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Summary

Maurice Grunwald lives in Cleveland, Ohio; wife, Elaine; son 35 and daughter 30 born in Israel; lived on a farm in Slovakia in Sabinov district; he had 3 brothers and 1 sister; he was 25 years old in 1939 when war broke out; went to religious boarding school in Prešov; 5 years old when father died; spoke Slovak and German/Yiddish; participated in Maccabi club for teenagers; played soccer with Maccabi Prešov team; 1936 drafted into Czechoslovakian army until 1939 before the war started; lots of antisemitism; Germans invaded Slovakia 1939; March 1942 sister deported to Auschwitz; in May, 1942 Jews taken from Slovakia to Sabinov in Slovakia, about 20 kilometer from his village; loaded in boxcars the next day; Slovakian police; no water, hole in box car for toilet, then to Prešov; went to West Slovakia, then to empty ghetto in Reyovset [PH], Poland, German SS soldiers; 10 kilometers from Chelm; one night; next day selection by SS; younger men taken 40 kilometers to working camp; in camp from May to end of October; little food, no beds, no clothing issued; guarded by Ukrainians and Germans; local population came to fence and could communicate with them if guards did not see them; 6 Jewish men required to supervise measurements along with local Polish population; in July told by Polish people that Germans had shot Jews; taken to a camp in Krakow; end of October or early November 1943 ran away two guys, bargained with Poles; put shovel on shoulder and then ran into forest and met the other guys later; one guy was lost; from Poland walked south through the forest for 20 days towards Slovakia; Saw Polish Jews who were trying to hide; went through Carpathian in Poland to Slovakia; border marked in stones; came to village of Frishka [PH], Slovakia; came to Badiaoff [PH], Slovakia; Jews had special permits in Badiaoff to teach gentiles how to manage the businesses; found friend named Sobel who had special permit to stay; Sobel bought him train tickets to go to Prešov; Arrived in Prešov and saw Kauffman, in textile business; Kauffman gave him new clothing and place to bath; slept in friends' houses; changed his name to Joseph Kookari (a Slovakian name) so he could get new papers; winter 1943 taken in by a Jehovah Witness on a farm in Jedna [PH], a village 10 kilometers from Prešov; stayed there until January 1945; he hid two Jewish families; 1945 built a bunker for the villagers when German soldiers were retreating; liberation when Russian soldiers arrived; worked with partisans, went on spy missions to spy on the Germans in Prešov; hid another Jewish man in his barn; hid him in the forest; hid several Jewish families in 1945; January 1945, Russians arrived and liberation; returned to Prešov and then to his village; used his original name; in Prešov, privately helped returning refugees; March 1945 drafted into Czech Army; in Czech Army until sometime in September 1945; then returned to Prešov; went to Israel with Hagganah in 1948; 1947 married a survivor who had spent three years in Auschwitz; 1956 went to Cleveland, Ohio;