

In the morning, we got up, they gave us brand new army shoes to wear, brand new, just made from the shoemakers. We didn't understand why. But we found out. A half hour later, we found out why. And we put on the shoes. They took us out in another camp, and marched in a circle, in a giant, large circle.

The reason they did it, to break in the shoes for the soldiers. So when they put them on, they will be comfortable. They won't be hard to wear. But our feet got swollen a bit. We had to wear them every day, those shoes.

They had, in one barrack, the Russian prisoners. They were soldiers, but they took them in there. And they lay in bunks. Like we would lay in bunks, but their bunks was so close, that they have to lay. They can't even sit up. They had to lay there for eight hours a day.

During the evening, when all the workers, the prisoners were going to bed, they took them out to march [INAUDIBLE]. Then they back. This was their torture for the Russian soldiers.

They had another barrack. That was a empty barrack. We were wondering why it's always empty. Then one day, we were watching. They bring in a transport with gypsies-- men, women, and children. They put them in there. It was a giant barrack. They put them in. Then the SS came with 50, 60 German shepherds.

They let the German shepherds in, in their barracks. And we could hear the scream-- we could hear those screams blocks and blocks away. After about two hours, they let the dogs out. When they came out, they grabbed some prisoners to pull out the dead gypsies, to bury them.

They had some colored people. That's the first time in my life I saw colored people. I never know there ever exist colored people. I looked. I asked, who are the colored people? They said they're prisoners of war from America. They had the worsted job in the camp.

They were tortured, beaten. Everything they could do, they did to them. They're supposed to be prisoners of war. That was the camp Sachsenhausen. Some people don't realize that the camp- a crematorium and a gas chamber. They didn't need any one there.

They didn't have any crematoriums at Sachsenhausen?

To tell you the truth, I don't know. We were so busy, scared, walking around in one circle to see what's going on. And around in this area, we were afraid to look or to ask. We were watched every minute what we do. So that was-- I don't even remember how long I was there.

But then they took us out of this camp. They said you're going to a different camp. That's what they call the march of death. I think if history [? said ?] didn't know about it. They took thousands or thousands of prisoners from Sachsenhausen, and marching for six days, or seven days and six nights.

I remember it was winter. I can't remember a day, because we didn't have a calendar. I don't remember times or month. It was cold. But we were thirsty. We were marching. There was no snow. We were thirsty. If we had snow, we would eat it.

We were hungry. There was no food or water. Every time you bent down-- maybe you saw a piece of coal, or a snake, or anything-- snails, I mean-- we picked up and we ate to keep us going.

Whatever time you looked back, you could see dead bodies laying behind you. Or when you walked in the march, you can see bodies. You passed by bodies laying already. There was in the back of our trucks, who picked up those bodies. What they did with them, I don't know. We keep marching.

One night we stopped in a big farm. We had to stay outside. Usually, if we stopped at any place, we had open place to sleep. We stopped by a big farm. And I end up close to a barn. I laid there. It got dark. I sneak toward the barn. I opened

the door. And there I saw pigs. And there the pigs eat food.

They had pig food. Who know what kind of garbage it was. I laid down. I ate together with the pigs. That food was delicious because I didn't have any food for three days.

I went out and I told somebody that. I said, go in, there's food. Well, actually, we keep sneaking in and out, in and out. SS, Germans, they saw that. They had a commotion. Because in the beginning, it was one by one.

But then-- then when they find out, everybody go in. And it was a big commotion. And everybody start to try to go in. When the German find that out, they went in. Whoever was close or inside, they shot them to death right away, all of them.

And in a way, I start to feel guilty. If I wouldn't say it, maybe that wouldn't have happened. Then I realize, if I wouldn't say it, maybe some people would die anyway because they didn't have food. So either way, you don't know if you did the right thing or the wrong thing.

Well, we were marching there for about six days, or seven nights-- six-- seven nights and six days. We came-- we passed Berlin through the street-- beautiful. There was a lot of buildings that were in ruin because it was '44, or '45, in the beginning of '45-- January or February. I can't remember exactly.

It was like the Americans start to bombard or the Russians. The city was-- there were a lot of officers walking around. We were marching through the streets.

There were some German children walking with their mothers, looking at us. Then suddenly-- why, we don't know-- the children-- the mothers let the children go, and they come over and start to spit on us. And their mothers were applauding and laughing. We didn't feel like we are human.

What can you do? You're in their hands. You do what they tell you to do. And we marched. We marched. The longer we marched, the less people left. We came to camp Lieberose in [GERMAN], 2,000 or 3,000 left. In that camp, we were again in barracks. They assigned us to work.

I was assigned to work-- to work every morning, to go to march 10 kilometers. When we got there, we have to cut trees, and dig holes, like ditches-- dig ground. Because they have an overflow of potatoes, the Germans. And we had to bury them-- put the potatoes in. Put straw on top and buried it.

But we didn't have any food, and we were burying those things. But every chance we had, we put a potato in our pocket. If we had the chance, we'd go in the washroom. It was like [INAUDIBLE] outside. We ate the raw potato to keep us alive.

Because the food was very scarce-- one slice of bread a day. When you come back, you had a bowl of soup. So whatever we found, food-- what kind of food-- any-- even dirt we used to eat-- whatever you could.

But buried those potatoes, and they were watching us. Every night, going back to camp, bring your dead bodies home, who couldn't survive. And one night, I have a toothache. I came back from work, I had a terrible toothache. I went to the-- they call it the Revier, what it is like a hospital, a medical clinic.

And I said, I have a toothache. And they said, you have to go on the other side. On other side, there's a dentist, a German doctor-- a dentist. When I came to the other door, there's two soldiers waiting outside. They asked me what I wanted. I said I have a toothache. They told me to go in.

I went in. There were six men in front of me. The door was open from the office for the dentist, in a SS uniform. He's a doctor. He's the commander from the camp. He's everything.

He told-- asked that man what's wrong. He told him, I have a toothache. He said, OK. He pulled the tooth out. The man

was screaming. He said now, because you screamed, I have to pull another one. So he took-- the more he pulled, the more he screamed. By the time he was finished, that man came out without teeth.

How can anybody in the world imagine how we felt to see this horrible thing. The man came up, blood all over his face, all over his clothes. And there, the dentist comes to the next guy. And to make it short, all of them came out without teeth.

I was the last to get in. I come in. I sit on the chair. I was shaking. He looked at me, and said, which tooth hurt? I showed him. He gave me Novocaine, and he pulled my tooth out. He said, I want you-- to see you in the morning back here. Don't go to work. Tell the kapo that I said so. That's it.

I thanked him. And I said, danke schoen. And I went out. I went back. I never saw those men again, because everybody had different barracks. There were a lot of barracks, thousands of people there. I was bleeding all night.

In the morning, I got up, I told the kapo, I can't go to work. The dentist wants to see me. He said, no, you go to work. So I went to work. I was bleeding all day. I came back from work. That dentist was waiting by the gate for me.

He looked at everybody. He pointed his finger, come out. He said, I told you to see me in the morning, and not to go to work. Why did you disobey my order? I said I didn't disobey your order. I told the kapo what you told me. He told me as long as I'm with him, under his-- how you call it?

Supervision.

Yeah, under his supervision-- you do what I tell you to do. And he said, I know you want to get away from work, but it won't help you. He said, which one was it? And I pointed the finger to that kapo. And that kapo, it happened to be a German, but he was not in the army. He was a German criminal. I don't know why he was in camp. Because usually, the criminals is the prisoners, and into the concentration camps too.

He took him out. He said, did that man told you-- I was a man by then-- that I want to see him? He said, yes, but you know, they're-- all the Jews, they are liars. They want to get away from work. You don't know who to believe, who not believe. He took out his gun and shot him.

And he told all the kapos, that's a lesson. If anybody tell you, I want to see somebody, I'm the boss here, not you. You do what I tell you, or you'll end up like him.

Everyone who went in, and he took me. He said, you come with me. I was scared, but I went.

He took me in the clinic. There were laying wall to wall people, sick and starving. He called out a male nurse. We didn't have any other. Whoever said he's a doctor-- they're a doctor or nurse.

Said to give me what kind-- some injection. He gave me an injection in my thigh. After he pull out the needle, I couldn't walk. My foot was stiff.

And the doctor came in, and he said, well, now what? I said, I can't walk. He said, that son of a gun, he give you in the wrong place, the injection. And he called him over, and he shot him.

And he took me out from there. He said, I won't leave you here. They had-- in the next addition, they had another clinic that was for the German wounded on the front, for soldiers.

And he put me in a room-- white linen, nurses. I couldn't figure. Am I in a concentration camp? Am I alive? Do I dream about it?

It couldn't be. Why? It's because-- because I pray to God? If that's it-- if I pray to God, why didn't it help my parents? Other ones? Everybody's praying.

So I was there for about three days. I have good food. They did their best.

After three days, he said there's too many wounded soldiers coming in. You have to go in the other barrack, not a clinic. But I made arrangement that you will be separate from the other people.

I come in there, but what I saw there, I wish I wouldn't see it. That doctor used to come in every morning, to see the sick people. What about their treatment? Oh, everybody had a large cyst, grot, puss.

All he did is-- they were all naked. Stay in line-- he took a knife, cut, then fell down. The next one-- where's yours? On the arm-- cut it, the blood come out, the man fell down-- like a slaughter house.

Then he treat me like a human being. He treat those other people like animals in a slaughter house. How could you figure out a man like this? How could you treat one human with decency, but the others like animals? But who am I-- who am I to say it?

I was there for about two weeks, in that clinic. He didn't let me go out. In those two weeks, thousand and thousand died. And I couldn't tell nobody not to go to that clinic. I couldn't go out.

One night he came into me. He said, Carl, they're going to liquidate that camp. You go back to your barrack. In the night, some soldiers will come in. They will give a little speech. They will say, we will liquidate.

If you are unable to walk, we give you free transportation. You can volunteer. He said, but don't you volunteer. I couldn't figure why.

I went back. In the night, they came in. They had that speech. They tell everybody what happened, what going to happen. If you can't walk, volunteer. I told-- in my barracks, I told everybody, whoever I could-- [INAUDIBLE] don't volunteer. Because something is fishy going on here. And they told me not to volunteer.

Nobody in our barracks volunteered, but in other barracks, there were a lot of volunteers. They went to that clinic. In the morning, we marched out. We weren't far away, maybe one block out the gate. There, we heard machine guns going. So many machine guns we had to close our ears for the sound. Then we realized what happened. They shot them all.

And we marched to the famous camp, Mauthausen, in Austria. We came there. Our job-- they put us in barracks, in bunk beds. Our job was to carry stones, big stones, up the hill. It was a big mountain company. We carried stones up, all the way.

And when you're on the top, they threw the stones back down. You kept going down, picking up the stone, and you go up. If you can't do it, he'd just gives you a push. The SS give you a push. You go with the stone, down.

This was going on day by day. I couldn't do it anymore. In the morning, I got up, I couldn't do it. I couldn't go any more. I was very weak. And I figured, well, there's no more life. All the time in camp, the reason I survived is I was thinking about to meet somebody from my family, maybe still somebody alive. But then, when he came to Mauthausen, I figured, that's it. I can't take it.

What happened? What happened, I went to-- to the hospital. Now I know from Auschwitz, from experience, what happened to that, when you go in the hospital. I know from Lieberose what happened when you go in the hospital. But to me, it didn't make any difference anymore. A person can take so much, and that's it.

I went there. All we do is lay on the bunks. They didn't give you bread there, just a bowl of soup. To get the bowl of soup, you had to sit up in the bunk. They count, and they hold a bowl, and they give you a bowl of soup.

The first day, I got the bowl of soup. I was lying next to one guy, and then there was another guy. He was from the same city what I was, and we were talking together. In the morning, we get up, the man next to us was dead. Usually, when

you have a dead person, you threw him down on a pile, then you take him out. They buried him.

So they man to me said-- he said, don't throw him down. I said, why? He said, well, maybe we got still a chance to survive. So every time for lunchtime, you pick up that man. I was holding with the shoulder, and the other guy with his shoulder. And with the ball, we got extra bowls.

Well, that was going on for three days, till we start to smell. We threw him down. We pick up a fresh body, put them. But we survived. That must go on for about a couple of weeks. Suddenly they said, we eliminate that camp. Let's go again. We marched.

We march to another camp. That was camp Gunskirchen, in Austria. It was a forest preserve. There was barracks. They pushed us in in the barracks. That was in May of 1945. I think it was in May, the 1st or the 2nd, we came there. No bunk beds, just on the ground, laying. No place to go.

Once you get up, you have to go out to the bathroom. You come in, you don't have where to sit. I went out. That was the 3rd-- May the 4th.

When I came back, I had no place to go back. I saw big beams in the barracks. I climbed up on that beam and lay on it. That's all I remember.

The next thing I remember, I was in the hospital-- with white sheets and nurses. And I thought to myself, oh, my god, heaven is good. I'm liberated. I'm in heaven. I didn't know-- am I alive or am I dead? If I'm dead, it's nice in heaven.

So what happened? They told me. When I was laying on that beam, I fell down-- unconscious. They took me out. They put me on the pile on top of the dead bodies.

On May the 5th, the American army came in. And they start to bury those bodies. One of the soldiers saw me bleeding, being alive. They transferred me to a hospital.

I used to get-- when they transferred me, I weighed 56 pounds. You could see every bone through my skin.

I used to get-- an American doctor, a Jewish doctor, came in. And he talked to me every day. He encouraged me-- keep fighting. He encouraged me to be alive. He said, don't eat much.

They used to give me blood transfusion once a week to put me on my feet. He said, don't eat too much. He said there's a lot of people, prisoners from the concentration camp, who died after the war. They saw food. They ate and ate. They became sick with diarrhea. We couldn't help them.

You got a chance. You're young. I'm going to help you as much as I can. But do whatever we tell you.

So after six weeks being in the hospital, they took me down from bed to teach me how to walk. I couldn't walk anymore. Everything was frozen.

I was glad when I walked out, I saw so many people still alive. And then I start to-- then I had another task-- find my sisters, my brother. Are they alive or not?

I was traveling-- first they put us in a DP camp. They gave us clothes when we were in DP camp. And I was traveling from camp to camp, looking for my relatives. While other people went back to Poland, I didn't want to go back. I know what we've been through. But from camp to camp.

In one camp, I found a girl. She know my sister. And when I asked her what happened, she didn't want to say. She said, well, I can't tell you, and she walked away. I realized then something terrible happened, but I didn't give up. I kept looking for them. I didn't find them.

Then by 1949, I married in Austria. I was in DP-- I was liberated in Austria. And I was in DP camp in Austria. I married my wife. Before I marry her, I was by myself. Nobody to tell me from right to wrong. I start to drink. I didn't care.

But in 1949, I married my wife. She came from Russia. She was [NON-ENGLISH]. The German delivered them to Russia. She survived with the family and came to Austria after the war. And I met her there in camp. And I married her in '49.

I was-- in '49, I was sick [INAUDIBLE]. My wife was pregnant. She was six months pregnant.

I went to the hospital, and the doctor said that's from drinking. You need to stop drinking or you die. Well, I went through so much in the camp during the war, and then so much hell too,

I said, well, why not? It's easy to stop drinking. I have now a new family, I will have. I stopped drinking. I never drink since. I survived.

My son was born in 1950. And we start to make arrangement to come to United States. And in 1951, I came, in January, to the United States of America, to a free country, freedom of speech, freedom of religion.

You can talk to people. You can ask him. You can agree with him. You can disagree with him. Nobody can put you in jail for it.

In the beginning, I was afraid of a policeman. But America helped me. I overcame this. Because I see freedom.

I remember the first election they had. I was wondering-- I never saw elections. And they said it's free. If you don't like the politician, you don't have to vote for it. It's a choice. They may fight each other to get the job, but it's up to the people to vote for them, for the best person.

And I appreciate--

Tell us when you met your wife, Carl.

I met my wife in 1949. She came from-- she was in Russia during the war. Afterward, I went to Poland. From Poland, I went to Austria. When all the Jews who ran away from Poland, she came with her father and two brothers to Austria. As a matter of fact, we used to live there, in Austria, and prepare the camps for the Jewish people who come from Russia.

But that was in 1949. And we had some in our camp-- that was in Austria-- Linz, Ebelsberg. We had some dance going on there every Saturday.

Are these DP camps?

Yeah, DP camp. So there I met her at the dance party. Yeah, at the dance party, she came with a few friends of mine, what they live in the same camp. And we get to know each other. And I started to date her. And by 1949, I married her.

I want to clarify that those are displaced persons camp.

Displaced persons camp, yeah.

How long were you in the camp?

I was from '45 till '51. First I was in a different camp, in Bad Ischl, in Austria. Then they transfer us. People start to emigrate to America, to Australia, to Israel. So they liquidate that camp and push everybody together in one camp, from all over. And I was there till '51. I applied for papers to United States.

Well, I didn't have any problem to get it here, but my wife, because she was from Russia-- she came from Russia. So the

American government had to investigate all the things to make sure they're not communists. So that's why it took us longer.

But we came here in-- in January 26th, 1951, I came the United State with a boat, the General Langfitt. I still remember that.

And in the United States, I-- first, when we came, we used to move in a apartment with a family, through the Jewish Federation. They gave us a bedroom. I had a son already. He was born in Austria, in 1950, July the 7th, 1950. When we came-- when we came here, he was six months old.

And we lived in their bedroom for a while till we found an apartment. After I found an apartment, a small apartment, I started to-- the Jews from the service send me-- I asked for-- I didn't want any charity. I asked for work.

So they gave me a few jobs to go, a few places. And I went to the first job, the Continental Can Company. And I liked it. And I start to work. And I work for two or three years there.

And this was in what city?

In Chicago. In 1954, we had another child, a daughter born. Her name is Helen. My son's name is Gary. And we-- while I was working, my wife raised the kids. It wasn't an easy job, but she did a very good job on it.

My son is in Chicago still. He lives in Elk Grove Village now. But he's a business-- yeah, he went to college. And he had very good grades. He became-- graduated with a bachelor's degree in education.

His first job was in Batavia, Illinois. He started to teach there, in the fifth grade. I don't remember exactly.

But he keep going back to college, get more degree, more degrees. And he got a master's degree in education. He started to go back in night school again-- DeKalb, Northern University of Illinois. He kept going back there.

He went back to get a degree in business management, in administration. He got a master's degree in this. Then he-- they asked him if he would like to be a business manager in Chicago, in a private high school. They call it Gordon Tech. He had an interview there, and they accepted him. And he worked there like 10 years, in that high school, as business manager.

Then about-- after 10 years, he went back. They call him. There was opening at Park Ridge, Illinois, District 64. They needed a business manager. That's a public school. And he's now the business manager there, at Park Ridge, District 64, in Illinois.

And your daughter.

My daughter is married. My son is married too. He had two sons. One, his name is Adam and Andrew. And my daughter, she was born in 1954, in the United States.

She went to school. She graduated. She got married. And her husband is a salesman, a shoe salesman. They make very nice living. They got their own homes, both of them.

And she had a son. His name is Ryan. He's now nine years old. My wife, most of the time raised this kid. When we were in Chicago, he was living more in our house than in their house.

He still calls us every week to see how we're doing. And he comes to visit us every week. He has a summer vacation and winter vacation.

So do the other grandchildren too. Every time they have a chance, my son come over with his wife. We see them. We go to Chicago to see them So we still keep close together. I enjoy them.

And you came to Phoenix in what year?

In 1984, I came to Phoenix. Because they closed-- the company closed the plant in Chicago. They moved to Omaha. So it was hard for me to get a job. It was a recession.

So I took the pension from the company, and I sold my house. We came to Phoenix because of health reason, osteoarthritis. I couldn't take the cold over there anymore, the snow shoveling mostly.

So I came in '84 to Phoenix. And it's very nice here. I enjoy the life here. I got involved with the Holocaust Survivors Association. Me and Magda do the interviews. She's the interviewer. I'm the cameraman. And we try our best to keep that association together.

And to keep-- to disseminate the information that the Holocaust survivors went through.

That's right. I keep going to schools. I speak about the Holocaust survivors. Every time they call me. They send me letters. They send me your letters, say thank you. They said otherwise they wouldn't know really what had been done. They read books, but it's not like in person, if a person stay and talk to them. So I'm happy to do it.

Really, after I come home from school speaking engagements, I'm sick. Just because everything comes back to you. But somebody has to do it. We have a lot of survivors here. Not every one-- they would do it, but not everyone got the heart or the guts. Because it's painful to talk about it.

By the way, I forgot to mention, her name is Ruth. And she was born Ruth Jalowiec. And she came here with her father and two brothers. Her father passed away, I think in '71.

Thank you very much, Carl.

You're welcome.

And your story will serve very well for information.

Thank you.