

-TITLE-HEDY MARMORSTEIN
-I_DATE-
-SOURCE-HAWAII HOLOCAUST PROJECT
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY-EXCELLENT
-IMAGE_QUALITY-EXCELLENT
-DURATION-
-LANGUAGES-
-KEY_SEGMENT-
-GEOGRAPHIC_NAME-
-PERSONAL_NAME-
-CORPORATE_NAME-
-KEY_WORDS-
-NOTES-
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Born in Vienna - Nov 18, 1921
Married - Yes. Husband retired - Electrical Contractor in New York City. Theodore. Parents: Father - Shailan (Solomon) arger - grocery store - Vienna. Mother - Bertha

Went to school in Vienna. Parents wanted her to be professional. Went to school until Hitler came to power. Maternal Grandparents - lived in Northwest Austria - Hungary. No siblings - an only child.

Education: School until 16 in Austria - Finished high school in N.Y.

Left Austria at age 17. Had a year of Hitler occupation. 1938 - Hitler marched in April and she left in Dec. Very difficult period. World collapsed from _____. Dignity and rights taken away. Felt it would blow over, but of course did not. Knew that there was to have been a plebescite where Austrians were to vote whether they wanted to remain free or be a part of greater Germany but before plebescite was taken, Hitler delivered ultimatum to Austrian Chancellor who knowing that Austria was not prepared and that many Austrians were already illegally members of the Nazi party and for Hitler all along. Had inkling when Chancellor met with Hitler.

Jewish education. Religion part of curriculum in school. Children divided according to religion. Rabbi on staff to teach them Hebrew, Jewish history. Neighborhood mixed.

Accepted anti-Semitism - part of life. Only awareness was few Jews accepted into medical school, college, getting jobs. Not worried about going to college.

Discrimination: Teacher teaching music taught song re Abraham (derogatory). Jewish students decided to complain to Rabbi (religious teacher). Decided to take it up with faculty. Song taken out of repertoire. Then a terrible thing happened. Music teacher had habit of taking little girls for walks in afternoon. Story was that he molested them. She wasn't permitted to go with him.

Had non-Jewish friends as well. Recalled walking with a friend one day and seeing a non Jewish friend in uniform of a German unit. The girl, in act of defiance, linked arms with these two girls and walked with them. Girls embarrassed.

Parents talked about leaving very shortly. Talked about getting her out - Question where and when. Had relatives in America. Going to send her and they would come later. Father served in Austrian army - couldn't understand why they were being treated badly. Very patriotic. Parents opposed her joining Zionist organization 1937. Needed to be sponsored by someone in order to immigrate. Her number of immigration being Austrian was better than others. Also family in America felt more comfortable taking a young Person who is more productive. Sponsor - father's nephew, brother's son. Agreed to bring her over. Visa would be issued soon if registered with American embassy and Viennessian both.

When she was 14 or 15 interested in going to Israel. Mother lit candles and kept kosher. Synagogue on holidays.

Visa - got physical at American Embassy. Left shortly - Dec. Passport almost expired - had to leave. Not easy to get visa. Was made difficult.

Shortly after she left she heard from her parents that notice came in for her to report for labor service. If she were home there would be no way out. For very young people they wanted to squeeze out work from young.

At that time Chamberlain went to see Hitler to negotiate. Came back saying Peace another time. Later reading history, heard he sold out. This gave them more time to prepare for departure. If war broke out then, they could not leave.

When she got visa - packing and saying goodbye. First time in her life she saw father cry. Was the last time she saw parents (crying). Corresponded until Pearl Harbor. Cousins came here - told family here of what was going on. Tried to get money to go to Cuba who accepted Jews. But she was going to school and working. Then Pearl Harbor was attacked and they lost all communication. After war - a cousin who was in six concentration camps and survived, went back to Vienna and went to their house and found out her parents were deported. When she went back to Vienna looked for her parents.

Found out her parents were sent to Riga. Found out from deportation notice.

When arrived in N.Y. family insisted she finish high school. Then got a job.

When she arrived she felt Americans were very nice. Only could see Hitler as a funny looking man with funny moustache. They didn't realize how sinister, how dangerous he was. People felt sorry for her - also indifference.

Heard speeches on radio in Vienna by Hitler, was how people went against Jews. Saw on November 11 when all Hell broke out. Kristallnacht - experienced it. All synagogues were bombed people taken to prison, much damage. Breaking into houses. Father couldn't continue business. Had a book they were reading about a family in Germany during Hitler and what happened to them. Hid it in the store and locked it up. Father also had saber from Austrian Army - locked in store - father got it out and threw it away. Father had no income - survived from family in America and saw importance of getting out!

After she left when were they taken to concentration camp? 1941 after war broke out. American Jewish reaction - Did not talk about experience. Only talked to people who had similar experiences. Husband born in Hungary. Did not talk to husband re experience - he came here as child.

Lived in N.Y., almost 40 years. Loved Hawaii after first visit kept going back.

Husband electrical contractor. No children. Husband had from first marriage.

Anti-Semitism in America. First when in school studying Supreme Court. Some girl said to another in class, "two Jews on Supreme Court". Another incident, when applying for a job. Interviewer said "you know we are a Christian firm but during war we cannot get all the help we need so we have to hire Jews". I replied that I was Jewish. He said he didn't know and it doesn't matter and wanted me to start immediately. I didn't want the job.

Impressions of experiences and how it affected her life: Long range - Hard to get used to new society. Had a lot of skepticism. Couldn't feel patriotic because of her patriotism for a county that betrayed her and family. Insecure. Being afraid to make deep commitment to this country. Feelings have gone but feel more secure in Hawaii than she did in 40 years of living in N.Y.

Feels more at home in Hawaii maybe because this was her choice. N.Y. was a necessity. More of a minority in Hawaii than in N.Y. but makes no difference. Would trust in Israel but would not feel at home. Enjoy the history, accomplishments a part of her, but would not be comfortable there. Would be a newcomer, refugee etc.

When learned about Japanese interned - felt an alliance with them, felt sorry for them - they were innocently persecuted for something they didn't do. Does not feel a sisterhood toward them because experiences were not the same.

Relatives in Austria or parts of Europe now? No. Did have relatives in Europe? Yes - all perished. If you had children would you pass your experiences on to them? Yes They should know.

Last day in Austria - experience? Yes. Last high holy days - Yom Kippur. Parents bought tickets for services with grandparents - Children able to go in and out. Terrible feeling of fear, unease - at one point in service she, cousin and girlfriend went out. SS stopped them. Asked if they were Jewish. Told to go with him. Didn't know what to expect. Took to a beautiful house. Showing who was boss. Humiliating them, put fear into them, then sent them home. Shaken. Grieved but pointed out helplessness, hopelessness. When she got home, she was so frightened took a piece of bread, ate it and had not fasted since.

When left Austria packed clothes, books. Mother had box with her teddy bear and diary. On borders, cut up teddy bear and diary looking for jewels. Nothing of value left. 20 years after she went back, house was gone.

1959 went back - 20 years later to Vienna. Dreamed of going back - love and hate. Back several times and feels like a stranger - facade of house has changed but there are still many memories all over. Father's store not there. Is a drug store next door - talked to people who wanted to know if she would come back to live. NO. Visited concentration camp - but not Riga where parents' perished - went to Dachau. Tour guide took them city of Dachau trying to live down reputation. No one wanted to tell them where the camp was. They found it. Were the only Jews on tour - everyone in tears! Thought of parents - felt the empathy of people. Tour went back to Munich and that evening there was an Oktoberfest. Couldn't face it. Didn't want to go.

When crossing border what was on your mind? Remembered when crossing over to France had to strip, and be thoroughly checked. Had this fear now but nothing happened and there was such a relief.

Showed passport that had "J" stamped on meaning Jewish.

Do you speak German when you are with Austrian club? Half and half - German a little and English. But more fluent in English. But welcome speaking German because I don't want to forget it.

When in Austrian-Club met people ate goulash party.

When she came to America lived with relatives. Smoked then and still do. Started at age 17.

Austria-Club - Many Austrians here. At first, interview for job met Austrian who told her about club. Many women war brides - very congenial people - social club - some women went through war years. Not necessarily Jewish - strictly Austrian - Hedy asks no questions - doesn't want to start waves. In club speak English, sometimes German.

Speaking German does not bother her. Loves the language. Does not want to forget it. Doesn't wish to talk about the war years with people of the club.

Asked if she resents talking about the Holocaust to this group. No - Thinks it necessary that people don't forget, shouldn't be denied. Painful. Necessary because it is a page from history.

This is the first time she talked of her experience in length. Feels better for it.

Tape was interview with someone else and camera was on woman interviewer. (Think she was with instructor.)
.END.