

**Thea Kahn Lindauer**  
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Thea Kahn Lindauer, born on July 17, 1922 in Eisenberg, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany, discusses the town of Eisenberg; the paternal and maternal sides of her family; her father's family work in the cattle trading business; the 1918 influenza pandemic; her two older half-sisters from her father's first marriage; her mother's brothers, half of whom served in the German army during World War I and half of whom served in the French army; her grandfather from Alsace-Lorraine, who later lived with her and her family; this grandfather's bakery business in Strasbourg, Germany; her father's work selling insurance; her religious, Jewish upbringing, but considering herself German first; her nanny; being exposed to Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant traditions growing up; going to boarding school in Switzerland for a year when she was nine years old; her parents' emphasis on education; her sister; Eisenberg's small Jewish community; her father's role as cantor and holding services in their home; attending a Catholic kindergarten and then public school; visiting Germany in the mid-1950s; seeing a psychologist after the war; returning to Eisenberg after boarding school; not experiencing antisemitism at school; her father's meeting with Gilbert Kraus from Philadelphia who, along with his wife, rescued 50 children and brought them to the United States; Hitler's rise to power; the Sturmabteilung's (SA) attacks on communists; knowing some members of the SA in Eisenberg; Nazi propaganda efforts and Joseph Goebbels; a newspaper publisher's two sons who were sent to labor camps because of their anti-Nazi leanings; Martin Niemöller and his poem; her father's efforts to get her out of Germany when she was twelve years old; her father's insistence that she go to the United States, not somewhere else in Europe; finding a Kindertransport through the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS); traveling in April 1934 to the U.S. Consulate in Stuttgart, Germany to get a visa and other required documentation; visiting relatives around Germany before leaving for the U.S. in November 1934; her school class and a teacher coming to the train station to say goodbye; traveling with her father to Hamburg, Germany to get to the ship; the voyage to the U.S.; being one of six children on the ship in the HIAS Kindertransport; catching pneumonia early in the voyage and spending the rest of the time in the ship's infirmary; arriving in New York, New York and seeing the Statue of Liberty; being sent to a sponsor family in Chicago, Illinois; an aunt who lived in Chicago, but was unable to be her sponsor; moving in with her sponsors and foster family, the Sonnenschein family, who had an apartment near the Museum of Science and Industry; being placed in fifth grade instead of seventh because she did not speak English; her classmates calling her "Kraut" because of her thick accent; staying in touch with her family through letters; moving to live with a new foster family, the Perlsteins, who had children and pets; Mr. Perlstein's work at the Pabst Brewing Company; her parents' attempts to leave Germany with her sister; her half-sister, who was studying medicine in Leipzig, Germany, before being offered the chance to continue her studies in Brazil; the Aryanization of her father's shop; her foster father helping her parents and sister to get visas to the U.S. in April 1937; her family's arrival in Chicago in December 1937; feeling torn between her family and her foster family; switching schools her senior year of high school; the Works Progress Administration (WPA); the fates of family members who stayed in Europe; staying in touch with the Persteins after moving in with her parents; meeting her husband in 1946, who was serving in the U.S. Army; moving to Japan, Germany, and other locations where her husband was stationed; and making a point throughout her life to go to plays, concerts, and other arts performances. [Family photographs and descriptions follow the interview.]