

## **RG-50.031.0165**

### **Summary**

Avraham Sharon, born on June 13, 1926 in Siauliai, Lithuania (30,000 population, 6000 Jews); Avraham shares photograph of his father's large family, parents, brother (4 year younger); fond memories of Jewish celebrations; Jewish education (spoke only Hebrew at school; spoke Yiddish in home); experiencing first antisemitism, waking up to a stone that had been thrown through bedroom window, father unhappy about antisemitic worker in business he owned; some family had fled to South Africa; Zionism forces a change to only Yiddish spoken in school; Jews forced to wear badges; Soviets begin "shipping Jews" (acc to Avraham) to Siberia; father's small sawmill and grandmother's hotel taken over, family kicked out of house, most Jewish men "taken to be shot - whatever was left put in ghetto"; family forced to live in one little room, then paternal grandparents taken, then father taken into slave labor, killed in work-related car accident 1943, Avraham and brother in child forced labor (bakery carrying flour), able to obtain soup; Nazi invasion; 1944 now age 18, ghetto "locked down because Russians were coming," Avraham decides to run, insistent on "not going to Germany"; mother and brother sent to Stutthof – survivor later tells Avraham that she witnessed Abraham's mother "sent to crematorium"; Avraham learns every child under 15 killed at Stutthof but uncertain exactly how brother was killed in Stutthof; discussion re: months following war, Avraham's complicated routes through various countries to reach Palestine, including being robbed on train, year in Italian kibbutz, 5 mile swim to a rescue boat (one person gives up in the swim); schooling in Palestine until entering Merchant Marines-Israel War of Independence, serves 2 years Africa supervising loading of ships; while working as deck hand on ship "Negba," meets first wife, marriage 1950 (she a survivor from Poland, her family had also been "shipped to Siberia"); reaching US, lives in Chicago, obtains an MBA, returns to Israel but cannot find work; 2002 first wife passes away after 52 years marriage; 2005 marriage to second wife who had lived in same building; in US, self-identifies as "only an economic refugee" - heart remains in Israel; Avraham returns to traumatic events witnessed – man's beating at the barbed wire or seeing a pregnant woman endure their long march; Avraham shares family photographs.