were very involved in the community.

A: We were very much involved and we -- I always said if I ever write my life story, I'm going to call it lemonade.

Q: Yeah?

A: If life gives you lemons, you make lemonade.

Q: Sounds like you made some really good lemonade.

A: We made some very good lemonade, yes.

Q: It really sounds like it.

A: No. I was very, very fortunate. I had a happy life.

Q: Yeah. How long did you and your husband live in Ecuador then?

A: We stayed another two years. No, longer. We got married in '54. We left in '58. Four years, and then we went to Costa Rica and lived there for ten years, then we went to Brazil.

Q: What an adventurous life. How nice.

A: Then we went back to Ecuador and then we came to the states in 1972.

Q: Okay. And when you say to the states, to which --

A: To Washington -- I mean to --

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah. He came to here and then he retired from AID.

Q: Was he from this area?

A: He was from Rhode Island.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah.

Q: I see. So these different moves --

A: But he was working for the predecessor organizations of the -- I mean, we underwent -- at the time we got married, we were going from -- they renamed the agency and it came under the state department instead of being under the department of agriculture which had been before. That's why we had to wait until I got cleared to marry.

Q: Yeah.

A: We had -- well, we got married in April, so it wasn't that long a wait. He was down there in the jungle and I was in Quito.

Q: And did you continue working as a secretary in that office?

A: Until I got married, yes.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But I also did a lot of translating for my boss, and I'm now a professional interpreter.

Q: I see.

A: In Spanish.

Q: I see. Spanish/English?

A: Yes.

Q: Yeah. And did you have children?

A: I have four children.

Q: Four children?

A: Ten grandchildren and fourteen great grandchildren.

Q: Fantastic. That is some good lemonade.

A: Yes.

Q: So when were your children born and where?

A: My oldest son was born in Quito, but we were living on the -- at the experiment station, but I went up to Quito. My father was still alive and Jimmy was born in Quito and my father died six weeks after that. And my Mary Ellen, my daughter was born in Guayaquil where we had moved to after two years in the jungle. We moved to the coastal city.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And then I was seven months pregnant when we moved to Costa Rica, and I had twins.

Q: Wow.

A: In three and a half years I had four children.

Q: You were busy.

A: And in two different countries and three different cities.

Q: And then you were in Costa Rica for ten years?

A: Yes.

Q: So a lot of the children's childhood years were spent --

A: Were in -- yeah.

Q: And then after --

A: In fact, the funny thing is my twins were born on the fourth of July.

Q: Really?

A: And I had a cesarean, and we had just arrived two months before.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And we didn't know -- have too many friends, but I needed a blood transfusion.

Q: Oh.

A: And they didn't have a blood bank in Costa Rica at that time, so my husband called the picnic at the American embassy and told (inaudible) somebody to donate blood.

Q: And they got someone?

A: They got -- his boss came with some other people who -- they didn't -- I didn't know what my blood type was, so they had to take my blood type, and his boss happened to be my blood type.

Q: Wow. What a nice gift.

A: He told me that we should give him one of the twins as a payment.

Q: That is really --

A: The 4th of July, for many years my kids thought their birthday party was given by their Uncle Sam.

Q: I see. And all those fireworks were for them.

A: Well, they didn't have fireworks, but they had a big picnic and we had Uncle Sam and he would always walk with them until they were about five or six by then after that they didn't anymore, but --

Q: So what kind of school did your children attend?

A: They went to an American school.

Q: To an American school?

A: Yeah.

Q: And then from Costa Rica you were in Brazil?

A: In Brazil.

Q: For how long?

A: Two years.

Q: Two years. And did you learn Portuguese also?

A: Yeah. I worked -- I didn't interpret Portuguese, but I interpreted from Portuguese into English and Spanish, too.

Q: Wow. And then from --

A: And then we went back to Ecuador.

Q: For your husband's work and --

A: And then he had a heart attack and he had to come back to the states.

Q: I see.

A: And we came here, but he -- he worked for a few years and then he retired and then he died 17 years ago on June 8th, two days before my birthday. June 8th has been a big date in my life.

Q: How strange, yeah. And so when you returned to the U.S. -- well, when you came and he returned --

A: Yes.

Q: -- it was to Washington?

A: Yeah.

Q: And have you always lived in northern Virginia?

A: Yes.

Q: That's nice. I want to make sure I'm staying on track here. So your parents remained in Ecuador until they died?

A: No. My father died in Ecuador, and then my mother came to the states. By then I was an American citizen and I could sponsor her, although I wasn't living there, here. When she went and lived with her sister who was in New York. She had a sister who lived in New York who came about the same time that we -- when -- towards the end of our stay in New York in the '30s.

Q: I see. So she went and joined her?

A: Yeah. She went to live with her sister and -- I mean, she found an apartment in the same building as her sister.

Q: That's nice.

A: And she worked for a while.

Q: And how about your brother?

A: My brother also married an American non-Jew.

Q: Really?

A: And he ended -- he was working for Pan American Airways, and he worked in South America for many years and then retired to Florida; and he died four years ago on June 8th also.

Q: No, he didn't?

A: Yes.

Q: That is really strange.

A: That's why I say June 8th is --

Q: You hold your breath on June 8th?

A: I hold --

Q: Sometimes good.

A: I spend a lot of time -- a lot of June 8th at the cemetery.

Q: Yeah, I guess you do.

A: Yes.

Q: So your brother remained based in South America until he retired?

A: Yeah. And then they moved to Fort Myers, Florida:

Q: And do your children all live in the states?

A: Yes.

Q: Do they live nearby?

A: Two of them live in Virginia, northern Virginia, and one son just moved from South Carolina to Georgia last week.

Q: Oh.

A: And my Mary Ellen, my older daughter lives in – she was living in Idaho but moved to Hawaii, and she's my gypsy. She's been around, but she's now in Idaho but she's going back to Hawaii.

Q: Sounds like a good choice.

A: And I have grown grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Q: Yeah. How old is your oldest great grandchild?

A: Well, there again, my -- we don't have a family tree. We have a family vine. My oldest son married a widow who's ten years older than he is, and she had three children from her first husband.

Q: I see.

A: And my son adopted them, so my oldest grandson is 46.

Q: Okay. So he's old enough to --

A: Yeah. And so he has my oldest great granddaughter, his oldest daughter is 20 and is getting married next week.

Q: Oh, congratulations.

A: My great granddaughter.

Q: That's great.

A: So I might become a great, great grandmother.

Q: You could. That's the way to do it.

A: Yeah. I had three instant grandchildren, but then I've had seven new others.

Q: That's wonderful. With all of these moves that you made over your life from place to place and especially after really sort of rediscovering or discovering your Zionist feelings and getting into the Zionist activity --

A: Well, yeah, but then when I married --

Q: Okay.

A: -- that ended.

Q: That kind of ended. Well --

A: And now, now that I'm a widow, I have made -- sort of reconnected with the Jewish community here.

Q: Yeah.

A: But not -- I don't belong to any temple or anything like that, but I have a lot of -- I joined the hadasa (ph) and I joined the benabiast (ph) for a while. I've been sort of trying to reconnect.

Q: Yeah. To find your place in there?

A: Yes.

Q: Certainly lots of different ways to engage with the Jewish communities.

A: Yes.

Q: So you can find --

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Well, through all of these moves, at whatever level of identification you were with your religion or culture?

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you experience discrimination after Austria?

A: Yes, in Ecuador.

Q: There was?

A: Yes. Again, they would make an exception with my father and they tried to, you know, to -- but there was --

Q: Was that with Ecuadorians or with those Germans that you said?

A: Well, the Germans, we didn't really become really good friends, but, no, the Ecuadorians, there was -- a lot of ignorance about what Jews were. I remember once one of my classmates asked me to take my shoes off to see if I had cloven feet.

Q: Wow. How do you respond -- how does someone respond to that?

A: I couldn't understand why she wanted me to show her my feet.

Q: Wow.

A: And I know that like they didn't allow Jews in the tennis club and country club, but they kept telling my father he could join if he wanted, and he said I'm not going to be a token Jew. So I never learned to play golf or tennis. So there was -- wasn't -- we didn't -- as I said, my father was accepted but he always made a point of saying that he was Jewish and -- and I've always said I'm Jewish, and I moved, you know, with my husband. We were involved with the embassies and things, and I have never -- I've never denied my Jewishness, but I haven't publicized it for a while where as now I do.

Q: Yeah. Well, I think that's one of the nice things about Judaism. There's a -- it's flexible and people move in and out.

A: And, I mean, my oldest son is married to a very devout Catholic and he became a Catholic, and so all my -- most of my great grandchildren -- I mean, in that part of the family and they have the most kids.

Q: Yeah.

A: Are Catholic and --

Q: What about these Germans that your dad was treating in Ecuador? You said they were Nazis or Nazi sympathizers?

A: Yes. And --

Q: What were they doing in Ecuador?

A: I think espionage, but I'm not sure. I know that they had an airline that was traveling into Ecuador and -- and some of them actually, during the war, were sent to the states to camp, you know, to whatever kind of camps they had for the Germans.

Q: Like POW camp or something?

A: No, not -- it wasn't like that, but it was some sort of -- not as bad as the Japanese.

Q: No, no.

A: But they did have something, and I know that one of the girls whom I had met a little bit and then she went to the states and was hired in the same office where I was working with the AID because her English was much better than mine because she had lived in the states.

Q: Yeah, but she lived in the states for that reason, right.

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A: Yes. But this was --

Q: Yeah?

A: -- in the '40s and '50s, late, '40s and early '50s.

Q: And do you -- you said that they went to your father as a doctor. Do you think that they were -- there were people who didn't pay attention to the race -- I say that in quotation marks.

A: Yeah.

Q: This crazy race stuff or --

A: Well, they just figured he was a good doctor.

Q: Right. They were just --

A: And he was better than the doctors they could go to.

Q: So a Jew from Vienna is better than a --

A: My father died it was really -- his funeral was really incredible because the new German ambassador had just presented his credentials and he came to the funeral in his, you know, very elegant to my father's funeral.

Q: That's strange.

A: And we had -- it was a Jewish funeral. That was -- by then it was 1955.

Q: Uh-huh. Had he had a relationship with --

A: Yeah.

Q: The --

A: Yeah.

Q: Was he one of his patients too?

A: Yeah.

Q: I see.

A: Yeah. He had a lot of people that were --

Q: You mentioned before that you had been back to Vienna twice?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Once with your husband?

A: With my husband, yeah.

Q: And once with your daughter?

A: One of my daughters. One of my daughters.

Q: So when was the first time you returned?

A: 19 -- it was about 199 -- maybe '94, '95.

Q: Uh-huh. And you said you recalled not feeling welcome?

A: No. It was -- it was a little bit earlier than -- in the '90s, maybe 1990, '91.

Q: And you recall -- how did you say it? You said you didn't -- you felt like an outsider?

A: I felt like an outsider. I remember it was very interesting. I was -- we had a our _____ pass and we had been Salzburg and/or near Salzburg and we were on the train and a guy came and sat with us, and I started talking to him in German and this was when what's his name was the president of Austria:

Q: Oh, Waldheim.

A: Waldheim.

Q: Oh, gosh, yeah.

A: Yeah. And it was really funny because we were talking in German and my husband was very interested in all these old castles and things on the way, and so he kept asking what's that and the guy said this is Angs Schlossel (ph). It's a castle.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah. Just -- and of course my husband didn't speak German.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I was talking to this man and as -- and, you know, and I was asking silly questions and like is this the Danube, is this the Vienna vault (ph) _____ and he said why do you ask. I said, well, I was born here but I left when I was a little girl. So he realized why I left.

Q: Yeah.

A: And he said we would never have elected Waldheim if the United States hadn't made such a stink about it. I don't know if that's true, but that's what he told me.

Q: Yeah. I think that attitude, and there's a subtle antisemitism there too because --

A: Yes.

Q: United States, run by Jews, whatever.

A: Yeah.

Q: And that seemed to have been the sentiment, if it weren't for those --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- Jews raising trouble, we would have --

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Yeah.

A: So that was his -- and then it was funny because he said, but you speak like a native; and I said, well, I am a native.

Q: Yeah.

A: And by then I had been in Austria for maybe two weeks already, picked up -- picked it up again, but I haven't really spoken it in the last 50 some years.

Q: Uh-huh. So --

A: That was, as I said, I think it was in the early '90s.

Q: Did you feel more comfortable just sort of as a tourist in Salzburg sort of revisiting Vienna?

A: We went to different places. In fact, we spent about a week in a little -- we had one of those exchange programs that we could stay for free in a hotel somewhere on the line near Salzburg. I don't remember what it was called, and we would take day trips on the ural (ph) pass to --

Q: Yeah.

A: We went to Salzburg, we went to Innsbruck, we went to different places and stayed at the hotel.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And then we took the train to ViennaA: And we stayed another week or so, but we were definitely tourists --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- in those days, but then in Vienna I -- we -- I looked at a street map and figured out how to get to see my -- the place where I used to live on Wolksenfeld.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I found it.

Q: Yeah.

A: And I went there and found the place and looked from the outside, it looked just like I remembered it. It was really funny and we -- and we went up to the third floor and I stood in front of that door and I was -- and I couldn't ring that bell, and he said -- and Russ told me, ring the damn bell. And I just -- I was petrified. I just couldn't. And finally said let's go. And then I went back with my daughter and I still couldn't do it.

Q: Yeah.

A: So I never went in. But I found it both times.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And, you know, and I remember I was -- whenever I saw somebody in that -- when we were near there I would see people who were -- who looked older than I am and I say do you remember -- I wanted to see if anybody remembered my father, but I never met anybody that old, I guess.

Q: Or maybe they realized and they didn't want to talk about it.

A: No. I mean, I never -- no. I would just ask.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I didn't come out and ask them. I would just say have you lived here long and they said no, so --

Q: I see. But when you went there with your finger at the bell, you did intend to ring the bell but you just couldn't bring yourself to do it?

A: Yeah. I just couldn't.

Q: Do you want to?

A: No. Not anymore. No. I mean, now that's past now.

Q: You've had such a rich and interesting life.

A: I've had a wonderful life.

Q: Yeah. And I'm sorry about how it started, but the rest of it --

A: I made lemonade.

Q: You made some really great lemonade. Yeah. You really did.

A: I'm trying to see if there's anything I forgot.

Q: Do you think that -- well, I have one more. Do you think that your experiences affected the way you raised your children?

A: Probably.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Yes.

Q: Did they -- did they ask you about it? Did you talk about it with them?

A: Oh, yes. I've told them my story. Yes.

Q: Yeah. And of the four, are any of them religious or Jewish identifying?

A: Michelle, the daughter that I went to Austria with is probably the most -- they all -- they all know that they have a Jewish mother. I mean, that's definitely, and they haven't really joined any religion except for Jim.

Q: With his wife?

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you ever have contact with -- maybe your young friends in Vienna were Jewish too, but you mentioned sleeping at a friend's house the night before you left.

A: That was this Eva that was --

Q: So you did reconnect with her and --

A: Yes. That has been a beautiful experience.

Q: Yeah. How did you find her again or you --

A: Our mothers -- our parents kept correspondence.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: They corresponded with each other and so -- and I know that about Eva and she knew about me, and so when I came to the states, I told her I was here and she had married -- she married a black guy who was a Tuskegee air man.

Q: Wow. And you said in Atlanta, in the south?

A: They didn't marry in the south. She met him in -- when she moved to California:

Q: Wow.

A: And he's -- he just oh, gosh, he just died also.

Q: Oh, no.

A: Everybody's dead.

Q: Oh.

A: But he was just a lovely person, and we had a great, great relationship with them.

Q: That was the couple you and your husband became friends with?

A: Yes. And when Russ died, they called me every week to make sure that I was all right and things.

Q: That's so nice.

A: And I've gone and spent some time with them and we were going to -- several times we were planning to go on a vacation together and never materialized.

Q: Yeah. That's really nice to reconnect.

A: Yes, but it was -- they're both dead now. Yeah, unfortunately most of my friends and relatives are -- except my -- the next generation.

Q: Yeah. That's got to be hard. A hard part about --

A: Yeah. About growing old.

Q: Growing old, yeah. You want to keep your body healthy and strong but then --

A: It was so funny because my husband was 14 years older than I am, so I was always the youngest in our friends. Now I'm -- all of the sudden I'm the oldest.

Q: Oh. Did you ever have any contact with non-Jewish Austrians or did -- any old friends?

A: I've met some, but never -- I mean, I've gone to the Austrian embassy, some functions there and but not really.

Q: Did you or your family ever -- was there even the responsibility to apply for any reparations or --

A: I'm getting Social Security from Austria:

Q: Good. Good. That's --

A: Yes. I got --

Q: You should get everything that you can.

A: Yes. I'm getting -- no. That was so funny because there was some -- an article in the paper, oh, gosh, about 20 years ago that Austria was making some kind of reparation for people who had to leave before their -- and they had to be 15 by the day Austria was liberated, and I missed that deadline by about a week.

Q: Yeah.

A: I was one week too young to get that. So one day I was going to the Austrian consulate, I don't remember what for, and I told the woman, you know, I heard that they're doing this but I'm one month or two weeks too young, and she said but you can apply the next year.

Q: Oh.

A: And so I applied and I have been getting 300 whatever a month and --

Q: Every little bit.

A: And it's in a bank in Vienna, and every once in a while they send me some money here.

Q: That's good that you get something.

A: And I put it in my will that my kids will get whatever's left.

Q: And was there any property that your family lost at that time or --

A: We didn't own the property. It was state owned because, as I said, it was provided by the -- they had nationalized medicine there.

Q: Right.

A: So.

Q: So it wasn't a -- you didn't own anything else or --

A: They didn't -- we had a car. Again, Bill, at the museum found.

Q: Bill Connelly, yeah.

A: Yeah. There was -- it says somewhere that my father was supposed to get some kind of -- but it was like a thousand shilling or something.

Q: Something for the car or --

A: I don't know.

Q: Yeah.

A: I don't know what it was for, but, you know, I haven't bothered about that.

Q: Yeah. But it was unusual to have -- I guess for a doctor, maybe, but it was unusual to have a car at that time.

A: Well, when he first became a doctor Eva's grandfather, who they were -- they had money. He told them now that you're a doctor you need a car, and my father said I can't afford one. He gave him a car.

Q: Wow.

A: They had these good friends.

Q: They were really close like.

A: They were very close, yes, and all -- I mean, it's so funny that my two families, my mother's family and my father's family, there's been a lot of -- they've always been very close. There was not his family and your -- and her family. It was --

Q: That's so nice.

A: They had very, very close relationships.

Q: That's really nice.

A: I have pictures of my uncle from my mother's side and my uncle from my father's side.

Q: Do you have pictures with you?

A: I have a few.

Q: Oh, can I see them?

A: Yeah. I was going to go and --

Q: Are you going to --

A: I have some albums here. I brought two. Let's see.

Q: Nice. Let's see if I can do this without disconnecting.

A: Here are my two grandmothers.

Q: Look at them.

A: And here's -- that's my Grandmother Fisch and she's the daughter of my Uncle Gotzl, and here's my aunt -- here's my mother and that's my -- this is my aunt -- this is my Aunt Elza (ph) and her husband and that's their son.

Q: Are these the aunts and uncle that came?

A: That went to Chile.

Q: And who's this handsome man?

A: I have no idea:

Q: Oh.

A: There's my uncle and my cousin, but that's not his son. There's my father with one of my uncles. I think this is my brother, my grandmother and my aunt. Yeah. That's my cousin Howard and his parents.

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Q: And this is an album that you took with you to Ecuador?

A: Yes, uh-huh. There's me when I was a little girl.

Q: How cute.

A: There's me and my mother and my brother.

Q: And these are the grandmothers?

A: My two grandmothers.

Q: That's so nice that they were close like that.

A: Yes. There's me and my doll, and that's Eva --

Q: Oh.

A: -- and her doll. She had the same doll and we had the same dresses. They always dressed us alike. They were silk importers, and so whenever they made a dress for Eva, they made one for me.

Q: How nice. These are really good friends. Is this the doll that you --

A: Yes.

Q: I see. That you carried all the way with you?

A: Yeah. There I am with my brother. There's my uncle -- my mother's brother and my father's brother. He's the one that went to Ecuador.

Q: And what happened with him?

A: He went to Chile.

Q: Okay.

A: That's my family, my parents and us.

Q: And where is that taken?

A: On a vacation in Austria: I think it might have been in Feldon (ph) _____ we went there when -- I found Feldon (ph) when I was traveling with my daughter, and we went there and I went to a hotel and I said I haven't been here for 70 years.

Q: Really? I hope they treated you well.

A: They treated us very well.

Q: Good.

A: There's a -- I remember this picture my uncle who's back here somewhere he said stand -- don't stand so close so that we can cut out the ones who have died.

Q: Oh, my gosh.

A: I'm the smallest. Yeah. He had -- oh, here, there's my uncle who went to -- oh, there's my father, my Uncle Bela (ph), the one who went to Ecuador with us and their younger brother, the one who went to concentration camp.

Q: I see. So he was the one that was deported from --

A: From Oss.

Q: And what camp was he in? Do you know?

A: Auschwitz.

Q: Oh, my gosh.

A: Yeah, but he wasn't sent there until -- he was sent there in the '40s, or 1942, I think. He was not sent early. He was deferred. Apparently he was doing something that the Vama (ph) thought was important, according to the papers that Bill showed me.

Q: He was -- and that sort of saved him in that --

A: Yes. He was not sent to a camp until --

Q: I see.

A: -- several years later.

Q: I see.

A: Yes, so I'm not quite sure.

Q: What did he do?

A: He was a pharmacist. 1924. There's my grandmother and my grandfather. I never met my grandfather.

Q: Did they live in Vladin (ph) or they visited there?

A: No. I think they must have been visiting. This was long before I was born. Yeah. That's my Uncle Walter, the one who went to Chile. That's my -- I don't think that was my father's car. There are my two grandmothers with us.

Q: That's so nice.

A: There's my mother and her mother.

Q: Looks like at a Hoyar (ph) or something --

A: That was my fraulein.

Q: Yeah? Is that you as a little --

A: That's me. There's me and --

Q: Like at Shobroken (ph) or something?

A: I think so, and that's -- there's me and Eva and my brother and I guess our mothers and grandparents. I have no idea who that is.

Q: It's a beautiful picture.

A: Yeah. That's my cousin Marian (ph) from Chile. We are with Eva and my brother playing.

Q: You really all were very close, weren't you?

A: Yes. We were always together. There's my father with us. I was in dancing school.

Q: That's so sweet.

A: And that's in front of our building in Vienna, my father. That is (inaudible) that one I don't want to show.

Q: Your first frontal nudity.

A: That's my uncle when they were going to Chile on the trip in 19 -- I think they went in 1934. There's my cousin, my brother and I.

Q: Just lovely.

A: Yeah.

Q: So lucky to have all these photos.

A: As I said, I was very privileged. There was (inaudible).

Q: Start them young.

A: Yeah. That's my cousin on the ship. That's my cousin Howard. His name was quick Michael Shivits (ph) and now -- and the name was Howard Mar (ph). There's my Uncle Bela (ph) and my Uncle Ula (ph) that was his wife, Ula's (ph) wife and this is my mother. That's my father's car. I remember the license plate of that car. It's so funny.

Q: The number?

A: Yes.

Q: Really?

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A: _____ +.

Q: Isn't that funny?

A: I don't know it in English.

Q: It's funny the things we remember.

A: That was my first birthday.

Q: Oh. Flowers in your hair.

A: Yes. My grandmother with her two grandsons.

Q: Just lovely. Oh, thank you for letting me see the faces --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- of all of these -- it's so nice. Is there anything that comes to mind that you -- that I've forgotten or you've forgotten or --

A: I don't know. Boy, this (inaudible)

Conclusion of Interview