SOL SLOAN
BORN: RUSCOVA, ROMANIA,
1914

Sol Sloan was born 1913 in Ruscova, Romania, a small town with about 600 families. He had two sisters and two brothers one of whom recently died in Israel. The family was quite poor, and he did not learn much in school because of persecution by the teacher and other students. He left home at age 13 to go to Arad and started peddling. He also had a market stand and, for a while, a store. At age 17 he got married and in 1939 served in the Romanian army for a few months. He shows several photographs of his wife, one daughter and one son and also of some friends. About 1943, he was in forced labor in the Ukraine for over one year. Then, he came back to his family and was peddling rags. They had to live in a ghetto were there were 6000 people crammed into one acre of land with totally inadequate sanitary facilities. They were supervised mostly by Hungarians who treated them brutally.

In 1944, he, his family and parents were taken to Auschwitz, 90 persons per cattle car. The trip lasted four days. There was no food or water and many died. At Auschwitz he was separated from his family. They were killed while he and other able-bodied men were shaved, showered and taken to barracks. He claimed to be a precision mechanic which probably saved his life. There was a lot of beating with sticks, but after three weeks he was taken to France to work as a mechanic in a mine where he got an SS-man to help him fix a machine. He knew nothing about the progress of the war.

After several months, he was taken to Kuchendorf (near Breslau, now Wroclaw, in Silesia) and had to work in a salt mine. There was so little food that his weight dropped to 70 pounds. He was selected to go to Auschwitz to be gassed but because of some bombing they missed the train connection in Frankfurt and were taken to Allach, near Dachau, where he was supposed to work in a munitions factory. However, he was too weak to work and survived only because of a more humane Nazi supervisor. Later he volunteered to shovel snow. He stole potatoes, was caught and given 25 lashes on his back but worked again the following day. He was lucky that some Hitler youths who supervised them behaved decently and one even gave him food and did some shoveling for him.
The boy was caught and punished. Later he was lucky again and found another German who gave him some clothing. After several weeks, he got the job of taking food to another camp where he again worked as a mechanic.

In March 1945, they had to load everything on a truck and then were taken by train for several days to no particular place until they were liberated by the Americans. He shows a badge from Dachau which he had to wear.

He is still much affected by his experiences and particularly remembers when his little girl was taken away from him in Auschwitz. When he told his stories nobody wanted to believe him. He emphasizes that people should be careful because such things could happen again.