

Erica Eckstut (born Erika Neuman)

This is a follow up interview focusing on Eckstut's post-Holocaust experiences.

Erica Eckstut was born on June 12, 1928 in Znojmo Czechoslovakia. During the war Eckstut was able to stay with her sister, and at its conclusion in 1945, Eckstut was with her sister, and her sister's husband, in Czechoslovakia. She married Robert Kauder, a member of the Czech army, on August 28, 1945. Eckstut had two children, a daughter in 1946, and a son in 1952. In 1957, Eckstut's husband died and Eckstut applied to immigrate to the United States. She was cleared to go, but her children were not. So Eckstut remained in Communist Czechoslovakia for another 3 years until she was allowed to immigrate with her children. They arrived in the United States on April 11, 1960, and were greeted by a swarm of reporters. Eckstut was among the first to be allowed to leave Communist Czechoslovakia. When Eckstut arrived in the U.S. she did not speak English and went through many jobs before she attended technology school. Eckstut lived with her sister, her sister's husband, and their children for a year before getting her own apartment. In 1962 she met her husband, David. In 1989, Eckstut was diagnosed with lung cancer. She participated in a cancer research study and was one of two survivors of the seventy-five person study. Eckstut has enjoyed volunteering at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, working once a week at the donors desk and speaking to new volunteers.