

And today we are interviewing Mr. Marvin Newman, a Holocaust survivor. The project is sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women, Cleveland section. All right, now Mr. Newman, we'll continue. You're in Gusen now.

Yes.

And it's in the spring of 1944.

Early spring of 1944.

And you're about 14 and 1/2 years of age. Now, what work did you do there? Did you have a regular job?

OK. See, first I wasn't Gusen I. And we only stayed there and we were shipped to Gusen II. OK, my job. I will tell you what my job was. I was assigned to a group where they carried the dead people. Otherwise it was a wagon, and there was about 12 people. And each person or each man had a rope. And we loaded up, there was a latrina. And one latrina for 20,000 people. Otherwise, it was a long place where you went to latrina.

And this latrina also housed all the dead people. They brought them from all the blocks and they mounted them up. And that was what my job was.

Now you carried them from where?

We carried them from Gusen II.

Yeah, but from their--

From the latrina.

From the latrina.

Yes.

After they were piled up there.

After they piled up.

After the latrine was the--

We put them on a wagon, latrine, right. We put them on a wagon. And we were assigned. We were about 12 people to a group with ropes. Each man had a rope and each man had a pull. And the crematorium was in Gusen I. And that was about two miles away from there.

How did they get transported? You say by wagon?

By wagon.

What pulled the wagon?

Us.

Oh, you pulled the wagon?

We did. I pulled the wagon. I was one of the 12 people.

And unloaded the bodies.

And loaded them up like two of us. One grabbed the feet and the other one grabbed the hands and just threw them up like meat.

Threw them where?

Threw them on a wagon. We loaded up.

Yes.

Yeah, we loaded up. The wagon had rubber wheels. So we loaded up about 20, 25 corpses. And we pulled them to Gusen I. And that's where a crematorium was. We did not have a crematorium in Gusen II December of 1944.

All right, now when you unloaded them, did you unload them right into the crematorium?

Yeah, we took them right in the crematorium and unloaded them. And there were two people over there, and working around the clock. And it went--

Right into the fire.

It went real fast, right into the fire, into the oven.

In the ovens?

Yes.

Do you remember what you felt?

I felt, I mean I was numb. I felt nothing.

It was just a job.

It was just a job. It was just a job I had to do, and I didn't feel nothing just like talking to you.

Yeah.

Otherwise my heart was-- I had no, I mean everything was just gone.

How long did you work?

I worked there.

What were the hours during, every day or five days a week?

We worked there, see, I had another job besides that. I worked carrying that. And I also worked at the latrine. Otherwise, we had to carry-- we had different wagons, and then take all that stuff out from the latrine with buckets. And we had also on the same wagon, but it had a box over there. And then we used to take it to the fields and just dissolve it over there.

Just spread it.

So I had two jobs. So they kind of shifted me.

And how long were these jobs during the day? Were they from what hours?

See, I think during the day over there, that was not an eight hour work. That was a 12-hour job.

So from early in the morning?

From 6:00 in the morning, like we got up at 4:30 in the morning. From 6:00 in the morning till later in the day. Till they'll tell you.

Tell me a typical day, a typical day starting at 4:00.

A typical day, you get up in the morning at 4:30. Typical day you get up and two men, two kapos outside, and they have rubber hoses. And the rubber hoses by the door, when you're supposed to run to the latrine overnight, and they have rubber hoses, big rubber hoses. And the rubber hoses are filled either with sand or with slag. And as you approach the door like cattle, and you run. And you get, and two guys and an SS man, he stands and looks over there.

He stands on the side. And they have two kapos on each side of the door. And they hit just like it's going out of style, over your neck and all that.

For no reason? Just--

For no reason. And you get kicked. And I wasn't that tall. I was short. So I knew how my way to get around. So when I ran, I always tried to be in the middle so I wouldn't get hit. Yeah, but that was the beginning of getting up in the morning.

All right. And then what?

And then we went to the latrine and overnight, what happened from all the 20,000 people, they executed, well, they executed through the night all those people. We seen people piled up 20 feet high, all corpses. And then we went for breakfast.

Like I was saying before, we got there was a big, about a liter of coffee or hot water, or whatever it was. And they divided us up with about 15 or 20 men to-- and everybody got a sip. So like I was saying before, some of them got a drink of hot water, or whatever it is, and some of-- and then we had a report to the job. And that's when my day started.

And then how about did you have a lunch break?

A lunch break, yes. A lunch break was at 12 o'clock. Yes, a lunch break was at 12 o'clock. And at that time, the food was either was spinach or it was beets, those beets where they made sugar out of that.

Red beets?

Yeah, red beets. And they were wild beets, like wild beets, and just hot water and beets. Yes.

And go ahead. Now then when you went back to work after that?

Yeah. After that I went back to work.

Until when?

Until they told us to knock off. Until we finished the job. Otherwise there was about a half a dozen wagons that they made rounds, keep getting back and forth in order to expedite these corpses, because fresh ones came in the next day.

And then how about dinner? What did you have for supper or dinner?

Supper, you see the thing is bread, see supper was the bread was for supper. Otherwise, we had a loaf of bread. And it was a small loaf of bread. It looked like a square. And we got 20 people divide it. Otherwise it was 20 people, 20 slices for one bread.

So we got a thin loaf of bread. And then they gave us a little thin piece of salami that you could have seen through. And that was our supper.

That was a typical supper.

That was a typical supper.

And then what happened after supper?

After that, after that supper, we just seen some unpleasant things. How they had places over there, how they just used to pick up people from random, just like random all over the places. Mainly they picked on Jews. As long as they had Jews, they picked on Jews and executed the Jews. And then when there was no Jews, then they picked on Gentiles.

You mean there were more, there were other than Jews in that camp?

Yes. And another thing is, also you have to ask me who were the people who executed those people?

Yes.

OK. The people who executed all those people were Poles and Germans. And you see another thing is, is the murderers where they executed all those people had triangles, green triangles, like I was a Jew. I had a yellow triangle because I had a Jew. And then I had my number whatever my number was, what they give it.

And those people, those murderers, they brought in special murderers.

Do you remember your number?

67,921.

67,921. That was the number you wore.

There was the number and also I had a green triangle because I was Jewish.

Green or yellow?

No, I'm sorry. Yellow.

Yellow.

So what I'm talking about otherwise these Poles and Germans, they brought them in a concentration camp because they committed crimes in civilian lives that instead of putting them behind the bars, they brought them in special in a concentration camp. And they were specially assigned of executing these people.

For what?

For no reason. For no reason.

Now this was-- now, we're talking about things that happened after--

This happened all after working hours.

And how did that happen? What did--

OK, how did that happen? Otherwise, they just used to go around people. People, you see after you went in the block, they used to go around people, and just pick people random. Come here.

And what happened when they came?

They rounded them up, and they rounded them up, and took them to a place over there. And you also have to ask me how they executed those people.

Yes.

OK. They had most of the people in Gusen II, where they executed, and they executed by the hundreds and by the thousands. That's the quickest execution I have seen. And I witnessed it almost every night. They had two barrels of water. And they put I don't know what kind of poison it is, Clorox. They put that in the water. And it went so fast you could have a line of 200 or 300 people. And that's all you had to do is push those guys where they executed them, that's all you had to do is just push those heads in. And by the time push it in, and just took them out. And you were deader than hell. Split seconds. That's how fast it went.

Did they have to drink it?

No, no, no, no. They just put them in, in that barrel, and they were dead it in hell. Another thing is, there was other groups after work. There was another group too. And after that, there was other group at nights where they used to carry those people all to the latrine.

And you saw that?

I saw that all that absolutely. I witnessed. I witnessed it and I saw that every night.

Were you ever afraid that it might happen to you.

No. I wasn't afraid because I also figured that it could happen to me. But there I was. And there was no escape for me.

Was there then after supper, any kind of social exchange?

No, no.

Any kind-- did you have any friends? Did you have any buddies?

I tell you what. After supper there was some terrible things happen almost nightly. We heard sirens. And after the sirens, we had bombardments almost every night. I mean those howitzers. I mean, you could hear every time at night, you could hear that. I mean it was so heavy. Planes, we came. See, where I worked over there, a lot of people were assigned. We worked underground. You could go for 20 miles underground in granite for a door open, and they produced over those Stukas and Messerschmitt parts over there.

That's why almost every night we had that incident.

Because there was also a factory?

It was a factory.

People were working.

A lot of factories, and we were like 25 miles from Linz. And Linz, that was a big industrial city where this city supplied most of those warfare, war goods and so forth.

And again, did you have any friends? Do you remember? Did you have--

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, I had some friends. Otherwise we get otherwise, see, Gusen II. This was my place. I settle down. And this was the place where I stayed. So I met some friends, some boys where they were assigned to work in the kitchen. And we corresponded and we met.

What did you talk about?

Talk about how to get some food and clothing, like clothing. There was no clothing at all. We can get to that, and we can start talking about that, about clothing.

Let me just ask this. How about the-- were there any girls? Did you have any contact with girls?

No, see the only girls over there, see, there was these SS over there. These SS over there, we were at Gusen I and Gusen II, each one housed when they execute those people, they brought other people. Each one was 20,000 and we were guarded by SS. And they wore green uniforms. And then Gestapo there was the black uniforms. And another thing is, the only girls there was over there, the girls, they had a place over there when I came in over there. The only time I seen over there when I came into Gusen I and Gusen II, like all the concentration camps, there was a huge gate from steel.

And on top of the gate there was a big eagle. And close to that gate over there, there was girls for the SS. And that was a special quarter over there, women for the SS. That means they worked and killing so hard all day in order maybe to quiet their mind, but that was the only women we seen. Yeah. See, I used to see more things because I used to go out from one concentration camp into the other concentration camp.

So I used to get out of the gate and come into another gate.

Yeah, into the two Gusens. How about your clothing? How about the clothes?

My clothing, you see when we came to Mauthausen, this was the only pants, pants, shirt and a jacket I got. And they never otherwise, they never gave us any shirt or anything. And as far as keeping yourself clean, once a week what we had to do is, we had to take our shirt and everything off. And we had to kill the lice. And after you killed all the lice and you hope you killed all the lice, then they call that a louse controller, or a louse control.

And you had to go before there was two kapos, one SS, checking your shirt and each louse they found on you, each louse they found on you, they took your pants off. They took your pants off. And they had again they had their rubber hose with it loaded with slag or whatever thing, and they give you over your ass, they give you over your ass. If it was 25 lice, you got 25. And after that, you had to thank the guy for killing you half dead. And you had to take off your cap, if you have a cap. And then your ass next day just turned black. Yeah.

Did that never happened to you?

Yeah, it did. I got 15 over my ass one time, because I couldn't kill all the lice. They were so small and every damn thing else. Yes. And it happened many times to me.

Was your head shaved?

Yeah. You see, another thing is going back to the head shave, see once a week, you had a line up and one barber, otherwise we had 2,000 on a block. And one barber would take care of maybe 200, 300 people with one knife. And your head was shaved about 2 inches right in the middle. Two inches across over here and with one blade, would have one blade. Otherwise you were bleeding, or the skin came off, or whatever. There is not much.

And that was because they kept that head shaved because if you would ever run away, that means they will have a chance to recapture you because you wouldn't be a normal person.

Right, right. How about illness? Were there any illnesses going around?

Yeah.

Because of all this drinking in the same cup.

Well illness, you see the water was contaminated, illness. Most of the people what they did die, they didn't even have to kill them. They just died of [NON-ENGLISH], what they call it, a [NON-ENGLISH]. Otherwise, they had such bad diarrhea, and if you were 200 pounds and some of the people they didn't even have to kill, they just died. Otherwise they became skin and bones. Otherwise from 200 pounds he went down to 60, 70 pounds.

And he just became a skeleton. And we had a cure of that, hundreds and thousands of people like that.

Now how much did you weigh at that time?

I weighed, I was probably underweight but because I had a little bit better connection, because I did get here and there, I start to get some friends, and I start taking chances. And even if I would have got killed, I had to get a little bit of extra food. But I was underweight, but not quite that bad.

So you worked at this job at removing the bodies.

Yeah for about 10 months.

For 10 months until December, you said December '44?

Well, I worked there from late March till about-- no, I worked almost a year at these jobs, almost a year.

Were you aware at that time of what was happening in the war?

Absolutely. Absolutely.

How did you get your information?

Well, I tell you what. We got the information is by new transports. See, my number was 67,000 and they keep executing those people. And by the people coming in 8, 10 months later, we got the information how what's happening in the world event.

And what was your feeling about what was happening?

My feeling was what was happening is just, I was saying to myself, let's take it out.

It was hopeful.

Hopeful for me, yeah. For me it was hopeful.

The reports were that Germany was losing the war.

Yeah, the Germans was losing the war. And we also seen that American boys, see a lot of the American boys by that planes like I was saying in May in June. They came by the hundreds and bombarded those factories.

May and June '44.

In daylight, in daylight. And I seen dozens of planes getting hit. And a lot of boys, American boys, what I could see from the camp from the barbed wire was daylight, beautiful daylight. And a lot of them came down. And before they came down, they were parachuting it. And as close as they came down, the SS executed every one of them. Because when they got shot, that chute just dropped all of a sudden, and it took them split seconds. And it hit right on the ground.

You mean as they were parachuting down.

As they was parachuting, they didn't let them come alive. They killed them right in the air.

Were there any that were taken captured, do you know?

No. I didn't see any. Most of them I seen as an eyewitness, most of I seen them, they got killed. Because the only thing is, when they were parachuting, they were coming down real slow. And as soon as the guards, they come down low enough, they just shoot them down with the machine guns.

Now you said in December of '44, they built the crematorium in your camp.

Yes.

So you had less of a distance to go to. And did your work change at that time?

No, no. Another thing is, is they finished it in December of 1944. And it just so happens they never had a chance to use that. And it was a huge crematorium they built in Gusen II. Because they never had a chance to use it. And they executed the people in a different manner. How were they doing it then?

Froze them to death. They brought every night at that time, you see in December in late December of 1944, they executed most of the Jews. And there was just a skeleton Jews left like me and few other guys, and all that, and the whole camp over there, what we did our job. They brought, you see in December, Warsaw, Poland said that they will capture, they want to capture Warsaw by itself. They don't want no help from Russia.

Russia pulled back, and they still made it for a month or so. And all those people saw all those Poles, what they said they will capture, they captured and they liquidated cities over there. And they brought to Mauthausen like 2,000. They brought about 5,000, 6,000 a week, Poles. They were no longer Jews. And they were all Catholic Poles. They brought them to our camp.

The Nazis were bringing them.

The Nazis absolutely. And I talked to these people. And they said that they were uprising against the Nazis in Warsaw. And they liquidated all these people. And they brought them, and something went wrong. Otherwise, we still took the people over there. But the place where they cremated could not accomplish. They had so many people over there. And they could not accommodate burning all those people.

So another thing, what they did every night is they took off their clothes. And it was subzero weather. It went on for a month, and maybe 1,000 or 1,500 people, and they took off their clothes and they chased them out on a place right over there where we used to have an appell, roll call. Otherwise every night when we had a roll call in a big huge place. They took off all their clothes, left them over there, frozen to death.

Overnight.

Overnight they froze them to death. And all those noise, all those noise, and noise, and noise.

The men were making noise as they were running.



That's right. That's right.

Yelling.

Yeah. Till they died. In the morning, they were all everything was frozen. And we had the same job to do.

And you took them then to the--

Yeah, we took them then, and had them cremated. Yes but that other, they never used that other.

Do you remember your 15th birthday?

No, I don't.

You have no recall of it?

No. I can never recall my 15th birthday.

It was October of '44.

See, the thing is I have another problem with my birthday is, I was born October 10, 1929. But I don't remember my date. I mean these wars and everything else. I mean not that I-- my mind fortunately is all there. But I don't remember the date, which date. It's either the 30th of October or the 10th. But I think I was born on the 30th. I unfortunately I never wrote a way. It's Russia right now. I never wrote a way for my birth certificate.

But you don't remember any--

No.

You don't remember saying anything to anybody, this is my birthday?

No, no.

Everyone was--

No such thing.

There was never a celebration. How about over the weekend or on Sundays, did you have any time off from that job?

No.

That was a seven-day week?

No such thing. Some time off ago, in the late December, January, you see they change guards then. They change guards over there and some of the guards got older. They brought kids and guards, SS [NON-ENGLISH], they brought in guards. And the only thing it is, is the food was the big problem over there, the food in order to survive.

So I used to take a chance a lot of time. I could have gone down right by the barbed wire. There was a decent German. He ate beets and potatoes. And a lot of times they threw right through the wire. He threw me in a couple of beets and a couple of potatoes. But food was the only surviving thing over there. But there was no such thing as social life or anything. The only social life over there is seeing those horrible things every day, how different they executed those people. That was the only social life over there.

All right. So then what happened is 1944 came into 1945.

OK. OK, 1944 came into 1945. Every day the Allies are coming closer. And they're coming and bombarding the place. In fact, one time over there, like you say, social things. And a song came out around early March I think. And I was sitting over there. And we had some fighter planes or something coming over there, and bombed around the camp over there. And fortunately I seen bullets. I think the bullets from the airplane, fighter planes. I don't know what it was. I seen the bullets going right near me. They were right in the ground going near me. And I can see the dust spitting out, and fortunately I didn't get hit.

And these were Allied planes that were doing it?

These were Allied planes, right. Right.

And then when did you first hear that the war was over?

No. Well, it wasn't over yet. OK. And then in middle of March, an order comes that all the Jews, the remaining Jews from Gusen II should line up. So we lined up. So we lined up, and they took us back to Gusen I. And from Gusen II, they took us back to Mauthausen. And I seen that camp, but not back to Mauthausen. It was a camp on a field over there. They called it a Zeltlager. Zelt means a canvas lager.

And that canvas, there was a big canvas lager. And they brought all the surviving Jews from all the camps what they was branched from Mauthausen. And it was a lot of Jews. How did they look?

Half dead and everything else. And most, OK. So we stayed there about for eight days. That means we came in late March. We coming into April now.

What did you think was going to happen?

Nothing, just get shot probably on march. See, we're not finished yet. After that, we stayed about two weeks over there in that lager. And the food wasn't much. I don't know. It was so horrible. We don't know what we ate. We might even-- I don't even want to bring it out what we ate.

Well tell me what you ate.

It could have been human meat too. Could have been very possible. Yes. And we stayed in that canvas lager till April. Yeah, in the beginning of April, and then we went on, on a death march. Otherwise we run there.

Now at this point--

Yes?

Who was leading? Were the Germans still in charge?

Yeah, absolutely, still in charge. And the SS, and everything else, and still in charge. And they took us to a place over there about 100 miles. We had a march. And I would say, and they also brought in a lot of Jews from Hungary. They were in a work camp. And these Jews, see these Jews they were not in a concentration camp. But we were integrated. They integrated us these Jews from Hungary. They were like in a work camp, where this work camp, these people worked for the army, like they dug ditches and everything else. And these people were well fed.

And they had clothes over there, and pots and pans and everything. And most of those people did get executed. Because another thing is they were so stupid. They had to march. And these people they had to march every day. And a lot of these people could not march because they were either half sick or unqualified. It was a death march actually. And if you stayed behind, you got shot.

You were shot.

Yes, and by nightfall too, every nightfall after we had the death march when we left Mauthausen, that was Gunskirchen. Name of that place was Gunskirchen. And it was a city in Austria, name of it was Wels. And I would say from all the Jews, we must have been at least 10,000 Jews over there. And so by the time we got over there, it was maybe 2,000 Jews left.

Did you know where you were going?

We were going from one camp to the other camp. We really didn't know where we were going.

And did you have any reports of what was happening in the war?

No, no. Nothing whatsoever.

You were just doing what they were telling you to do.

Doing what we were told--

And trying to survive.

Most of the guys got shot. You see, they didn't shoot them with the plain bullets. They took the bullet out, and just left that powder in. And they shot them, dum-dum. So another thing is, like in the morning, or right when they used to shoot these people, either a head was missing or a hand was missing. It would just tear that body apart. That's how they used to do it.

Now there were no women on this?

No, no. There were no women on there at all. Yeah. Most of the women I've seen in Auschwitz, they were shaved. Their heads were shaved off. And they were working like carts, carrying anything. That's the only thing, the only time I seen women.

You seen women. Now, then what happened at the end of the march?

At the end of the march, I mean, a lot of these people got executed. And we finally came to the destination over there. And we stayed there. We stayed there till we were liberated.

Now what did you do? What happened? Do you remember when that happened?

What happened? It was on a Friday. It wasn't a Friday evening. And the only thing I knew was Friday, Friday evening. And all of a sudden there were the guards were shooting left and right. And the only thing I knew about it, I got shot in the leg too. I was shot in the leg. See, the only thing I got shot in the leg. And later on, I was liberated. See?

Bullet went out here.

Bullet went in one side.

Bullet in here, and went out over here. And I got shot. And I got liberated. May 8, 19--

Now just what happened after you got shot?

No, no. This was all otherwise this was already on the end. I got shot. And after I got shot, I was liberated by General Mark Clark's army.

But when you were shot, you were shot by the German guards.

This was right before the end, by the German guard, right?

Who took care of your wound? Who took care--

I was laying between the other dead people, and the American army came in. And just selected me out, because I was still alive.

And you still had your wound?

Yeah, I still. That wound stays forever. And I also got bitten many times by German dogs. Those German dogs, they used to bite us. And they were trained over there. And I got scars that you see when a dog bites you, you can never-- that scar remains forever. And the Germans, they used to call the dog. You see, the German soldier used to call the dog, the SS, mensch man. Catch that dog. Otherwise, he was the man and I was the dog.

And I used to get bitten like this many times. He used to just let those dogs run freely, and they used to just bite us and everything else. And I also didn't reveal that I also was in a concentration camp with Spaniards.

With Spaniards?

Right.

Spanish people.

Yeah, but I was in a concentration camp in Mauthausen, see with Spaniards, those Spaniards see when they had what do you call it? When Franco had an uprising, what year did that take place in? 1934?

'38 or '39.

No, it was before then.

Yes, '35, '36. '36 I guess.

Hundreds of them, otherwise these Spaniards where they uprising against Franco, either he executed them or he requested Hitler he should take them all in concentration camp. And I was with 500 Spaniards in Mauthausen. And when I came to Mauthausen, and some of them were doctors. They helped me in a lot of different ways, doctors, or barbers, or anything. So they said they fought against Franco and Franco requested Hitler and Hitler accepted their request. And they put every one of them in a concentration camp. And they were just like one of us.

Now, tell me about the liberation. So you remember the day that happened? You said it was a Friday.

Right, OK. The day of the liberation was on a Friday evening. That's when I heard the guards that we were liberated. Then the guards start shooting. We start to run over there, and see if we can get out of the camp. And that's when I got shot. And later on, I found myself in a field hospital. And I was attended by the American army. The only thing I knew is I was liberated by the General Mark Clark's army.

What were your feelings then?

Great.

Were you amazed that you had survived?

I Certainly am.

Now, then what happened?

Then I stayed there for about two or three weeks, till they got me on my feet. And then I went to look for my relatives.

Where did you look?

First, I went to Czechoslovakia.

How?

Did you have money? Did anybody help you at this time?

No, no, no, no. I didn't have any money. And the reason I survived also even on a death march too, I never carried anything with me, just my clothes and that was it. Yeah, I didn't have any money. But the Allied army did accommodate us with all the things what we needed, and gave us clothes, and so forth.

And then tell me about looking for your relatives.

Well, I mean I kept looking. I went to Czechoslovakia and traveled, did travel freely. So I went looking for my relatives. And fortunately, I did find my older brother.

How did you find him?

I found him in Budapest. Yeah, I kept asking friends, did you know Sidney, Sidney Newman, or whatever. Made a lot of friends over there and start asking them questions. What concentration camp you were and when you were liberated and so forth. So I start asking them. And finally I did contact some friends what they were in one of the concentration camps where my brother was. And they said your brother is alive.

So I found him in Budapest, and that was about three or four months later. And this was the only, me and my brother, this was the only--

How did he Look Did he look any different from--

No, he looked fair. After you were liberated, he looked fair.

Then what happened?

Then after the war, and otherwise I stayed in Hungary. And there was no future. I mean we didn't have anybody. Me and my brother, we didn't have anybody. And we went back to Austria. So I went back to Austria and wound up in a beautiful displaced person camp. And we stayed in Austria in a beautiful camp.

And your brother was with you now? Your brother was with you also?

Yes. At that time already, I did unite with my brother. And my brother was with me.

And he was at the camp also?

And he was at a displaced person camp. They it took us to a beautiful place, Bad Gastein. And this was one, I mean it's a resort. It was a fabulous place, like Goering and all those big, I mean it was all the dignitaries came at that place. It's a ski resort. But it's one of the beautiful places in the world.

And I stayed there and I got me after the war, I got me a job with the US Army. And I didn't have anybody. And I met this older lady which I started working for her. And she was the head of the UNRRA. UNRRA was an organization

where they helped a lot of these displaced persons.

United Nations Refugee Organization.

Right, [NON-ENGLISH], she was a nice, very nice old lady. And she gave me an advice one time. And she says, Marvin, you're under 18 years old. And I know you don't have anybody in the world. You see, even after the war so she says to me like this. You're an orphan. You don't have anybody in the world. Why don't you go to the Children's Bureau and register yourself. You're an orphan and why don't you make an application, your age of under 18 and register yourself, and you will have a good chance to go to the United States.

And I just took her advice and followed up.

Did your brother also do that?

No, my brother was older. And it took my brother five years later to come to the United States.

Was there any talk at that time of going to Israel?

I didn't want to go to Israel because all the things what I went through, I just wasn't ready to fight because there was a lot of people in the camps. A lot of people like the masters, and the guy, these Jewish people what were in charge in a displaced person camp. I should go fight for that. And I believe in my heart that I'm a good Jew, but I just wasn't ready to go through more hell. Yeah, so I was waiting patiently and I worked for the army and the UNRRA.

I helped unload trucks and everything. And the time just came. And at one time, it come over there that I'm getting the visa and I will be shipped to Bremen harbor. And then I came to the United States as an orphan.

And then what happened?

Well, actually, I was told that Mrs. Roosevelt brought out a lot of orphan children where they didn't have any parents.

Excuse me, did you know any English at that time? Could you speak English?

Yes. Yes, I did. But I didn't speak as good as I speak now. But I did speak English because I was a youngster. And surrounding by the UNRRA and by the American army over there, we used to go to Salzburg. And pick up stuff for the army. So I did learn and picked up. By the time I came to this country, I did speak English.

And what happened to you when you came here?

Yeah, OK. When I came to Brooklyn as an orphan, I stayed there about 10 days. And naturally, I didn't have anybody. So they couldn't place me. I wanted to stay in New York but they had too many orphans over there. And they couldn't find a place for me. And then one day, they ask. A caseworker, a social worker calls me in. And he says, Marvin, would you like to go to Los Angeles, or you would like to go to Chicago, or Minneapolis, or all these places.

And then they said, would you like to go-- we have another place to go it's not too far. He says, would you like to go to Cleveland? We will set you on a train, and you will sleep overnight, and we'll ship you to Cleveland. And I discussed over there. And I says, I'll take a chance. I'll go to Cleveland. So when I came to Cleveland, I wound up in Bellefaire because I was an orphan and I didn't have anybody. And I stayed there for about six or eight months till something popped.

I did get a job over there.

Did you go to school at the time?

I did go to school a little bit, but not much. Mainly I did teach myself or whatever it is. I am reading papers every day,

and that's how I picked that language up and increased my language much better than it was, and how to use it. And fortunately, I stayed at this one job for a year and it wasn't a well-paying job.

And I met some more friends over here. Met more friends.

Friends from?

No, no. some new friends.

You made friends.

Yeah, I made friends in Cleveland. And the job I did wasn't a job for me. It was a presser. But me being raised on a farm and hard work, and I seen other guys too. So I did want to become a bricklayer. So I went to the union and kept bugging them, they should give me a job. And I told them I don't have anybody. I talked to these business agents, and these Scotch people. They were business agents. They said you want to get a job just like this.

So he says, well, he says, on Wednesday nights we have meetings. And maybe we can assign you a contractor, so you'll be an apprentice for three years. And I kept bugging them. I kept going there. What have I got to lose? So they finally found me a place. And this guy I worked for as a-- he says, I will give you a chance for three weeks. If you can adjust yourself three weeks how to start and being a bricklayer, he says you will have yourself a job.

So after three weeks he took me down to the union and he signed me up. And I became a bricklayer. And after three years I improved my English. And I also went to school once a week in a trade school, and I graduated as a fine bricklayer. And this is the only work I've been doing ever since.

Now where did you live after Bellefaire?

After Bellefaire, I went out on my own. I went out on my own and supported myself. And things were starting to look up.

And how did you meet your wife?

My wife, I met-- we got married, in fact, I met her. We used to hang out on 123rd and Superior at that time where I used to live. And I met her right on the corner. And I met her in 1952 and we got married in 1953. And we've been together ever since.

Tell me, at that time did you think much about the Holocaust? Did you think much about what you had been through?

I thought about it very much that it was a very sad thing that the whole world stood by and said nothing about it. They said nothing about it. Otherwise, we were just like animals. And we were slaughtered year in and year out. And there was just no end to it.

And now as you think back, how do you think of it?

It backfires. See, all the problems what I went through is it backfires on a lot of times. It comes, keeps coming back. Yeah. Otherwise, I mean not in the daytime, but at night it comes back that I see all those things happening. So it keeps coming back. But after I wake, everything is back to normal.

Now, have you been to Israel at all?

Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

When? During the--

I went there. Me and my wife and took our younger son in 1978.

This was for the reunion for the Holocaust?

No, no, no.

Just to visit?

I didn't go to the reunion.

You didn't.

No, no. I didn't participate in that.

Now, but in 1978, you went to Yad Vashem.

Yeah, I went to just I wanted to see Israel. And we had some distant relatives over there, and I wanted to see them. In fact, they went there before Hitler came to power. And I wanted to see them, going back many years. And well I mean, that Holocaust is just a museum. That's all it is.

Do you remember how you felt when you saw the Memorial?

I actually, I see even today, I'm cold all and everything. I mean I don't get emotional or anything, because after going through all that what you would say, after going through all that hell, so it's neither do I get carried away, neither do I get excited. Because I went through just as much as any other author. The only thing is they're writing books about it. And they're writing books about it, and just I got just as much material as they do.

Oh, yes. No, your stories.

The only thing is, is I feel proud and I want to thank somebody up there what he gave me all that power to have the vision and to survive.

Now, you have a picture of--

Yes.

I'd like to see the other side.

Yes, I have a picture over here. I have a picture over here. I have a picture over here of me right here. And this picture was taken in Dachau right by the cremating place. And it says this area is being retained as a shrine to the 238,000 individuals who were cremated here. Please don't destroy. And I am right here on this corner.

Now, when was that picture taken?

This picture was taken in middle or late 1945. I went to look for my dad, and I heard some kind of news that he was liberated. And when I came there that my dad has passed. After 10 days, he died after he was liberated. And he was buried in a mass grave.

Buried? So you were then about?

I was then about--

You were 16.



Not quite.

It was after--

It was 1945, going on 16. Yes.

Very handsome, handsome boy there.

Yeah, I even noticed. I even had a cigarette.

I thought that was a cigarette.

Yeah, I even had a cigarette in my hand. And I even had a cigarette in my hand and I just I had to do something after the war, with all these things going through. So--

You started smoking.

Yeah, smoking.

Who are the others in the picture?

The others in the picture are also some of the--

Survivors.

Some of the survivors who look for their relatives.

Let me ask you a question.

Sure.

What can you say to people years from now about the Holocaust? What would you like to say to them?

What I would like to say to people years from now that people should have a heart. People should have a heart, and not pick, especially on Jews. I know there was a lot of other people executed. And I witnessed it every day. But not pick on a very small, the smallest minority in the world that it shouldn't never happen again.

Well your story is an amazing story. And it's an amazing story of survival.

Yes.

Because it's one that shows that with a feeling of hope and determination you can survive.

You can survive.

And you survived the hell.

Yes.

That we don't wish anyone.

Another thing is, I want to say is I'm very proud to be in this country. And this country is the greatest. That's all I can say.

Well, I hope it remains so.

And I hope it remains so. But this country is the greatest and it means everything to me. And I think there is no other country in the world like it.

Well, I think your story will help keep this country great if we can listen and remember.

I hope so.

If we can remember which we have to do.

Thank you very much for coming.

Thank you very much for giving up your time and being with me here.

Well it was very heartening to hear your story, very heart rendering. This is Donald Freedheim. Our Holocaust survivor today has been Marvin Newman. And this project is sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women, the Cleveland section. Thank you again. Thank you, Marvin.

Thank you very much. And it was nice and a pleasure to be here.

Thank you.