

Freida Brakesmajor

Volume 1 Side 1

Born in Brozow, Poland July 15, 1912; Maiden name was Freida Sprung; Mother's maiden name was Rosa Hamer; Father was Mayer Sprung; Lived near Vavoruska, Poland but moved to after war; Conditions were very bad; Worked for Christians and a priest and burgermeister helped her make papers as though she was a Christian; Wore different clothes like Christians wear without a hat so as not to be recognized as a Jew; Accompanied Christian girls to Germany; Worked in shoe factory with thirty Christian girls; Not known that she was Jewish; Barracks bombed by Americans and clothes destroyed; Girls called into office where manager accused her of being Jewish; Defended by Christian friend who declared her a cousin; Became close friends; Found shelter in a school during the day; Slept in bunkers at night; Bombs were terrible; Sent to make holes to hide soldiers; Sent to Heidelberg; A good German woman tries to find work for her and gives her one night's shelter; Moved to another German town ; Had nothing to eat; Met German man who gave her and her friend breakfast and found them work; Went from Lorba-moska near a camp; Found family (sister aunt, uncle, cousin) live in Ashleger = a Jewish camp; Prefers not to discuss what happened in beginning - too depressing; Relates story of the Strauss family who had lived in a big hole in the forest (12 people) for four years (parents, children and cousins); Emigration to Israel in 1948 from Ashlegar; Had married while in camp at Ashlegar; She had two children (one born in camp); Lived in Israel ten years; Move to America to be with family; Her younger sister also made Christian papers; In America opened delicatessen-grocery business. Thanks God for everything; Lives in same house with youngest son; Older son lives nearby in Manhattan beach; Many friends are other survivors; Learned English herself; Husband dies same week as grandson was born; Husband saw grandchild on Sunday and dies on Wednesday; Bris held following Saturday.

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(Side I continued)

son Michael relates
following story

Michael Brakesmajor requests that his mother's tape be a testimonial so everyong will remember what happened and noone will disbelieve; Father died in August, 1981; Father was born in Tzanok, Poland in 1902; Family moves to Berlin 1912-13; Father missed serving in Austria Hungarian Army by one year; His first wife and daughter (Hela) killed by Nazis; Had left them to go to Poland; They were to take care of business; Germans attacked Poland; Unable to return; continued traveling East, Russians caught and called him a German spy; Refused to sign confession; Imprisoned in Siberia for a few years; Drafted into Russian Army; Wounded in Checoslavakia and spent rest of war in hospital; Traveled to Ashregor and met and married Freida and emigrated to Israel; Left Israel because of 1) high taxes, and 2) fear of war.

Freida Continues: Born 4th and had 2 sisters and 1 brother; Family lived in Ghetto Vavarusca; Lived near Belzitz and air smelled bad; Christian recommends she and her sister make Christian papers. Freida and younger sister make papers and travel to Germany; Work in Christian factory; Other girls suspect sister as Jewish; Went away and sent baggage to Freida; Germans search for her baggage but cook denies receipt of baggage; Freida becomes fearful; Sister went far away and worked for dairy farmer in small town; Two other Jewish sisters were there and now live in Canada and are still very close to sister who lives now in Brooklyn; Sisters name is Blanche Sprung who married Friemack

(Side II)

Freida talks about other relatives: Joseph Atlas, Pepe Martov; Wish to make contact; Talks about her grandparents - Mendel and Chaya Hammer (mother's parents); Freida attended five yars of school;

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Parents were well educated; Father was like a Cantor; Felt education and learning very important School only lasts few hours; Helps at home in afternoons. Son Michael marries Sephardic girl; Happy to teach his children different histories and cultures; Freida speaks many languages; Son speaks as child of survivor; Had always heard stories - questions when children should be told; Mother unwilling to speak of past - much pain in telling and reliving; Father more eager to discuss; Important for people who disbelieve to know its not an exaggeration; Tells story of Christian friend who claimed her as her cousin and protected her: Explains how she tells her friend that she was Jewish After war she wanted to travel with Freida and husband; Joined Haganah and goes to Israel six months before Freida; Became Jewish after war in Germany; Freida and husband verify that she is a Jew; Friend marries and lives in Israel with two children happily.