

Riane Gruss

Tape 1, Side A

April 22, 1994

R-50.106*0113.01.06

Abstract

Riane Wohl Gruss was born August 18, 1932 in Vienna, Austria and she had a brother, Stefan, who was 18 months younger than her. Her parents lived half the time in Poland and half the time in Austria while the children remained in Vienna until the Anschluss. Her governess and a companion smuggled Riane and her brother through Switzerland to Krakow. Soon the War began and the family fled East towards the Romanian border. The father was jailed and the rest of the family was deported to Siberia. The train east took six weeks. Their cattle car was crowded with 70 people but the Russian guards opened the doors and gave them food at least twice a day. Riane had learned some Polish from her new governess and in Siberia she was registered in school and was taught how to read and write Russian and Russian politics while her mother worked in the forest. Her uncle was working out-of-town so did not get deported and was able to send them food packages to supplement their diet.

This part takes Riane from her arrival in Siberia to her return to Poland by train and escape to Hungary. In Siberia the 14 relatives lived in a hut where they all slept on one long bunk and had an outhouse. In order to obtain food rations, the adults worked with the tall grass while the children went to school. They were taught that Stalin was their hero. They only got food staples, no vegetables. They had no toys so she played word, string and jumping games with her cousins. Her mother was constantly worried about Riane's father and suddenly the three of them were allowed to leave for home. First they had to prove who they were and then the uncle sent them money for a ticket. They took a horse and buggy to the train and after 11 days arrived in Moscow and then continued through Ukraine to Poland. The uncle met them at the station and took them to his home where they saw Riane's father after 18 months. A relative from New York had obtained Bolivian passports for them in Switzerland so Riane's father was set free. When the Germans occupied Poland, the parents sent Riane and her brother to live on a farm for a few months. After the uncle escaped to Hungary, the three of them followed him to Budapest.

This part begins with the family arriving in Budapest. The father goes into trading business with the uncle and they live on earnings from the mother's diamond pin for a year. Soon the family gets arrested and taken to a nearby detention camp while their papers got checked. The false papers were accepted and they were released but required to live an hour away, in Langhollen (?) where they rented a villa. There they were surrounded by non-Jews and had to fake their way into the community, especially with the church routine. When the Germans checked them out to see if they were Jewish, Riane went with her mother and the father was replaced by the children's teacher's husband and Stefan presented as his son. They started making preparations to cross the Romanian border. The children stayed with a Hungarian lady and the parents elsewhere. After a

few weeks they went to Szeged to arrange for the border crossing. Other immigrants were tortured and told about them so they were arrested. They hired a local lawyer who got them out of the Szeged jail and they returned to Budapest. The father suffered a gall bladder attack and the lawyer arranged for the parents to go to a convent hospital while the children lived with the uncle's girl friend. Then they were placed with a janitor in a Dutchman's villa and the parents joined them just when the Russians were bringing the War to a close.

No summary for part four of the interview.

This part begins in Vienna when the children are taken to Krakow to reunite with their parents who have obtained visas for Brazil. While awaiting passage, Riane helped out at the family antique store and lived in an office with her family including her grandfather and aunt. Then they traveled through Warsaw to get to Stockholm where they waited a few months. Meanwhile her father went to Switzerland to try to arrange some business for their livelihood in Brazil and her mother suffered a miscarriage. They take a freighter from Goteborg to Brazil. Her father's daughter from his first marriage meets them at the pier and her father's former partner rented them two rooms. The half-sister helped Riane enter the American School in 9th grade. Upon graduation, she decided to get away from home as her parents argued regarding the mother's unhappiness, she has little rapport with those her age and secretarial school was the only recourse for her in Brazil. She went to the US and had to take a secretarial course before starting college as her father wanted to be assured she could earn a living. She met her future husband, Oscar Gruss, and he visited her in Brazil during her vacation there on school break.

This last part begins with Riane marrying Emanuel in New York where she continues to reside. They have two daughters and she enjoyed viewing their development. Riane does not continue with school nor work as she feels her early education was incomplete. Her husband had gone to England just before the War and remained there to finish his education when War broke out. Then he immigrated to the US where he entered the Army. Her only outspoken anti-Semitic experience was in 1973 in Krakow at a restaurant when a couple seated nearby pointed out that Riane did not finish her food as it was not good enough for her and she has a Jewish nose. Another Polish family helped her on a hiking trail. She feels more American than Polish but different from others due to her accent and past experiences. Riane loves America but feels that American Jews are cocky and focus on their Jewish background. She built a house in Israel because her uncle lived there and she wanted her daughters to speak fluent Hebrew. She studied Hebrew but just to speak, not to pray in it. Many relatives died in the Holocaust and she would not want to live in Germany. She hopes her interview will be used by a historian to learn about the life of Hungarian Jewish children during the War.

Summary

00:00 Riane Wohl Gruss was born August 18, 1932 in Vienna, Austria. Her parents, Atol (?) Wohl and Giselle Stiegfrey Wohl were born in Krakow and she had a brother, Stefan,

who was 18 months younger than her. Her parents lived half the time in Poland where they had family and half the time in Austria which her mother preferred. Riane and her brother remained in Vienna when their parents went to Poland. They were mostly raised by a governess or a nurse. They lived this way until May 1938. In 1945 Riane visited her old home which was in the center of Vienna, in the 3rd district near the Belvedere Palace. It was a walk-up on the 3rd floor. It was the nicest section of Vienna, not a Jewish area. Her father was a banker and an industrialist. He had banks in Poland and Switzerland and furniture and brick factories in Vienna. She did not begin school in Vienna as she was seven when the War broke out and school begins at seven there. She registered in Poland for school but did not attend. Her family was not religious but she recalls Passover '38 in Poland. The family felt Jewish and knew they were Jewish but only practiced the traditions, such as attending synagogue, after the War.

05:00 She had few playmates as children were isolated due to the fear of contagion. Her brother was her usual playmate. Occasionally, she saw other children. She did not attend nursery school. That is the way that the more affluent brought up their children. Her cousins were in Poland so she had no contact with them. After the Anschluss, Riane and her brother left with their governess by train. Riane was not frightened, just surprised as she was not with her parents. They were smuggled through Switzerland by the governess and a young man who posed as the governess' husband and father of the two children who had no documents. The man was Aisfry (?) Landau, her father's friend, and he still lives in Switzerland. Upon their arrival in Krakow, they were met by their parents who said this would be their new permanent home. A new governess who spoke Polish was hired as the children only knew German and had to learn to speak Polish. They saw their relatives including the two grandfathers and cousins.

10:00 . Her parents had a large apartment in Krakow on the 2nd floor above the bank which was on the main floor. It was at the corner of Sarago (?) and Gertud (?) Streets near the moat which is now a park. Her mother was nervous but did not tell her why. It was '38, the year before the War, and life was normal. She was always upset and screamed when it rained and thundered. Riane thought things were not as nice as before but does not know exactly why. Her governess took her to the park. Her father was still learning Polish and said something which was funny as it was a direct translation from the German. When her grandparents and cousins visited, Riane realized they did things differently since they kissed their hands. She did not attend school so had limited contact with children. Her father was established and worldly and had traveled all over the world before he married. He was not close to the family and her mother was only close to her own family and had lost contact while living away.

15:00 When the War broke out September 1, 1939 there was a terrible commotion with screaming, yelling and packing. Her parents were at home and were nervous. They had her father's car and another car and were deciding who should ride in each and what items

to pack. Riane rode with her father's youngest sister, her 14-year-old and the brother-in-law who was in charge of the Krakow branch. (Stefania, Lem and Regina). They drove to the new governess' town. Her name was Amelia but they called all the governesses "Peta" which was baby talk for sister in German. Riane was frightened and uncomfortable in the car as it was a long trip and the car was crowded. The family was undecided where to go. Her father was optimistic and thought they would be comfortable at the governess's house where she lived with her parents. Riane's mother wanted to go straight to Romania without stopping but her father thought she was in panic. They did not leave Krakow until September 3rd as the public needed a few days to withdraw their money from his bank. There was a lot of tension. Riane did not understand about the Germans, just knew that they had invaded Poland. Children were sheltered and never ate with their parents. They stayed two or three days at the governess' home. There was bombing, sirens and the sound of planes so they went down to the cellar. The house was crowded.

- 20:00 There were 14 people in all in both cars. It was noisy in the shelter and they saw the planes coming down low and heard the siren which was frightening. It was worse than lightening which frightened her. They continued traveling and stopped at an abandoned house where the non-Jewish owners had fled. It was roomy so they stayed a few days. The uncle was able to get gas to travel but her father was willing to remain. He was convinced to leave when they saw Polish soldiers who had deserted as the Germans had advanced. They found food in the abandoned house and bought more food and drove east to a small town of Zweter (?). They were invited into a Jewish apartment and her father wanted to stay over the Jewish holiday. The uncle wanted to drive across the Romanian border immediately. Her father had a gall bladder attack so they remained a few days.
- 25:00 They lived in uncomfortable conditions and discussed what to do next. When her father improved, they drove to Kolyma on the border and stayed in someone's more comfortable house. They found the border closed as the Russians had occupied eastern Poland and the Germans occupied western Poland. There were guides available for payment to help you cross the border. They remained so Riane recalled being placed in first grade in a Polish public school and drawing rows of As and Bs on lined paper. Her brother was too young to attend school. By then, Riane spoke Polish. The Polish children did not bother her. Kolyma was full of Jews. They spent three calm months there. It was decided that the brother, father and brother-in-law would first cross the border and later she would cross with her mother. You could not make the crossing in a large group.
- 30:00 Her aunt and cousin had crossed the border without stopping in Kolyma. It was around November 1939 that her father left and was captured and she was to leave the next day so did not follow. Her mother was crying which upset her. The guide had told her mother that the brother and father were in jail but did not know where. Her mother tried to

contact the Russian authorities as she wanted to visit her husband and pick up her son. Her mother had no contact with her husband but was permitted to pick up the son who was released nearby. Riane's mother decided they would join her family in Zwatroop (?) where her parents, an older sister and two children and her brother, his wife and their 3 children lived. With the three of them, made 14 people in their apartment. They probably took a train to Zwatroop (?). The uncle would travel a few hours away to Woof (?) where he got a job. Riane's brother did not talk of his prison experience. They did not attend school in Zwatroop (?)..

35:00 One night there was a big commotion with banging and screaming. The Russians came with trucks and loaded them up and took them to the trains for deportation. The family had thought of taking Russian citizenship but was afraid they would never be permitted to leave Russian territory. All had Polish passports so were deported. They did not know where they were going, perhaps to Siberia. There were 70 people in each cattle car with bad conditions. In the middle was a pipe to be used as a toilet. It was not covered so they hung up sheets or blankets around it. The train often stopped and the Russians would open the door and hand them soup from pots about twice a day. It took six weeks to get to Kutzkul (?) near Yatzkit (?) which was almost to Manchuria. They were often placed on side tracks. They were men, women and children all together. Both her brother and cousin got scarlet fever and were very sick so they tried to isolate them. Her mother was upset that he was so sick and they got a doctor from another car. They could sit down on their suitcases and lay stuff on the floor to sleep on. There was some light from a high window.

40:00 Her mother taught her how to darn socks and when she ran out of work to do, she made holes in the socks. She had no toys with her. They stopped at small towns and always saw life-sized statues of Stalin and Lenin. Somebody would stand on the suitcases and ask passerbys for water and food. One day they thought the statue was real and said they were sure of getting something to eat. There were arguments about space, particularly when her brother and cousin got sick. Her mother argued with her sister-in-law as everyone was anxious and needed space. Though the train often stopped, they were not let out in the six weeks. The doors were open when they were given soup, black bread and hot water. They had to wear the same clothing. There was little washing. Riane played a lot with the other children and her mother told stories. They had been deported in June and she turned eight when they arrived in August which was very hot. No one talked of escape until later when they were settled in Siberia. The men and women behaved the same though her mother had different actions and attitude from the aunt. There was lots of despair and crying but her mother did not succumb to that as she was more resourceful.

45:00 She used her charm and intelligence to gain things while others despaired. They thought that they would never get out and this was the end and her mother said it was not the end.

Riane had fear of the uncertainty and she did not like the crowded environment. She was not hungry as her mother gave her sufficient food and she was not cold. Her father was in prison and after her mother picked up the brother, they had no knowledge of his whereabouts. They did not know if he was dead or alive. Her mother talked about it as she was insecure that he was gone. The only time she showed despair was when she talked about it. Her father was never involved in their daily life and care so the two siblings did not miss him much. The journey seemed endless as they did not know where they were going or how long it would take. The guards treated them satisfactorily. Upon arrival, it was hot and they were in a forest of wheat or tall grass. There was a settlement of barracks waiting for them.

- 50:00 It was wonderful to get out of the train. The grass was almost as tall as she was. There were 10 or 15 huts with a central one where they lined up to be assigned to one. Her mother requested that the 14 relatives be placed together in one hut and she succeeded. Riane was healthy and her brother had improved but was weak and emaciated. There were many children and they were all registered for school and the adults registered for work. She was eligible for 2nd grade but did not know Russian and there were insufficient number of children for the grade so she was placed in first grade. First and third grades were in the same room. Everyone was given an ID card which was used to obtain food rations. The adults were paid with rations for their work. The bunks or Pritcher (?) were made of wood, placed on the floor and were long. All 14 slept together so if one turned, they all turned over as they were very close. Riane still cannot sleep with others. They had food but no vegetables so people got scurvy although they did not starve. Their uncle sent them food parcels as he was at work when they were deported. He wanted to join them but his friends said that he would not find them so he stayed home.
- 55:00 He made a good salary working for the Russians and was able to send them fat, sugar, tea, and coffee. The fat was lard or chicken fat and he knew the grandmother kept kosher and would not eat it so certified it himself. After the War, he told them the truth. Their work settlement had no name. It had political settlers from 11 years previously who told them there was no way to get out and they would remain forever. The area was populated by assorted deportees. At school, Riane learned to read and write in Russian and was given political indoctrination that Stalin was their leader and father.
- 60:00 When they prayed for candy, nothing happened unless they prayed to Stalin, then they got candy. They were taught glory for Communism and glory for Russia with no other subject matter. School was not unpleasant but it was a difficult walk of about one kilometer which took 10 to 15 minutes. Once the snow fell, it did not melt. All the children were given boots of heavy felt to help make the walk. They played in the snow and listened to stories at home. Lined jackets were allocated for the children and working adults. Her mother worked with the women in the taiga, cleaning it by gathering the

branches and carrying it to a central spot where it was burned. The men's duties consisted of cutting the branches so they all did physical labor.

61:00 Her mother felt well and said she never slept better in her life.

Riane Gruss

Tape 2, Side A

April 22, 1994

R-50.106*0113.02.06

Abstract

This part takes Riane from her arrival in Siberia to her return to Poland by train and escape to Hungary. In Siberia the 14 relatives lived in a hut where they all slept on one long bunk and had an outhouse. In order to obtain food rations, the adults worked with the tall grass while the children went to school. They were taught that Stalin was their hero. They only got food staples, no vegetables. They had no toys so she played word, string and jumping games with her cousins. Her mother was constantly worried about Riane's father and suddenly the three of them were allowed to leave for home. First they had to prove who they were and then the uncle sent them money for a ticket. They took a horse and buggy to the train and after 11 days arrived in Moscow and then continued through Ukraine to Poland. The uncle met them at the station and took them to his home where they saw Riane's father after 18 months. A relative from New York had obtained Bolivian passports for them in Switzerland so Riane's father was set free. When the Germans occupied Poland, the parents sent Riane and her brother to live on a farm for a few months. After the uncle escaped to Hungary, the three of them followed him to Budapest.

Summary

00:00 In August '40 Riane arrived in Siberia by train with her mother and brother. They seemed to be in the middle of nowhere but they saw huts. They scrambled to see who would get each one. The family was able to obtain a hut for the 14 relatives. At the beginning it was confusing to register, get food cards and arrange for the adults to work and the children to attend school. Most of the women were like her mother and had never worked and were given heavy physical work. At first the adults received sickles to cut the tall grass. Then they gathered and tied it. It was very hot weather. Soon they went to school. Ordinarily Riane would be eligible for 2nd grade as she was eight and could read and write Polish but there was no 2nd grade. She was placed in 1st grade where she learned Russian. She was required to attend school in order to obtain food. Her teachers were nice. She was told that Stalin was nice and would give her presents and at Christmas he would give her candy. The children prayed for candy and it did not appear until they prayed to Stalin for candy. It snowed in October and never melted. They walked to school in a ditch with high walls of snow on each side. She did not see the grownups

very much. They had to obtain wood for fire in the huts. They were never hungry as had some food. They took their ration cards to the store and were allocated food but just received staples; no vegetables so were deprived of vitamins. There was a small town nearby where people were summoned for various reasons and were fearful to go. It was usually to be recruited for other work or they were suspected of being bourgeois.

05:00 Two young people ran off to the Manchurian border and might have been caught. The Russian secret police came and asked questions. The little town nearby was Auden (?). They had lots of bed bugs in the hut. Her 15-year-old cousin had many discussions. He was a good student before the War and knew a lot of history. He thought they would never get out as Siberia is where the Russians sent people during purges and they never get out. Riane's mother thought that Hitler would be defeated and they would get out. When her mother heard negativity, she would say, "Greens of a severed head." Her mother was optimistic, clever and sophisticated, having lived in various places in Europe. Throughout the War, Riane's mother felt they would survive and made the family believe it. She made them feel important and special because of the connections her father had and who he was. She helped them survive the War and it worked. Riane played with her two female cousins, one a year younger and one a year older who now lives in Israel and are still friendly.

10:00 They mostly spoke about school – about arithmetic and how well they drew lines. They attended school on Saturday. On Sunday they stayed inside and played word games, string games like cat's cradle and jumping games. They were all invented as they had no toys. They used the space in the center of the hut. Sleeping conditions were terrible as all 14 slept on one long bunk. It was so tight that if one person turned over, everyone had to turn over. Riane says she still cannot sleep with anyone. They slept in their clothes and covered themselves with clothes such as coats and jackets. They heated water and placed it in a wooden bucket in the kitchen to occasionally wash themselves. The bathroom was an outhouse where it was very cold. Both her governess and her cousin's governess were deported along with the family as they were with them at that time. In Siberia they felt they deserved different conditions as they were working girls. They both left and lived elsewhere. One had a relationship with a guard and the other married and never left Russia. They disappeared and Riane's mother and aunt had bad feelings towards them as thought they were not loyal. Her mother could not pay the governess so they took the opportunity to leave their jobs as governesses. Life was like living in a kibbutz as they were all together. The mother, aunt and grandmother all told the children what to do. Riane's relationship with her mother was good. Her mother was always concerned with the younger brother as he was sickly. The aunt was very strict so Riane felt privileged as her mother was not strict.

15:00 It was terrible to look at her mother as she was so nervous about what happened to Riane's father. It was oppressive to hear about it all the time. Each time her mother had the opportunity to speak to a Russian guard at work or when she got her ration card, she asked about her husband but they only knew local matters. She tried to invoke their pity by explaining that

he is older and sick and she is worried. She said that he was a bank clerk rather than a bank owner. The guard responded that she is young and pretty and will find a bank clerk in Siberia. There was always a lot of snow but the school room was pleasant and warm. In April '41 her mother was summoned and told she could return to Poland with the children. She could not believe it as no one was ever set free. Since she had no money, the Russians suggested she ask her brother for a ticket for the Trans-Siberian Railroad from Vladivostok to Moscow. It was many days by horse and buggy to the last station. Riane's mother was afraid they were being tricked because the uncle had a lot of money.

20:00 They thought to make a collection for the ticket but the Russians do not make collections. To assure the uncle that Riane's mother was who she said she was, he asked for the name of the cousin who went to America in the 20s. Riane's mother responded correctly and the uncle sent the money and they took the train after spending a night nearby. Riane was excited and afraid because the rest of the family wondered where they were being taken. Her mother said they would not need this production to harm them so they trusted it. Everyone said good-bye but wondered if her mother should leave. Riane accepted their leaving as she loved her brother and they were going together and back to Europe where it was warmer and better. They were leaving the grandparents who they were not very attached to. Riane was glad to leave the aunt. Her grandma was quiet. They took their few clothes with them. Her mother watched their documents closely.

25:00 She had to get permits and train tickets. They got on the train and into a compartment with bunk beds. Riane and her brother slept on a lower bunk bed. There was a man in the compartment the entire time. He took them to the restaurant car and bought them hot chocolate. Her mother suspected that he was planted to take care of them and watch them. They were not sure why he was there. It was an eleven day trip to Moscow. Sometimes they got off and stood on the platform. Their bed was made with linen and they had good food and hot water on the luxurious train. They were in Moscow for a few hours and the man took them sight-seeing by horse and buggy. He left them there and they went on to Kiev where her mother rented a horse and buggy to see the city. Her brother saw a broken egg on the street and yelled as an egg is special. When they arrived in Krakow, their uncle was waiting on the platform. They were happy to see him and he helped with the luggage. His assistant in his antique work was there and helped them into a taxi to the uncle's home. Riane's mother inquired if he heard about her husband and he responded that he is well. It was a 10 or 15 minute ride to his home and he said the husband was there. Riane's mother screamed and fainted away when she saw him and had to be carried.

30:00 Riane's father had not been seen in one and one-half years. They went into the house and talked. The father did not meet them at the train as they felt the mother should be slowly prepared. Riane's father had been set free as a relative from New York had bought partially false Bolivian passports in Switzerland. They were partially false as obtained by the Bolivian Consul rather than in Bolivia. Her father had been moved around to 11 jails in the 18 months and was

interrogated in each jail. Perhaps they did this as they had no records on him or they wanted him to get exhausted. He suffered from hunger and was interrogated at night. He convinced the guards that he was important. He spoke five languages, was educated in Germany and said he had good connections abroad including Bernard Baruch and the Lehman Brothers. They agreed he was worth sending abroad and obtain passports.

35:00 He had a luxurious room in Bibliolanka (?) with Persian rugs and went for a daily walk. They were notified that the passports had arrived and they could leave. It had taken the officials three months to find Riane's mother and the children. First they asked Riane's mother for a photo of herself and the two children. When it arrived, they showed the photo to the father to assure they were the correct people. They were to leave for Bolivia via Japan and Russia on June 24, 1941 but Germany invaded Russia and they could not go. The Russians evacuated and took no civilians so the family remained in Lublin (?). There was shooting and marching at night and her mother said it was the Germans as they march differently and she was right. Since they had Bolivian passports, they were not placed in the Lublin (?) ghetto. They could not go out as people were rounded up as they had Actions. They knew their passports were not entire legal. There were foreigners with legal passports. Riane was scared to see the Germans as they looked super human, like G-ds. She had the feeling that if she looked like they did and dressed the same in shiny boots, they would not mistreat her. The Germans looked mighty and seemed awesome.

40:00 Riane was very afraid and her parents fought over what they should do. Her father thought they should be law-abiding and lay low with their Bolivian passports whereas her mother felt they would not survive if they remained. The family spent a year under German occupation. After two or three months, Riane and her brother went to the country with their chauffeur from before the War. Riane's parents paid the chauffeur and his wife who farmed, to take care of them. They remained about four months. Riane was happy there as she was safe and it was quiet. It was not hard to leave her mother. People were nice to them. Later a German officer hid her parents in his office. In Lublin (?) Riane played pencil games at home as they did not go out. Her brother went crazier than she as he had nothing to do but listen to the grownups. They had no school. It was two or three months before the Germans came. She had bad teeth and required fillings in her permanent teeth. Her mother taught her how to knit and darn and she put the needle in her front teeth. There was no dentist and no Novocain so they wanted to strap her to a chair.

45:00 Her parents were fighting and she remained in the alcove where her bed was. She agreed to go quietly if they stopped fighting. They dug for potatoes in the country and made a fire to roast them so had something to do. She did not climb the trees but fed the cows and had their warm milk directly from them. It was a peaceful interlude on the farm. Her parents wrote letters and she responded. The farmer took the letters into the city. The farmer had a wife and a pretty daughter about 18 or 19 years old who sat in front of a mirror and formed three round hair rolls and pinned it up. Riane thought when she grew up, she would have the same hairdo. The family got paid for caring for them. They were kind and did not convert them. Riane and her brother

helped make cookies and decorate the tree. The family told their neighbors that they were caring for the children as there is little food in the city for them. One day the farmer said the parents were going to Hungary.

50:00 They were going to an estate where a German lived and he was going to help them get to the border. The German had a relationship with a Polish woman who knew the uncle. The woman was paid for saving several Jews. The farmer's name was Ushlevy (?). A few days before Riane's birthday in April, the German asked her what she liked to eat. She responded, "tomatoes" and he brought her four tomatoes. The Polish lady was killed after the War for being a collaborator. Her parents hid in the wardrobe in his office as it was important to get their children out. Although they had passports, they thought they would be deported. They decided to cross to Hungary which was risky though less risky than remaining. First the uncle went as he had no foreign passport. He was called a "necessary" Jew as he helped the Germans to choose what to steal. He was an expert and could tell what is a good carpet or china and had done the same for the Russians. He stayed in a warehouse and left with someone running it. He was arrested twice and badly beaten. The Germans got him out and he suffered so he decided to escape to Hungary. The family had a terrible experience crossing to Hungary. Though the guards were bribed they sometimes took the people to the police. The family was defenseless as they were walking along forest trails and crossing a river

55:00 They were afraid as it was risky. Her father slipped on the rocks and lost his glasses in the river. Riane found them and he was happy about it the rest of his life as he could not see without them. They arrived early in Munkachevo, Hungary and had no place to go so sat in the park. Her father's suit was wet so he was uncomfortable. Hungary was not occupied and Munkachevo had many Jews so her parents approached people for help but no one responded. Perhaps the residents thought if they had nothing to do with them, evil would not happen. Finally, someone who lived on the outskirts put them up in her barn and gave them food. Her father had arranged a meeting point with the uncle who was to obtain Christian passports for them. Her father got the papers and the family was taken by car to Budapest.

60:00 Riane's new name was "Maria Bulinski (?)" and her brother was Stefan Bulinski (?). They had to pass a police post where cars were stopped and you had to show your identification. Her mind went blank when the car was stopped as she forgot her name and she trembled. The guard spoke to the driver who said they were relatives and they did not have to identify themselves. When the car started up again, Riane told her mother that she forgot her name and was told not to worry. They went to a pension in the outskirts of Budapest where they had plenty of food and comfortable rooms as living was cheap. Once her father went into the city and returned.

61:00

Riane Gruss

Tape 3, Side A

April 22, 1994

R-50.106*0113.03.06

Abstract

This part begins with the family arriving in Budapest. The father goes into trading business with the uncle and they live on earnings from the mother's diamond pin for a year. Soon the family gets arrested and taken to a nearby detention camp while their papers got checked. The false papers were accepted and they were released but required to live an hour away, in Langhollen (?) where they rented a villa. There they were surrounded by non-Jews and had to fake their way into the community, especially with the church routine. When the Germans checked them out to see if they were Jewish, Riane went with her mother and the father was replaced by the children's teacher's husband and Stefan presented as his son. They started making preparations to cross the Romanian border. The children stayed with a Hungarian lady and the parents elsewhere. After a few weeks they went to Szeged to arrange for the border crossing. Other immigrants were tortured and told about them so they were arrested. They hired a local lawyer who got them out of the Szeged jail and they returned to Budapest. The father suffered a gall bladder attack and the lawyer arranged for the parents to go to a convent hospital while the children lived with the uncle's girl friend. Then they were placed with a janitor in a Dutchman's villa and the parents joined them just when the Russians were bringing the War to a close.

Summary

00:00 The family arrives in Budapest and stay at a Bastion (citadel) while Riane's father takes a short train ride to meet the uncle and others to do some trading. Her mother sold her diamond pin which gave them sufficient funds to live on for a year as expenses were cheap there. There was trading in stones such as diamonds, in dollars and English pounds by Jews and non-Jews and gentile refugees. People traded for their living. They were not in hiding. Her father was arrested as they were checking his papers for legitimacy. His papers were false as residency papers were required. The police asked where his family was and he responded and they were all arrested and placed in a detention camp in the center of Budapest. They were scared that they would be sent back to Poland as all Jews were handled in that manner. The men and women were separated. There was a courtyard in the center with a huge tree. Her brother had found a baby squirrel one day and took him home several months before the arrest. He was tame and her brother loved it. The family was permitted to return home to obtain their necessities and the squirrel jumped into the brother's pocket. The policeman had never seen such a thing and thus the squirrel went to prison and would run up and down the tree. They were released a few days later as the papers were accepted and they took the squirrel home.

05:00 The papers were actually false. They were never asked background questions such as the name of the grandparents. Often people would invent names. One woman would pick an object she viewed and added a Polish ending to make up a name. The family was released after 10

days. Riane had memorized what her mother taught her including her grandma's name and basic prayers including "Holy Mary" and "Father in Heaven" as they were supposed to be Christian children. They knew them in Polish as her mother had attended a Catholic church. They returned home but were not permitted to remain as large groups of refugees were not permitted in one place. The squirrel grew and ran into the forest and her brother got upset. They moved to Langhollen (?), a permitted area which was an hour away. It was like a concentration camp but they were able to rent a villa. The problem was they were surrounded mostly by non-Jews and had to pretend they were Poles who were not Jewish. They led a fairly normal life. They were not in hiding. Her mother searched for someone to care for her brother and her. She found a young lady who was a non-Jewish Polish teacher who had left Poland in '39. Her husband was a tenor in the Poznan opera. The teacher, Helen Warshinski (?) was paid and was happy to take care of them all day long. She took them on picnics and made a schedule for dictation, arithmetic, lunch, etc.

10:00 They sang a Polish song in honor of the uncle's birthday. He did not live with them. He lived with Polish friends. He earned his livelihood by buying and selling. Riane's father used her mother's jewelry and money from Switzerland for their living expenses. The uncle had no contact with his family in Siberia. It was thought that they were not killed. Riane's family's life was OK and they went to church on Sunday until the Germans marched in. Riane was always afraid that she would do things wrong as she was not Christian. She had to stand up at the correct time, take communion correctly, speak Polish correctly with no Jewish words and say the prayers at the correct time. Today Riane cannot stand it when people mix English and Yiddish. It was a matter of life and death to do everything correctly. Children pick up accents easily. She hates the smell of incense. Just before puberty she got terrible headaches and thought the incense and tension produced them. Going to church made her nervous as they were in danger. She thought of death a lot. She knew that each time they were arrested, the episode was more dangerous. If they were sent back to Poland, they would be killed. There was nothing terrible happening in Budapest.

15:00 The border guards would hand you over to the Gestapo and you would be killed. Everyone talked about who was sent back and why they thought their papers were better and they tried to speak correctly. It was a sure death if they were discovered. Living under false papers was dangerous. When the Germans came they set up a desk and everyone in the village had to report for inspection. They were lined up to determine if they were Jewish. Her family was afraid as their papers were false and perhaps others would denounce them. The men and women were lined up separately. Riane went with her mother to register. It was more dangerous for the men as they could be examined. The teacher's husband was shorter than but husky like the father so he replaced the father in the line and took along the brother as his son. In 1973 Riane visited Poland and saw the teacher and her husband in Poznan. After the War, Riane sent money to the couple. After the inspection, the family decided to run away immediately. First

the parents had a fight as the father thought they could stay as they passed the inspection but the mother thought they would be discovered.

20:00 Riane and her brother stayed with a Christian lady in Budapest and their parents stayed elsewhere. The family spent the next three to four weeks making arrangements to illegally cross the Romanian border. There was a wave of people going to Palestine before the Germans arrived. Her uncle was a Zionist and tried to get transport, an affidavit and false papers for her mother and Stefan but did not succeed. They went to Szeged where people lined up to go to Romania. They rented a room from an aristocratic land owner with property on the border and had to go through his land. There were many parties so it was not noticeable with a lot of people around. There was a party before some people were caught and tortured and gave out their address. The police came when the uncle was not at home and arrested them and took them to the Szeged jail. The men and women were placed in separate cells. She was in a cell with miserable conditions and some local prostitutes. Riane was terrified that the Hungarian police was going to hand them over to the Gestapo. She cried that she was too young to die and it was easier for her mother who already had a life. They felt close to being sent back. They were in the jail a few days.

25:00 Once a week the Gestapo came and people were handed over. The day before this event, they got released in the custody of a local Hungarian lawyer. The uncle had returned and realized the family was taken and found money hidden in a picture. He returned to Budapest and went to the Polish Committee and told them what happened. They thought the only transgression was that the father was not supposed to be in Szeged and invented a story that he was looking for work. They paid off a prominent lawyer who got them out of jail and took them to his home. He fed them and had them bathe. Riane had been in a small cell with two local women. Her mother was able to converse with the father in the corridor. To pass the time, her mother would tell stories of what was going to happen after the War. Riane got closer to her mother. She felt her mother was strong but the uncle was the strongest. He had arranged flight from Poland to Hungary, brought them items and told stories how he outwitted the enemy so seemed immortal, indestructible and Riane worshipped him as a G-d. Riane's mother was the next best but she was a woman. Her father was sick with a gall bladder attack when they were in Szeged so the lawyer arranged for him to go to a hospital. Riane and her brother took a train to Budapest and were taken care of by the uncle's girl friend while the parents went to a convent hospital.

30:00 Riane did not realize that her father was so sick. The priest came to hear the father's last confession but he could not do it well in Hungarian so spoke in Polish. Afterwards the father improved. The parents remained in the hospital for a few weeks. Riane and her brother could not leave the woman's house and then they were placed with a janitor of a villa owned by an antique dealer but now occupied by a Dutchman doing business with the Germans. The previous owner survived in a safe house. They were in Buda on top of a mountain with the janitor when the parents returned from the hospital. The Russians were close to ending the War. Riane's

brother was a nuisance. Her father was close to 50 when the brother was born and it was a second marriage. The father did not know about caring for children and the brother was lively and had nothing to do. The father was constantly yelling at him and the uncle was beating him up.

35:00 Riane said that she was mature and quiet. She knew how to darn and later learned to read and played word games. Her parents fought about the brother and her mother protected him. Riane thought the brother was the problem, not the circumstances. Riane did not confide her fears with her brother but took care of him and played with him. She did an oral history when they lived in Brazil in Portuguese. Her brother did one there for a program for Jewish refugees. They asked what people carry when they run away. The brother's perception was different from hers as they were afraid of different things. She tolerated him. She identified with the grownups and knew you had to behave. When Riane had her own children, she realized what children need.

Riane Gruss

Tape 4, Side A

April 22, 1994

R-50.106*0113.03.06

Time-coded notes not available for this part of the interview.

Riane Gruss

Tape 5, Side A

March 1, 1999

R-50.106*0113.05.06

Abstract

This part begins in Vienna when the children are taken to Krakow to reunite with their parents who have obtained visas for Brazil. While awaiting passage, Riane helped out at the family antique store and lived in an office with her family including her grandfather and aunt. Then they traveled through Warsaw to get to Stockholm where they waited a few months. Meanwhile her father went to Switzerland to try to arrange some business for their livelihood in Brazil and her mother suffered a miscarriage. They take a freighter from Goteborg to Brazil. Her father's daughter from his first marriage meets them at the pier and her father's former partner rented them two rooms. The half-sister helped Riane enter the American School in 9th grade. Upon graduation, she decided to get away from home as her parents argued regarding the mother's unhappiness, she has little rapport with those her age and secretarial school was the only recourse

for her in Brazil. She went to the US and had to take a secretarial course before starting college as her father wanted to be assured she could earn a living. She met her future husband, Oscar Gruss, and he visited her in Brazil during her vacation there on school break.

Summary

00:00 The discussion starts regarding Riane's school experience in Vienna. The old German textbooks could not be used after the War so everything was written down through dictation. The classroom was so cold that they wore gloves. She found it difficult to write down the German as she was not very competent in it. Riane and her brother attended school in order to obtain the soup that was served. A man arrived and said that her parents said to bring the children to them. She was happy to go. The man was involved in smuggling. Her parents had asked the man to bring them to Poland as they obtained visas to Brazil. He traveled back and forth between Vienna and Krakow in his car. At first he told the parents that he had no room for the children so he did not bring a note from them. Then he decided it would be advantageous to him to travel with children so he would look less suspicious. They drove to Brno, Czechoslovakia where Riane was given her own room in a hotel and for dinner had goose which was the best she ever had. The next day they drove to Krakow where her parents were very happy to see the children. She just owned a few belongings and brought them with her. Her parents lived in the office of a distant cousin as they could not return to their apartment which had become a government building. Her mother had reopened the antique gallery that Riane's grandfather owned. Riane did not go to school. She only walked to the store where she sat at the entrance and told beggars to return on Friday, the traditional day to give them money.

05:00 She was not well and went to the doctor who said she would be fine. This was around the end of May or June. Riane watched her mother talking to the customers and she ran errands. The grandfather and the mother's oldest sister returned from Siberia and they were reunited. Her grandfather was quiet but Riane learned something about Judaism as he ate kosher. Her mother showed her a shelf of Riane's grandfather's dishes and was told not to touch them. They all lived in the office so it was crowded. It was the office of the father's cousin who had imported watches from Switzerland before the War. Riane's parents placed a cabinet on the floor and used it as their bed. The rest of the family slept on chairs except her grandfather slept on the sole bed. Then they took a train to Warsaw and from there to Stockholm. Warsaw was in ruin with buildings destroyed but had been cleaned up a bit. It was not as bad as Budapest. They never went to any Jewish memorials such as the ghetto. Now people visit them. They needed help after the War so went to Brazil. No one, not even her schoolmates were interested in the Wartime experiences. Now it seems there is too much about the Holocaust. There is overdose on artificial characteristics of the Holocaust.

10:00. Riane still likes to read novels about the Holocaust, not like her own experience. She feels there is an obsession about it. It seems like too much and not all seems sincere. After the War, her mother was gratified as her parents asked Riane if she wanted to remain Jewish and

both Riane and her brother said, "yes." They owned Christian papers so had the possibility to stay Christian as others did. People took different options to recovery. She decided to remain Jewish as she was too young, had not studied and was born that way. Riane feels that being Jewish is not a full-time occupation. The family went to Sweden by train and waited there a few months to obtain passage on a ship to Brazil. They obtained a ticket on a freighter which took a few months to get to Brazil. It was hard to get out of Sweden as so many people were leaving. Riane felt that it would be a positive experience to go to another country. They had flown on an airplane with seats on the sides from Krakow to Warsaw. They got the freighter in Goteborg.

15:00 She knew Sweden was a neutral country and never destroyed so it would be heaven. It was a good country and prosperous so they would be comfortable. Riane was not unhappy to leave Poland as she had no roots there, having lived there just two months. She had a good feeling to leave as they were beginning something new. They had to settle somewhere. They lived in a Pension in Sweden. It was comfortable but the food was terrible as was different. They had lots of cold fish and herring and dessert was salty, not sweet. They left Poland in July and arrived in Sweden in August and there was a little sunshine. She noticed that people would sit on the steps of the Opera House and face the sun. Riane only understood a few words in Swedish that were like German. Her needs were taken care of in their boarding house. While they waited to arrange for a ship, her father went to Switzerland to figure out what work he could do in Brazil. He had been there during World War I and knew some people. His partner, Robin Landau had been in Brazil since '40 and had connections with the watch industry. He represented Omega and Tessa (?) watch companies. The family went to Brazil with Landau's capital as he owed the father money for imported Swiss watches. Riane's father went to Switzerland to develop relationships with manufacturers for two or three weeks instead of just waiting around for passage. Riane's mother was not well as she miscarried and was upset. At the time Riane just knew her mother was sick and bleeding as she helped clean her up. Later Riane found out that after her father left, her mother found out that she was pregnant and could not get an abortion in Sweden and could not travel with a baby so she induced the miscarriage.

20:00 The family took a beautiful train ride to Goteborg where they stayed awhile. Her brother got a bicycle in Sweden. They obtained their ticket for the ship to Brazil and arrived there in October '46. Riane had turned 17 in August in Sweden. There were 11 passengers on the small freighter. They were with another family but no children. Riane learned to play bridge as the captain and officers needed a 4th player. She felt queasy but not as seasick as the others. She knew that Brazil had a hot climate and that Rio, the capitol, was a beautiful city. The family knew some people there including the partner and the father's two daughters from the first wife. One had a son who was 2 and ½ years younger than her and a year younger than her brother. Riane imagined it would be a permanent home but her mother was unhappy as she preferred to go to Palestine with the uncle. Her father did not want to go to Palestine.

25:00 Her mother felt that Brazil was culturally different and she had nothing in common with the people there. Riane thought her mother was exaggerating and negative and wanted to be

positive like her father. If her father decided to do something, he did not have a second thought and wanted to make it work. Her mother thought Brazil was a strange and tropical country and it was no sense to go. Riane's mother said the brother would get used to it and would marry out of faith which did happen. Her mother spoke about the difficult Siberian train ride and difficult war experiences. She felt they had gone through so much and felt they should now have a better life. Riane did not worry about the brother marrying out of the faith and felt you should give the country a chance as it might be a good country. Her mother was a great story teller and amusing. She had vivid memories. It was the beginning of summer in Brazil and there was no air conditioning except at the movies so they would go there. Riane's half-sister met them at the pier. The former partner rented then two rooms, a bathroom and a kitchen in a residential hotel that was hot and full of cockroaches. Her mother instructed her to knock at the bathroom door to frighten the cockroaches away. It was middle class, not a slum nor luxurious.

30:00 On the second evening they were invited to dinner at the father's former partner's luxurious, enormous apartment. Such apartments only exist, even today, only in Brazil. The partner made money during the war from quartz and other raw materials. Tape 5, Side B. Dinner was elaborate. There was a butler with white gloves and candlelight. It was impressive as people do not live that way, even over here. There were two servants for each guest. They talked of their war experiences. Riane and her brother did not talk. The hostess told them that what they went through was nothing compared to what they worried about what was happening to them. Riane decided she would not talk about the Holocaust. As a result she had little rapport with youngsters her age as she felt they had teenage interest in lipstick and clothes. She felt they did not have a lot in common. Riane had a couple of friends but they spent the war in Brazil. She was friendly with Europeans who were there since '39 or '40 who were not survivors. They lived very well. The daughter of one of them is friendly today.

35:00 Riane was not interested in parties as she felt like an adult. She had little schooling prior arrival—10 months in 1st grade in Siberia where she learned to read and write Russian, 6 weeks of schooling after the war in Vienna, tutoring by a Polish lady in Hungary and her mother and two months schooling in Poland just before they departed. She found out that the Brazilian school system was like the French system and she could not be placed higher than 6th grade. She had to learn Portuguese and earn a Baccalaureate. She learned that the American School gives you credit if you know English so you can enter 9th grade which would be her correct grade. She had to learn English so went with her half-sister who spoke excellent English. They got an appointment and were told she had to pass an exam in math, social studies, general science and English by March 1st to be admitted into 9th grade. She studied "like crazy." They moved to an apartment. Riane studied with a dictionary with some help from her father and her half-sister. She always studied in an armchair.

40:00 She was permitted to take the exam with a dictionary. She was good in math but knew nothing about dimes, nickels and pennies. She was admitted to the American school and graduated at 18. She did not want to attend secretarial school so had to leave. Her teachers

knew her background and there were three other survivors in her class and they all did well. The teachers were not interested in the students' thoughts but would help them with schoolwork. Riane spoke with the three survivors as they had a lot in common. One boy was two years older but graduated two years later and one was a distant cousin of her mother who was two years older and they exchanged stories. Riane did not ask people for their stories but all the stories were similar if they survived. The parents knew each other. Riane learned more about survival from the parents. The children were more interested in the daily work. She did not keep a diary. She has rectangular embroidery, like a doily, from Hungary. She was good at knitting and embroidery which kept her busy. She embroidered from '40 to '45 and brought it with her.

45:00 She came alone to the US and wrote her parents daily as she was lonely and wanted them to know what was happening. They made a big sacrifice on their part and her mother kept the letters as she is still in Brazil. Her brother has the letters. Riane did not want to do secretarial work and work in an office so left Brazil. Attending the American school was a mixed lesson. The classmates were children of diplomats and business people who came and returned to the US even if the parents remained so she had no friends left. Her mother ended up unhappy. There was a lot of friction at home so Riane wanted to get away. She loved the US. Both countries are nice. Her brother attended the American School after her and made many Brazilian friends and married a Brazilian. He brought friends home. They were warm and not anti-Semitic. Riane's social life was within the colony. There were two Jewish social clubs where they used a record player for dancing and she dated people there. It was provincial. If she stayed out to midnight, her mother knew who she danced with by the time she awoke. Everyone knew what each one wore. In New York, she felt that no one cared what she did. She felt free and liked it very much.

50:00 She came to the US in February when she was 19. She had graduated in October and waited for the new term in US and the Korean War broke out. Originally she was going to London but she no longer had the option. She wanted to go to New York and her father was not keen for her to leave but her mother was. The Brazilians and her classmates were not anti-Semitic. She had little in common with them for a warm relationship. Her father was establishing a business and was not well-to-do as he had lost everything. The Brazilian government allowed \$200 a month for children living abroad. Her father was afraid that if things changed, he wanted to be sure that Riane could earn a living as soon as possible. He wanted her to attend secretarial school before college. She went one year to Secretarial School and then to NYU. She was liberal arts major for two years and then got married so she did not finish. Her husband was 12 years older and in an established business and they had to entertain. They had children so she could not do it all. Her father was a banker before the war and her father-in-law was in banking in Lvov, Poland. They had Polish neighbors in Krakow who knew her parents and found out in the US. Her husband said his name was Oscar Gruss and he knew her father and invited her for dinner. She received many invitations from people she heard about and they were usually deadly boring. She had not heard of him before so responded that she could not come Friday night but could come a week from Monday.

55:00 This gave her time to write home and get an answer from her parents. Her father responded that he remembered them vaguely from the banking business and she should keep the date. Her future mother-in-law answered the door and it was obvious that Riane was not expected. She went in and saw the maid setting another place. She sat down on the sofa and was asked about her life experiences. A half-hour later her future father-in-law and then Oscar returned from his appointment at Broadway at Schrafts and took her home. She described the dinner to her parents and told them of their large collection of Jewish art with Oppenheim and Kaufman wearing yamacas staring at her. Their art is now at the Jewish Museum. Her parents wrote back that in 1930 they sent Oscar a present for his Bar Mitzvah and wondered why he was not yet married.

60:00 Riane dated Oscar from February, the year after her arrival in the US, until June. Then she went home for vacation as the school year was over. Before she left, Oscar came over with a little reindeer and said that he was sorry he could not take her to the ship as it is on Shavuous, a Jewish holiday. Riane had never heard of the holiday and found out that he was observant. She returned to Rio and Oscar arrived for the 4th of July weekend and met her parents. They got engaged in September.

61:00

Riane Gruss

Tape 6, Side A

March 1, 1999

R-50.106*0113.06.06

Abstract

This last part begins with Riane marrying Emanuel in New York where she continues to reside. They have two daughters and she enjoyed viewing their development. Riane does not continue with school nor work as she feels her early education was incomplete. Her husband had gone to England just before the War and remained there to finish his education when War broke out. Then he immigrated to the US where he entered the Army. Her only outspoken anti-Semitic experience was in 1973 in Krakow at a restaurant when a couple seated nearby pointed out that Riane did not finish her food as it was not good enough for her and she has a Jewish nose. Another Polish family helped her on a hiking trail. She feels more American than Polish but different from others due to her accent and past experiences. Riane loves America but feels that American Jews are cocky and focus on their Jewish background. She built a house in Israel because her uncle lived there and she wanted her daughters to speak fluent Hebrew. She studied Hebrew but just to speak, not to pray in it. Many relatives died in the Holocaust and she would not want to live in Germany. She hopes her interview will be used by a historian to learn about the life of Hungarian Jewish children during the War.

Summary

00:00 The discussion starts with her engagement to Emmanuel (Mike) Gruss when Riane returns from Rio in September and they marry in December 1952 in New York and have continued to reside there. They had two daughters, one born in January 1954 and the other born in January 1957. She has not worked since getting married. She tried to take dictation on their honeymoon but was not successful. She feels she would probably be a different person if she had not gone through the Holocaust. When she graduated high school she wanted to be a physician but she felt her education was incomplete. It was like a building without a foundation. She had never studied European history. If her education was more complete, she might have studied medicine or something else more concrete. Riane believes her perspective on life is different from those without her experiences. Last week she spoke to Brenda about protective parents as two mothers were speaking about their daughters going swimming with 30 girls without a lifeguard. She would not have been concerned as she was not an overly-protective mother.

05:00 Riane has read that survivors are usually over-protective. She told her children very little about her experiences until they grew up and attended university and read about it. Riane did not want to burden them as it was over. Occasionally, she would make a comment about her actions at their age. Her grandson Jonathan asked where she was and what she was doing when she was his age. She told him and he asked what happened but she does not want to burden him until he studies history as he won't be able to grasp it. They did not talk much about it. Her husband left Poland when he was 17 and anti-Semitism was a big problem there. He had gone on a summer vacation to England in '38 to learn English and was supposed to return to Poland to matriculate. He fell in love with England and refused to return which upset his parents. He was able to be admitted to the University of Manchester using his "small" matriculation at 16.

10:00 He was lucky as War soon broke out. In '42 he came to the US after graduating University and enlisted in the Army. He went overseas but was not in the Battle of the Bulge. He is a stock broker in the stock exchange. When the Germans were in Poland and Hungary, she often wished that she wasn't Jewish as things would be different for her but she was not angry. She no longer has such thoughts but wishes that being Jewish in America wasn't such an important part of your life. Riane was not raised in a strictly orthodox home and just observed three holidays a year. She feels that being Jewish here is confining. She lost her childhood and cannot get it back. When her children were growing up, she was involved in their lives. She took care of them herself even though she did not have to. She enjoyed all of it and enjoyed that they enjoyed learning. She spent time going on school day trips which she enjoyed. Perhaps it relived her childhood. She loved sitting in the park with the children and observing their development. No one had observed her and her brother's development. When questioned whether it was difficult for Riane when her children were the age of her Siberian experience, she replied that she marked the time. For example, at seven when War broke out, she was amazed at how childish her children were compared to her at that age. The war made her go through

difficulty at that age. She saw how different her children were at significant ages compared to her own behavior at those ages.

15:00 Riane and her husband did not have the opportunities that children have today. Her husband joined the Army and had an education. Brenda worked, traveled and went to school before getting married. Children are more independent today. Riane lived in the US to assure her children a good life. Other horrible things could happen today but not in the same form. As an adult she experienced some anti-Semitism. Riane returned to Poland three times as she has her father's property. In 1973 she went with her husband to Krakow and experienced outspoken anti-Semitism for the only time in her life. Although the Germans were anti-Semitic, you never heard anyone say anything out loud. It seemed surreal as the Poles had helped her survive. They visited Auschwitz one Sunday and returned by taxi at 2 PM feeling starved and strange. They did not want to go to a fancy restaurant so asked the driver to take them to a plain place. He took them to a restaurant that he often eats at. It was a restaurant where parties sat together at a long table. The people sitting nearby spoke Polish while Riane and her husband spoke English. There was no menu and they were given a large plate of mashed potatoes, sauerkraut and meat.

20:00 Riane finished it off except for half the potatoes. The nearby woman said to her husband, "Look, she did not finish her potatoes. They're probably not good enough for her! She has this big Jewish nose." Riane was taken aback but could not finish her potatoes and could not think of what to say so just left the restaurant. It was the only time she experienced anti-Semitism in such a raw form. Auschwitz was a very terrible place to visit and she was thankful that she did not end up there. She had seen photos of the concentration camp and the visit bore them out. It was a horrible, depressing day. Riane did not learn anything new. After the War, her parents had learned of horrors although during the War some of their relatives were shot. Her father's brother-in-law and niece were killed. So many were shot before deportation so less were left to deport. Her situation was different from others as they were rich and raised by governesses in Vienna. In '38 she went to Poland but had no contact with children as her mother was afraid she would catch their diseases. Riane met some cousins in Siberia who went to Palestine. She did not meet some of her aunts and uncles as it was not a close family. When she and her husband went to Lvov, his hometown, he showed her relatives, the schoolhouse and the synagogue. They both lost cousins, aunts and uncles.

25:00 When she meets Jews born in America, she feels different from them. She still has an accent so people know she was not born here. They know she went through the War unless she decides not to talk about it. She could say she left Vienna at age five and not indicate that she went East instead of West. She feels more American than Polish as she likes this country best as she likes the politics. She has an interest in Polish events that she reads in the newspaper but not in Hungarian or Austrian events. She has more feeling for Poland. She is mixed up as she did not grow up here but became a naturalized citizen later and learned English later. During the Purim celebration today with Jonathan, they sang Purim songs which left her cold. When she sang, "America, the Beautiful," she felt a twinge as she likes this country. Her husband was the

one who conveyed Judaism to the children. She just did what was expected and wanted her children to be Jewish. She made no effort nor did she sabotage his efforts.

30:00 She is proud that she is Jewish but not proud why American Jews feel so sure of themselves, so cocky. It is too much, too political, all pressure groups even Israel are aggressive today. They feel better than others. It is too much for her, too overbearing. Tape 6, Side B. She went to Germany eight or ten years ago and saw an exhibit of the history of the Jews in Berlin. Her mother-in-law had donated a painting from her collection to the museum. Riane looked around to see if the people had been alive during the War. Most had not been born or were children. The Germans said they can't think of the War all the time. Riane would not want to live in Germany though she does not hate them. She wonders what would happen here if the Nazi racial laws which came on gradually would be against the Black population. She feels it would probably be quiet and they would not be helped by anyone. It was dangerous to help the Jews during the War. The Poles were killed without a trial if they helped the Jews. She would not want to live anywhere but here. She does not hate the Poles but did not like the anti-Semitic incident. Two or three years ago she went on a hiking trip outside Krakow. They had gone to see lawyers in Krakow as property was being returned.

35:00 They had some free time so went to Zakopane in the Tatra mountains which were steep and had moss and were slippery after the rain. There was a loop and she was afraid they would come down on the same trail. A young woman with a better map said it was a loop so you don't come down the same way. Her slow friends were coming up and she suggested they follow them as the route is confused. The couple were faster and met them on the top at the beautiful overlook. Riane asked for an easier way to go down and they said there is a "V" at some point and go left and it is difficult to find. When they reached it, the couple was waiting for them and they had made an arrow with pebbles for them. They were concerned so decided to wait for them. Riane has hiked in the US, in Switzerland and in France and such a thing never happened to her before. They probably knew they were Jewish and knew they were tourists by the way they dressed. They invited Riane and her husband to their home in northern Poland but it was too far so they did not go. Riane usually thinks in the language that she is speaking at the time. When she is alone, she usually thinks in Polish. Her uncle went to Palestine and opened a gallery like he had before the War and did well until it closed two years ago when he died. He was Zionist and happy to be in Israel. He often traveled to Europe. He had two daughters and a son. His wife died before him. The three children married and have children. They live in Israel and Riane is in touch with them.

40:00 It was hard when her uncle was sick in Bat Yam and she was heartbroken and traveled to see him. It was hard to determine his illness, probably strokes. It is not like in the US where the physician is blunt. The cousins would say, "old age" and not a precise illness. He was very sick a year before he died. The loss was difficult for both her and her brother. Riane built a home in Israel when her older daughter was 10 because she wanted her children to speak Hebrew fluently and get to know the country. Her husband had an office in Israel. She supported the house

mostly because of her uncle. She learned some Hebrew from visiting twice a year but was not fluent. She attended Ulpan in New York. Her husband speaks Hebrew fluently. She never had any Jewish education. Her class was composed of women who could read and pray in Hebrew but did not know to speak. She learned to speak but wasn't interested in praying in Hebrew so dropped out. She was happy that Eichmann was caught and thought it a great trial. She did not get the same good feeling when Mengele was tried. It was hard to repeat Eichmann's trial. Eichmann was in Hungary so deportations were efficient and she heard his name. She thought it was worthwhile that he was caught for Israel's sake and for the world.

45:00 She does not favor trying old Nazis as there are no witnesses. She is not political and she has civil right sensitivity, especially in New York, where there are so many incidents and the police overreact which upsets her. She is sensitive of the Abraham Fund in New York to promote relations between Jews and Arabs on the Green Line. The Palestinians have the same experience regarding ID cards as she had in Poland so she feels for them. She is not acquainted enough with civil rights in America so cannot help with it. She read historical books but not Holocaust books about women such as, "Between Courage..." A woman professor of sociology wrote about Jewish women in Germany from '33 to '39 which was very interesting. It showed the structure of the family changed when men lost their positions due to the racial laws so women earned a living and men became isolated and demoralized. Women were the force of the family and went to schools and heard about action there and when the husband was in jail, the women went to the police. Women became stronger. This would not have happened if the Holocaust had not happened.

50:00 It affected life and families. In her own family, her mother was more resourceful than her father who had a tremendous position before the War. She read a book by a German man, "The Reader." She reads books about the Holocaust if they give her more insight. Riane finds that music triggers memories of the Holocaust such as "Old Lily Madeleine" or the movie, "Comedienne Harmonica." Trains are different now so they do not trigger such memories. Now, she loves the snow and finds it beautiful when it falls. In New York there was a blizzard a few years ago and she went to the park when it was 12 or 16 inches. It was lovely but not much to make a fuss about. In Siberia once the snow fell, it never melted and they had to walk to school in a corridor with snow on each side up to their shoulders. She hopes the Holocaust never happens again and that her grandchildren have good lives and sees this as an interesting happening to their grandma. Riane hopes her story is interesting to someone. Her eight-year-old grandson asked her why she is doing this and she replied that, perhaps, someone will study Europe and will learn that Jewish children's lives in Hungary were different from non-Jewish children's lives.

55:00