

Good morning. And we're very happy that you decided to tell us your history. If you would, please, tell us where you were-- first, give us your name, the way you were called in Poland, and the way you are called presently.

My name is Franya Burzstyn. I'm born in Poland, in the capital city in Warsaw.

And they call you now in English?

In English, they call me Frieda Radasky by marriage.

By marriage. And your maiden name--

Burzstyn.

--was Burzstyn.

Frieda, so you were born in Poland in what year in Warsaw? What year?

1918.

Can you give us the day also?

April 15.

April 15. Did you have any sisters and brothers in your family?

All my family from eight children.

Do you remember their names?

Yes. Please, give us their names.

Can I speak in English to tell you?

Of course.

Maurice, Louis, Henryk, Lazar, and the oldest was a sister, Esther. And then come all the boys, Louis, and Motel, Sarah, and Frieda. Think I didn't skip. I have all the eight children.

What about your parents' name? relax

My parents my father's name was Shmuel David Burzstyn. My mother's maiden name was Ishah Galina and by marriage Burzstyn.

Were your grandparents-- do you recall your grandparents?

I didn't hardly know my grandparents. But they used to live in the country in Poland.

I see.

And one was Horowitz. And the other was Galina.

Tell us, Frieda, what did your father do for a livelihood? What kind of business or what kind of job?

My father? My father has a bakery.

Bakery.

Yes. And while in Poland, the children, the boys helped him in the bakery. And my mother was a housewife.

And what kind of school did you go to?

Public school.

Polish, Polish public school?

Yes. Yes.

Did you also have some Hebrew or Yiddish training?

Yes. Well, I learn Yiddish. I write down good Yiddish. And I speak Yiddish.

In public school, did you mingle with non-Jewish people as well?

Yes.

Yes?

In public school was non-Jewish and Jewish.

Did you have any non-Jewish friends?

Not special.

Not special.

No.

Did you have a comfortable life? Your father earned a nice living as far as you remember?

Yes, well, in Poland, not too much a luxury. But we had a nice living, went to school. I have girlfriends-- not when I was young, not boyfriends, only girls. And it came a Saturday, we was free, we went to the park. And I have a-- excuse me-- I have a lot of family in Warsaw. My mother have a brother who was in the fur business, which very popular.

This was an uncle to you?

My uncle, yes.

What was his name?

Galina.

Galina.

That's my mother's brother.

Yeah.

And the name from the company was Centrala Futer, the Center Fur Business.

Fur business?

Yes.

Your lifestyle was comfortable. As a child, did you feel that you were different?

No.

No.

No, no.

You had it comfortable.

We didn't think about somebody is rich or somebody is poor it didn't come in mind just to talk about that, just a comfortable one.

And you had a close family life?

Yes. When I was a teenager on a Saturday night, we went to the show.

Wonderful.

Yes.

Of all your sisters and brothers, are there many surviving today? Or did some of them perish during the war?

They all perished. The only one-- I have only one brother.

One brother.

Yes.

Where is he now?

In New Orleans.

New Orleans.

Yes, the old man, he is sick and on the wheelchair. But he is the oldest, what is left from the family. Yeah.

Frieda, would you-- can you tell me when and how you felt that the war was coming and things were changing in your life?

Well, we figured this in 1939. 1939 started. But we didn't thought about it's going to be so bad, that people were going to go like this. In the 1939, it started. We knew that's something coming up, especially in the capital city of Warsaw. The German soldiers started coming. They took bombs. They started with the bombs.

And we was hiding in the cellars. And we didn't understand. And then they make rules, you have to give up the jewelry. You have to give up the furs if you have something. You have to give up. And this was a place what you have to bring them. And if you don't bring them, if you hide them, you can be sometimes killed too if they find by you a fur coat. This was it there.

So this was only to the Jewish population?

Huh?

Only the Jewish people had to?

Yes, yes.

Had to give up jewelry and whatnot.

Yes. They have to give up everything, yes.

How old were you in '39 about? You were a teenager?

I was a teenager. And we didn't thought it so-- were going to be so bad. You give up the furs, you give up the furs. You don't have. But it started to be a hunger, no food. You have to stay in the line for food, for bread, for coals because Poland is cold like in New York cold. You need coal to heat up. Well, everything was in coupons. And with the coupons, you have to stay in the line. You get out 4 o'clock in the morning to stay in the line to get something. Yeah.

But still, you were still in your own home?

I was in my home, yeah, because then was just now in the beginning demolish. But the bombs started to-- it was-- really, the bombs was very scary because we knew-- we were so educated that we knew what kind of bomb come on. As bomb was go in the ground or a bomb was fire, we were so educated with the bombs because we were scared. And you don't know where to hide there. If it's a fire bomb, can be a fire. But if it's a bomb was going to the ground, you stay in the ground, you lost too.

So in the day, you can all go out in the street. Because Warsaw was a big town, the capital. You could go out and see how the people coming out, a hunger. You didn't have a bread. You have this-- whatever you want, you have to stay in the line. You have coupons, you have to stay in the line. It was not so easy.

And later on, started to-- the German people tell to come out in the street. Come out. And you see, they took you to the Umschlagplatz. The Umschlagplatz was the place where they going to the gas chambers. So you started to hide. I was hiding in the cellar. But in the cellar is another problem. You stay a week, two weeks, your eyes getting weak. You cannot see. So either way, you have to come out from the cellar either. So what's going to be, going to be. So they catch you, they catch you. Because either way, it was bad.

So we went out from the cellar on the-- my street where I used to live. And we see different people. They catch you, they catch you. You got a lot of dead people in the street too. It was hunger, don't have where to go for bread. You stay in the line how long you can stay in the line. You had to have coupons too. So either way, it was a bad situation.

So at one time, went out from the cellar because I saw-- I couldn't see anymore. I have a blind my eyes. So this is the way they catch me. They catch me. And they took me-- the German people took me to the-- not to the wagons first. They took me to the-- on a-- was a place, took me over there at a coal mine.

In Warsaw-- under Warsaw was a coal mine so we was a few girls working the coal mine. I was working the kitchen five girls. And the mens was working the coal mine. We was over there a few weeks. We was over there. Then they transferred us in jail in Warsaw. The name from the jail was Polish Pawiak. We was in jail, the girls separate. And the mens was in jail.

After I was in jail a few weeks, we didn't know what is do in jail or what every day the German coming in and count us up or if we still alive. Or if you don't still alive, if you cannot stay, they take you out. They're going to kill you.

So we was a few weeks over there in jail in Pawiak. You remember, this is the Polish name, Pawiak. After they took it out from the Pawiak, one day, the German came. They took it out from the Pawiak. And we was walking to the Umschlagplatz. Umschlagplatz is the name where the wagons store. And they send you to Treblinka.

You already knew about Treblinka then?

Yeah, yeah, because people saw it was young boys, they went to the German. They want to find it out. They was-- they are telling that they're Polish people because the life was either way bad. You're going to go later or you're going to go earlier. So that's why a lot of people find it out. And they look it out. And then later, we find it out that we go to the Umschlagplatz, they send you that or the camp. I was in-- I was in jail. And after the jail and the Umschlagplatz, they took us to Majdanek. Majdanek was a very bad camp.

Majdanek, same thing-- you'd get a piece of bread in the morning. You go out. And then a little water and that's the way it is. You always want to-- the more you got hungry, the more you want to live. It's a mine in the head. No, I want to live because when they took us to the Umschlagplatz, in the trains, I used to have a cousin. He used to work over there in the train station. He told me, well, maybe you want to go out in the trains. I'm going to catch you. And maybe you stay with me.

I say, no, I was with five girls together from Warsaw. And we was always together, in the jail too. I say, no, even I'm not going to go. I'm going with these two girl. And finally, I went with the train to Majdanek. In Majdanek is-- was working too. And every time, you scared.

Excuse me, Frieda. They-- in Majdanek, did they shave your hair?

Oh, no. If you was-- if you have clean hair, they did let you. If you don't have it, they cut it off the whole head. But I was lucky. I-- yes.

And you were able to wear the clothes you had on in Majdanek?

No. They give you a dress, a long dress. I was lucky, I got a long dress. So I cut it off the dress. It made me to sleep and not to have dirty hair. Everything-- it so was complicated. You couldn't think about something else. You couldn't think about eating. You was thinking, how is going to be? How long I'm going to be over there? And then in Majdanek, they-- I was a long time too.

And you were together with the five girls, always together?

Yeah. Then later on, we split, yes. But more-- in Majdanek, I was with the five girls. They all was from Warsaw. So if you have something, a friend what they know you from Warsaw-- and a lot of boys came to Majdanek before they opened the Majdanek. And they was working over there.

So some of it-- I got them sometimes a friend. He told me, oh, I know you. You from the Mila Street. I say, yes. Then he told me this, a boyfriend, a friend from my house is over there, a big shot in the barracks. So I told him, go ask-- go tell him this, the baker's daughter is over there. So I know he going to send me something.

So the other boys said, but I know you-- I'm not sure if I can give it to you the bread. He said, every day I'm coming with the soup for us. If I can, I'm going to have a piece of bread for you. And that's the way we fight our life.

And many time, with the five girls that was in Majdanek, they used to tell us, Frieda, you have somebody there. You get somebody. So many-- because my dad was a baker, so he was very popular. So after that, we went another camp. From Majdanek, they sent us to Gross-Rosen. In Gross-Rosen was the same problem. You have to go work. You don't have to eat. If you catch something, a piece of bread, you're lucky.

In Majdanek, did you work?

In Majdanek?

Yeah.

We went out to work.

What kind of work?

Bricks-- to carry bricks. They wanted from one side to the other ones. They didn't have it like a factory or something. They didn't have that. But sometimes, we was working. At one times, I was working from-- making from straw slippers for the hospitals. So if they'd ask you, who wants to work? You always pick up a hand.

You don't want to stay in the barracks because the barracks-- wherever-- in which camp you stay, in the barracks is no good to stay because there's a selection. So it's better you want to-- you go to work. So I used to work slippers making from straw for the hospital. And that's the way I-- we went from one barrack to another.

And then in 1945, I survived in a little town. The same thing, I have to tell you, when I was working in Türkheim. It's in-- by abteilung from the big-- those-- in Türkheim, I was working same thing on the outside by rich people. They have a lot of whole different potatoes. So I was working.

In Türkheim, we was again five girls. Two girls was working here in Türkheim. And the other two girls went a little farther in a little town. Well, that's the way take. And then after Türkheim, then I was in Feldafing by Buchloe. But every time, they transfers from one place to the other. They didn't let us stay too long till in '45 I survived in Türkheim.

In April, the American comings. And they started to talk English. We couldn't talk English. This was another problem. So we talked with the hand or whatever, with the mouth, whatever you can do it, you can talk. So I survived in Türkheim. And I was living over there. And then my husband was in Feldafing. This is-- Türkheim is by Feldafing. It's a small town. But it still belong to Feldafing, Türkheim.

It's like a suburb.

That's right. So in Feldafing, my husband was in-- I was living Türkheim because by rich people, I have a little room. Me and my girl got one room. And all of a sudden, I'm lay down a bed. I said, Sophie, look at that. We have a bed. We really-- it was a prize. And the bomb-- when they took us in, the bombs was flying back and forth. And back and forth, the bombs were flying. I hear the bombs. I said, uh oh, maybe the American coming in.

And sure enough, I-- from the upstairs to go in the cellar, the people tell us to bring down the milk and the bread. There was-- they told us-- the army-- they didn't say American-- the army coming in. They used that. So we was walking back and forth.

And many times, I went into the cellar and got-- have a drink milk. I never going to forget milk in my life. I didn't sip it so many years. And in the morning, the American came in. They was bomb the whole night. And we was walking back and forth to bring things, me and myself. And the other two girls was by another house living.

Who was this Sophie, a friend?

Huh?

Who was Sophie, a friend?

A friend?

Yeah, you said you and--

Sophie?

Yeah.

Sophie is a friend. She's a girlfriend, too, from Poland, from Warsaw. We were all all in the camps together.

And she's from Warsaw. But she is now in Brazil, see. Yeah. She used to have a brother in Sao Paulo. So she was-- but I don't know if she's still alive.

Do you correspond with her?

Yes, I used to, but not lately because I think she passed away. And her husband was [INAUDIBLE]. in Warsaw. So let me turn back where-- when I was the American came on in. Didn't know what to do, where to go, what I have to do. But with talking with the mouth, not was enough. But in German, we could talk a little bit.

In English, it was a foreign language. In Poland, you didn't talk English. You didn't-- schools-- only they teach you Polish. In the high school, they teach you German or French, but not English. But that's the way we survive, talking by hand, by mouth, by hand. That's the way we survived. And then after the-- in April--

Did the Americans treat you nice? The American soldiers, were they nice?

Yes, yes, yes.

Yes. Excuse me so, Frieda. I want to see if you're-- you're doing fine.

OK?

Yeah.

So and then American came in. First of all, they give us coupons. We went to buy some bread. And I was living by-- in a little town. So it was eggs a lot and the milk, what I told you-- and back and forth when I bring this. I was-- milk in my-- for so many years, I didn't see nothing. And I used to be a stout girl. But later on, I was skinny. I didn't have what to eat during the war. And that's the way we survived.

And in 1945, one of my girlfriend went to-- looking for her sister, was Sophie looking for her. Oh, said, maybe I'll find her. So she went to Feldafing. It's by Munich, a big-- a lager, or a concentration camp was.

And my-- and I told her myself, Sophie, I don't want to go because I know my sister told me-- a friend told me, oh, I saw your sister in Umschlagplatz to go into the wagon. And she didn't want to give up the baby. So they killed her in Majdanek. She couldn't-- she know her husband went to-- and she had the baby. So she got killed because she didn't want to give away the baby. And well, a friend of hers saw them. I saw your sister.

But unfortunately, no mother wants to give up her child.

That's right. When I was-- before I went to the Kon-lager my mother told me that-- she wrapped me the arms. And she said, go, Frieda, help yourself. I cannot do nothing for you anymore.

When was the last time you were together with your family and your mother?

Only during the war in the ghetto.

Yeah, when you were in the basements in the--

In the basement, yes. In the basement. So in the morning, we came out a little bit. So my mother was in the-- we were the first floor-- this-- not the basement, first floor. My mother, she used to say-- she saw how it's going on, she said, go help yourself. She grabbed me like that, she said.

And you mentioned ghetto. So was-- were you in the Warsaw ghetto too?

Yeah.

Before they took you to Majdanek, you were in the Warsaw ghetto?

Sure, sure, in the Warsaw ghetto. Where else I can be?

You mentioned the name of your street was--

From what?

The name of your street-- your street, what was the name of your street?

Of what?

Where you lived.

Yeah, Mila.

Mila?

Mila. Mila, oh--

Because there was a book, written--

Mila?

--Mila 8.

No, not-- Mila 8 was a book somebody wrote. But I was living Mila 47.

47.

A block away. It was a big block.

So was your street in the ghetto? Or did they take you from your home to the ghetto?

What? From the home? We didn't-- we were scared to be in the home because the bombs.

Yeah. But was Mila-- what was it, 40 or whatever your number-- was that a part of the ghetto?

No, it's all, sure, a part-- Mila and Zamenhof and-- around, all this was the ghetto. Yes. Yes.

So how long do you think it was before they took you to Buchenwald?

No, I was in Majdanek.

Oh, in Majdanek.

In Majdanek-- not too long because like I told you, I couldn't stay anymore in the cellar because my eyes getting blind.

You sit in the cellar-- we're not talking about food. So I have to come out. So where you have to go? I used to have-- my sister was a very good off too in the ghetto. She was very educated. And she was working in the army of the Gesia Street. Gesia was a Platz what the soldiers used to be over there, the Polish soldiers. But the German soldiers took it over.

And she was already a educated girl. She was working over there. And she told me, well, maybe someday, I'm going to bring you over there. But she couldn't do that, not to go out whenever she want. And I have to go out in the street because I saw how I'm getting blind. That's the way they catch me. And they took me to



the Umschlagplatz.

What was your sister-- she was teaching? Or--

Huh?

Was your sister a teacher? What was she doing?

My sister was married. And she had one little boy, four years old boy.

You mentioned you were working with potatoes in-- where was it, Turken or something?

Where?

In one of the camps, you were working--

Oh, when I was in Praga, when the soldiers-- they took me for the calling-- coal mine. So the mess was working the coal mines. And we was-- the five girls what was together, we was working the kitchen, washing dishes.

So were you able to get a little food there?

Soup?

A little extra soup or something.

Sometimes, yes.

Yeah. Yeah, that helped. It helped.

It helped. See, in Majdanek, the same thing. I have so many friends from Warsaw. And mostly, Majdanek, the first what they catch, the German catch, was from Warsaw. So like I told you, I used to have a lot of friends. They knew me. I didn't-- some of them, I didn't know them. But they knew me, young girl.

So they used to say, oh, you you're the baker's daughter. Oh, and I have a friend. He know you very good. So I want a piece of bread. I tell him, yeah, tell him that's the baker's daughter from second yard here. So bread was a life.

And when we was sharing the bread with the girls, when they give us in the morning to eat before we went out to work, so we was-- got a bread. We share it exactly the pieces of bread-- not your big-- because a bigger piece, another small one, with a piece of paper was shared. Because this was life, life and death.

So in 1945, when the Americans liberated you, so what did you do? You met your husband right away in--

1945? In Germany, you mean?

Yeah.

He was in another concentration about 45 miles away from my camp. So my girlfriend, like I told you, she was in Brazil, she said, I want to go looking for my sister. So she went in to Feldafing to looking for her sister. And she met my husband. And she said, I'm from Warsaw. And he said, I'm from Warsaw too.

And he said-- and my girlfriend said, ooh, my girlfriend is from Warsaw. You've been the fur business. My girlfriend is with uncles in the fur business too in Warsaw. They have a big apartment store, like here Broadway.

So he said, well, I think I used to deal with his uncle and his cousin. He said, my husband, well, I'm going to

go and see her. And maybe she know about my family. And he came to Türkheim, where I used to survive. And he asked me who I am. And I told him. And he say, well, I knew your uncle. I knew you-- I used to buy fur skins from his-- from your cousins. But I say, I don't know your family.

So that's the way we met. And he always got a joke of that. I was staying upstairs. And he came with my girlfriend. And he said, Frieda, Frieda, come down. I said, no, I'm not coming down. Not going to go down, I don't know the man. I'm not going, so help me God. I said, no. So I said, come upstairs, Sophie. So he came with sofa-- Sophie and him came to the room. And that's the way we met each other. And he saw. He told me, I know your family. I used to do business.

So did you get married soon?

Yes, yes. I got married I have a nice wedding with-- really.

There in Türkheim?

In Türkheim, yes. Yeah. You know why? Because when-- then later, through the American soldiers, I used to find my brothers, you see. So I used to tell the American soldiers that I have a brother. But I didn't-- I was from the youngest children. I didn't remember. The oldest sister used to have to correspond then to write to everyone. But we didn't know. I didn't know then. But that's the way we described each other.

And my husband don't have no family. He's the only one survivor. I used to have it brother, sister with this. And I used to have another brother too. But he died. But only I have a oldest brother left here. He's on the beach here. But that's the way we struggled. And we got a very beautiful wedding. One of my friend and one of his friend, he lives in New York today, Warsaw too.

Because when you from the capital city, if you see somebody is from Warsaw, you mean, there's a family. These little towns, they used to have it, they went to the camps, they used to have friends. But from Warsaw is not too many left because the whole fight was in Warsaw. So when you met from Warsaw, you think that's a brother or sister, you see.

That's-- until now, I have a friend in New York. He's from the fur business too. He knew my husband since little boy. And then we met each other. And then I have a friend in Milwaukee from Warsaw too. He used to live too closer. So if you have a Warsaw friend, you think it's a family. And that's the way we are together too.

And as a matter of fact, four weeks ago, I think, my friend-- his friend-- Sam's friend, my husband's friend from Warsaw came from Milwaukee, came with his wife. So that's the family. If you see something Warsaw, you think that's, yes, your brother, your cousin. That's the way we-- I have a few Warsaw friend, me and my husband.

And we have a very beautiful wedding, a religious wedding, and everything. And we went to a bakery. We bake some cakes and challah. And one of my friend from New York, he's a very rich man, he went to the [? continent ?] to buy fish and to make a wedding. So everybody chipped in. But he was very close with my husband. He is in New York but his wife passed away. But he's single. But he lives in New York.

So how long did you stay in Türkheim after you were married?

After I met till I got the papers from my brother.

Oh, he was here in the United States already, your brother?

Yeah, I told you, my brother was a long time.

Before the war?

Before the war. Oh. So he sent you papers?

Yeah, yeah. As a matter of fact, two brothers sent me papers-- one from Texas and one from New Orleans.

And also for your husband?

Yeah. I wrote when I-- through a American soldier, I didn't remember the exact-- I knew they lived in Pascagoula, Mississippi and New Orleans. I didn't know exactly--

The address.

--the address, yeah.

And they helped you find the--

Yeah. I give them the name now. My brother changed his. Instead Burzstyn, English, Bernstein. So I know Maurice Bernstein and Louis Bernstein. And my brother, Louis Bernstein was in the army, in the American Army too. Yes. Yes. Yes. But so I knew these two brothers in the United States. And I have a uncle, the uncle what bring my brothers here. And my uncle made me papers too to come. And the American soldier find us.

Isn't that wonderful?

One day, I got a letter from my uncle because my uncle was in the country-- my brothers I have so many years was before the war. So he wrote me a letter, dear niece, I talked to a soldier. And a soldier find out that you are alive. Yeah.

It's a miracle that--

Absolutely right.

--yeah, that you could find these people.

My husband have nobody. He's by himself, of course, yes. But I used to have a lot of family in the United States. My father's two brothers-- but one passed away. And the other was when I was liberated, the American soldiers find my uncle. And my uncle gave me the address from my two brothers. One was in Texas. And my other brother was always live in New Orleans. He's a old man now. I didn't hardly knew him. He's from the first oldest. And I'm from the youngest.

Yeah. So it's a big age difference.

Eight children, you know.

I forgot, I think, to put in my sister's name, Esther, too.

Esther, yes.

Yeah. Anyway, you get excited. So sometimes it slip you out.

So from Turken-- so you left from Türkheim.

Straight to United State.

And did you have to go-- did you come by ship?

By ship.

By ship.

They sent me papers-- by ship to New York, yes.

From New York-- to New York?

To New York, from New York to United States.

And where did you leave? Where did you take the ship? What city?

In New York, I don't know the city.

No, no, no, but in Europe.

The name, I can tell you.

In Europe, you had to go to a--

No, with the train, we went to the ship with the train. And then I can tell you the name from the ship-- General Hersey. Yes, General Hersey ship.

That's wonderful.

Yes, yes.

So you arrived in New York. Did your brother or somebody wait for you?

Yes. And then from New York, we come straight to New Orleans.

To New Orleans.

Then I have another brother in Texas. He wants me to come too. He say, no. He was living in a smaller town. And my brother say-- Maurice, the oldest-- New Orleans is a big town. And your husband is a furrier. You can make a nice living here. So we decided to be in New Orleans. Because I have first papers to go to Longview, Texas, to the other brother. So that's the way. My two brothers decided, we were going to stay. And now, we stay in New Orleans.

And you like New Orleans.

Yes, yes. And I have two children.

Two children. And their names?

The names-- my David was born in Germany, David. When he was a year--

Still in Turken?

Türkheim, that's right. David was born in Türkheim. And after a year, in 1948-- David was born in 1948. And we came here in 1949. David was a year old when we came here with a baby. And I told-- I wrote to my brothers. I told them, we married. And I have a baby. So David was a year old.

And David is-- I have to tell you about my children. It's unbelievable. They knew all about us how we survived and how was this. And this, in my mind, in my husband's mind, and my-- was that they have so much education, my children, without the money. Because I was poor.

But we was open to our children. Some people didn't want to talk to the children about what they have at that time. We was open to our children. We told them how it was in the camps and how we survived everything.

So this-- my David become a lawyer. He was working New Orleans. And then later on, he married. So he moved to Kansas City. But he started was in New Orleans, went to Loyola University. Yes. And he was top 10 graduate in the Loyola school-- law school.

And in our mind was that they know about our past life, how we survived. And after four years, I have my daughter, Toby. Toby was a wonderful child. Toby educated-- one of 1,000 Kennedys, so much educated. Same thing, we was poor. I have to tell them the story how it was. Toby went to high school.

Later on, she went to college. College, she decided she wanted to go to Texas-- Austin, Texas. She went in Austin, Texas. In the meantime, she was working for our-- in New Orleans for our governors-- Senate-- Lindy Boggs. Lindy Boggs, she was the warden in Washington.

After she finished college, she got-- Lindy Boggs-- a job, Congresswoman in New Orleans. The Congresswoman from New Orleans, she took-- she said, Toby, you going with me to Washington. My little girl was working Washington by Lindy Boggs.

In everything, she was very educated and very good. And she wants to show that she did something for the parents. David is a lawyer. She want to show that she wants to do a lot for the parents. So she was working, went in the bus a little while. And then she went working to the capital city in the White House, my little girl.

Wow.

She was working Secretary of State, the HUD, was Moon Landrieu from New Orleans. And then she was still by Lindy Boggs. And for after Lindy Boggs, she went to working with Moon Landrieu, Secretary of State from the HUD. And my little girl got two secretaries. And she was working till she got married. Yes. And even now, she's still in touch with Lindy Boggs. A few weeks ago, she went to Washington. She went to the office to see all the employment.

And in the meantime, when she was over there in Washington, she worked in the Capitol. Every day-- she-- my little girl got two secretaries. Every day, she was to the Capitol, make notes. She was-- she got to save call for Moon Landrieu. Moon Landrieu was Secretary in the HUD. It was the beginning years what the HUD started to working.

In the meantime, in Washington, she met her husband. She met-- he was in law-- in medical school. And she was working in the Capitol. So one day, she came. And she called me from Washington. She used to have a bachelor. Every time, every day, 9:00 in the morning, I have a phone. Mama, guess what? I talked to this and this man. Mama, guess what? She met so many high official people she met over there in the capital.

So one day, she called me up. Mama? What's the matter, Toby? Everything all right? Yes. I met a Jewish boy. And he wants me to go-- she went to-- in February to the capital city. And this was in March/April for the Passover holiday.

She said, I met a nice Jewish boy. He looks nice. I said, how he look, Toby? He looks very nice. But he wants me to come for the Passover Seder for the holidays to his parents. Said, where his parents live? He said, in New York. I said Toby, New York? Says, no, New York from Washington, every two hours, you have a plane to go. I said, well, I don't know what to tell you to. You have to go.

Said, he said, he's-- her husband's a nice boy. And I think, if they say for the holidays, for Passover, I want to-- I like to go. But I want to have your permission. I say, OK. If you think he is all right, go ahead. And that's the way they started.

And they was very pleased when Toby knew a lot of Hebrew. She's educated-- Polish, and Yiddish, and Hebrew. And at the Seder, she was sitting and reading the Hebrew book like a young man. And they was so surprised. And they like this. And that's the way they started. And they got married.

They lived in Washington a little while. Then he became a doctor. He was in the medical school. They moved after he became a-- they moved to Phoenix. And that's the story of my good children. And my son lives in Kansas City in Kansas. My son got one boy. The boy is going to be 12 years in August. We're going to have his confirmation.

And he is a lawyer?

Yes, he's a lawyer. Over there, he's with his parents-- he's OK, very nice. Very nice. My son is, I'm telling, you unbelievable. Every-- if he call me, and I do something in the kitchen, he talk to my husband, he can say, Daddy, can you do me a favor? Say, what? Kiss Mommy for Daddy because she's busy. They're very good. And this one too-- Mama, I love you. Mama, I love you. Everything, she want to do for us.

Tell me, your husband was a furrier in New Orleans? That's how he made a living?

Yes, yes, yes, yes.

He had his own business?

They had one business. It's not so quick.

Not so quick.

He used to go and work for somebody. In the meantime, I saw some people-- I advertised my husband as a furrier. He was working at the beginning of three jobs-- one job in the day, one job in the evening, and one job late at night. And I saw some people what they know me, oh, my husband a furrier. Yeah?

Well, he is a greener. So they gave him work. They know they're going to be cheaper than when they go in a store. That's the way. And he did it nicely. He was working for a big jobs. He's a good furrier.

Because in Europe, it's different, a tailor, a furrier. A tailor and a furrier her, you go in a factory, one work the sleeves, one make the front, one the back. In Europe, is different. You have to know from A to Z. You have to know how to put it and measure that. And he was a furrier like this. He know from A to Z. And I was in the house.

Well, we used to have a business too for 22 years. I was helping my husband in business till my children growing up and they were on their own. So we closed the business.

Oh, so furs, he was--

No, not furs. It was a dry goods-- clothing, yeah. And furs, he used to have in the side, he make. We was poorer than nothing. He used to work at night. And later on, he was one of the biggest fur stores in New Orleans. He used to give-- they begged him to give him a break. He said, you know-- and that's the way. We raised the children in a nice way. They didn't give him trouble, nothing.

Is there a Jewish neighborhood in New Orleans, do you know?

Nothing special, no. No. No. There used to be one. No, we lived in-- in a neighborhood-- no, no, no. No, nothing special, no.

Of course, you see your brother a lot, don't you?

Yeah. I didn't even know my brother was-- I was on the last one, the seventh. And he was in the second in the eight children.

Do you live far away from him now?

No. He used to live-- I used to live in New Orleans. Later on, they built suburban sections. And I was first in

New Orleans. And then we sold the house and went to a suburban section.

I see.

Yeah. And my brother was in a condominium what special for older people, but private. You buy a condominium it's not a--

Is his wife still alive?

Yes. His wife take care, yes, yes.

How often do you come to Phoenix?

How often? About three times a year-- twice or three times. This time, it was very late because we couldn't do it so quick. So yeah.

Well, you have a wonderful family.

Thank you. Yes. And this is always in my mind, my family, when I wake up. And sometimes, I go to bed, I'm thinking about how was when we came, and how my children give us happiness. And my David was on a scholarship. I didn't have money. To go to Loyola University, he was on a scholarship.

Yeah. That's wonderful.

Yeah, to make some money, it's nice. It's very comfortable, but it takes time when you are a newcomer in that country.

Did you have to go to school to learn English?

Oh, yes. I have to make my citizenship after five year-- to the minute and to the day, I make it. We make it, yes. Oh, yeah, you have to be a citizen. You don't want to be just a-- if you're not a citizen, they can do anything what they want. They can even let you out on the country like this. Exactly to five, I was in the newspaper with a picture from me and from my mom-- from my husband that we--

You made US--

--citizenship.

--citizenship.

Yes. Yes.

This is a wonderful country.

This is the best-- no, my husband always say, this is God's country. God give us this.

That's right.

Yes. It's a wonderful country. And we live together, happiness, and the children give us happiness. But they raised-- I raised them in a nice town. Didn't have it, money, they knew, the life has to go. We was open to them. They know our background from A to Z. We was this type that we have to tell the children that. Some of them, oh, the children going to be scared. Not us, we have to tell them. Even now, when my daughter, she come-- she always got a question, how it was this, or how was that. And we tell her, even now.

That's good.

Yes.

That's very good.

Yes, and my David too, my two childrens are all lovely children. And so is my granddaughter.

And how many grandchildren do you have?

Four.

Four.

My daughter-- my husband's-- my sons-- my daughter-in-law is a wonderful, beautiful girl, a wonderful girl. She is from the same type too, from the Holocaust survivors. Yes.

So how many-- your son has two children?

No, one boy.

One. And Toby, your daughter, has three children?

Toby got three, yes.

Three.

Well, with my son, daughter-in-law, she was very, very sick. And she got a bad pregnancy. So she decided not to have it anymore. But my Toby, always, I was begging God. And ever she prayed to have her-- they have children like I used to have her, very easy. I used to beg God to have easy children. Yes. And that's the life. We're happy now. You never going to forget what's happened to you.

Can you think of some special thing that happened during the war that you would like to still tell about it, some special event? Can you think of anything?

I can think about that when the American came in. I standed in the window. And I see the American-- the German soldiers stay like that with the hand. They give up. If you give up, you have to be there. So I says, Sam, look, we're free people. Look. We can go out in the street. We're not scared. That's what we say.

And while looking the window, is never going to forget. When the soldiers give up, they have to stay like this. They cannot put the hand-- maybe they got guns or something. This was the best moment in my life. I'm free. I can go everything. I don't have to be-- depend on the people took him in, which was very nice. They took us in.

Who took you in? Were they German people that took you in?

Yeah. Yeah. They were scared that maybe the American going to be very bad like they was bad. So maybe that was the reason they took us in. One day-- I'm never going to forget this-- when I was living over there by the German people on Rosenstrasse-- I remember everything-- 222 Rosenstrasse.

The Germany got a rule. If a German soldier come in private, you have to give him food. You have to be nice to him because they-- it's their country. So what I did over there, Rosenstrasse, by these people, I was dishes washing. So one time, I never going to forget this. That's my life too. I stay at the sink and wash dishes.

Three German soldiers coming in. They sit in the kitchen, the table, and eating. And poor Frieda stay by there, washing dishes. And then they say-- they ate it up. And they wanted to say, well, sit a little bit and talk a little bit. And the soldiers said, no, we cannot sit there anymore. The army coming in. The army is behind us. This was-- this was--



You felt good.

Yeah. And I washed the dishes. I don't know hear-- I hear what I don't hear. Wash the dishes for them-- I say, no I cannot stay anymore really. The army is behind us. And in the morning, the next day in the morning, I come out, Sam, look, the army, the American came in. And when they started to come some of them-- this was a little town where we was live, so they want to tell them to come in. We come in. We couldn't talk. We couldn't talk to them. American, American, and that's all. But my husband, you see, got a number from Auschwitz.

You don't have one?

No. I wasn't-- I was in different camps.

Yeah. You were in--

I was working ammunition. They transfer from one town to ammunition for the soldiers. So we know that in our mind was the last bullet's going to be for me.

So when you got to Majdanek, they didn't give numbers?

No, Majdanek didn't. The numbers, they give you in Auschwitz.

But you had one on your clothes? No, no number?

Yeah, numbers on clothes. But to be honest with you, I don't remember. Majdanek, I got a number like this with numbers-- six, seven number initial. Yeah, Majdanek-- Majdanek, you have numbers. But in Auschwitz only got tattoos, numbers. But we-- when I was-- we was working to the last minute on ammunition. So we used to say, well-- the girls wanted each other-- well, the last bullet is going to be for us. Now, it's a laugh. But we couldn't help ourselves. We was working 12 hours like a mule in ammunition factory. Yes.

In Majdanek, too, you worked with ammunition?

Majdanek, no.

No.

No.

So where was this, in Türkheim or where?

In Türkheim, yes. In Gross-Rosen-- Türkheim was already-- it's already almost finished.

Towards the end of the war?

Right.

Yeah, yeah.

But I was working.

So where was--

Skarzysko-- in Skarzysko, the Polish name, and Czestochowa.

You worked in ammunition.

Ammunition, 12 hours a day. You see, we was packing the bullets in the boxes. You got one here right, one

left here, and another right here. I was lucky because you have to work very quick. The machine run, the bullets running. I was left-handed. So I was sitting just in the middle. And the boxes is three lines.

So I was really good to work this one. One come the right, one come the links. And the other one come in the right. I was in the middle. But you have to work. You cannot move. The German watching you-- watching you. And no pity, nothing. You cannot moving like that. You have to work the bullets. And the last bullet is probably going to be-- that's what it is.

I am glad that the last bullet wasn't for you.

Thank you. Thank you. I'm happy too.

And I am happy that you were able to tell us your--

Yes.

--your experience.

Well, this is our pleasure because this was our life. So many years during the war, instead to be growing up, and go to high school, go to college, you go never there. You was a slave, a slave, a quiet slave. You got too scared to go out in the street at night when everybody is sleeping.

And you know what else? In Warsaw is not so-- it wasn't like in the little towns. In little towns, went to a factory and that's all. In Warsaw, when it's come evening, night, they don't let you put on light. You have to cover the windows-- the big dog. And you have to stay up 5 o'clock in the morning to stay in the line to have a bread. And thank god we survived.

Yes.

I have a beautiful family, like I told you. And I'm glad to meet you, you have patient for me.

Yes. Thank you very much for telling us.