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Summary

Sandra Mandel, born in Pausha, Romania in 1924, discusses her family's move in 1932 when she was eight years old to Borod, Romania; having one brother and two sisters; being fluent in Romanian, Hungarian and Yiddish; the nearest city being Nagyvarad (Oradea, Romania); going away at age 7 for 1 year to learn the Hungarian language; her education stopping at 7th grade; the Hungarians arriving in her village in 1940; the village men being drafted into the Hungarian Army in 1942 and her dad volunteering to go; her brother not going as he was only 16; wearing the Star of David beginning in 1943; receiving a letter in the summer of 1943 that her father was a deserter in Russian territory and never hearing from him again; the Hungarian police coming into her home on 10 May 1944 and forcing her family to leave; spending 3 days in the school auditorium and traveling the 8km to the rail station where they were placed in a cattle car; traveling to a temporary ghetto in Nagyvarad and spending 3 weeks there in the corner of a basement; being placed in a cattle car with 75 people and traveling for 3 days to Auschwitz; being taken to Birkenau for a bath and have her hair clipped; being taken to Camp C; seeing her brother briefly there and never seeing him again; doing nothing for four months in Auschwitz except going to bath in Birkenau once a month; traveling to Hatlerdorf leaving on 12 September and arriving on 14 September; walking 4 km to the Lorenz factory where she worked and lived upstairs with 400 other girls; stamping glass and drying parts as her job; Dr. Mengele coming for an inspection in March of 1945; learning news from the French prisoners of war who fixed the machinery in the factory; on 7 May being sent upstairs early at 1000 after the electricity went out; the war being over on 8 May; choosing to travel to Hatlerdorf with 5 other girls; being provided the quarters of the French prisoners of war; receiving instructions in a dining hall on 29 May 1945 to head home; her friend befriending a Romanian Officer which helped her get to Prague and then onto Budapest and Nagyvarad and then a little train to her town; finding that the men who were sent to forced labor had already returned in January of 1945; meeting up with Paul, a Hebrew teacher she knew from before the war, who decided in November of 1945 that they should travel to the US; Paul traveling first to Austria and setting up a community with others and then sending for Sandra; crossing the Romanian border on 1 May 1946 and traveling to Budapest before receiving papers under a false name to travel to Vienna and then onto Dregenz, Austria where there was an established community for Displaced Persons; marrying Paul on 7 July 1946; traveling to Chiari, Italy and spending 2 weeks there before traveling onto Ostia, Italy and having her daughter, Barbara, there on 26 February 1949; traveling to the American Consulate in August of 1949 for her exam and papers; being sent to Salerno to wait for the boat to take her to America; leaving for the United States aboard the Marina Jumper on 9 November 1949 and arriving in the New York Harbor on 21 November 1949, where they met with her husband's sister in law and child before traveling via train to Cleveland on 23 November 1949; arriving in Cleveland on Thanksgiving Day; living there with her brother and sister-in-law for eight years before Paul accepted the job as a Rabbi in New Philadelphia; living there for 8 years before moving to Wooster Ohio where they lived for 20 years before returning to Cleveland to be with her daughters, Barbara and Regina as well as Sally who lives in nearby Youngstown; Paul passing away seven years prior in 1977; having eight grandchildren at the time of the interview.