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Summary

Mejar "Mike" Rosen (changed to "Meyer" at US immigration) born on March 8, 1931 in Szczuczyn, Poland to middle-class family, parents storekeepers, father (served in Polish Army) Hershel ("Harry" in US) & mother Haneke ("Helen" in US) Goldfarb, Mike was youngest of three, elder brothers Abraham "Abe" & Stanley, paternal grandmother "Bubbe," extended family all killed in the Holocaust; Mike shares earliest childhood memories; in forecasting the Holocaust, uncle pushed family to flee to Palestine, his appeals ignored; a Polish family friend begins antisemitic taunts outside their store; after family lives are threatened, they flee to America on the RMS Aquitania, leaving behind beloved Bubbe & Stanley "Lots of tears"; Mike entering Ellis Island at 7-8 yrs. old, recollections, e.g. being told by US family member to "Be a good Jew & be a good American," words Mike would never forget; brother Stanley immigrates & enters US Army, ends up in 2nd wave in Normandy, ironically brought over on same ship Aquitania that had brought his family to US, Stanley serves in liberating some of the concentration camps, "He was never the same after he came back," acc to Mike; after arrival to America, to assist Mike's father get a start in his dry-goods store, an American by the name of "Heinz - loaded the store" with free supplies; experiences in returning to Szczuczyn in the 1970s, encountering lingering antisemitism; recollections of antisemitic hatred endured in childhood, despite father's generosity to Szczuczyn community; recollections of childhood Jewish holidays; discussion re: Mike's father's ongoing efforts in US to support his new community; later learning that most of their family had been killed in the Szczuczyn synagogue burning; Mike served in Africa for US Air Force; marriage to Beverly nee Erenberg, becoming father to Alan, Barbara, Ira, grandchildren; Mike comments on historic photographic book of Szczuczyn – their town square, synagogue, Jewish school, townspeople before war, other buildings in Szczuczyn, photograph of his mother, of Szczuczyn banker Bibliowicz (descendant later became distributor of auto parts in South America), photograph of mother's sister Sarah Goldfarb (killed in Holocaust), of Szczuczyn's Keren Kayemeth & their Zionist youth movements; photograph of Szczuczyn's Jewish cemetery where a paved road would later be installed over it; photo of a Szczuczyn drama club, Szczuczyn girls wearing Paris fashion; Mike ends by sharing a photograph of his children & grandchildren.