

Kosidois, Edit Hamlich
RG-50.120*0327
Four Video Cassettes
In Hebrew

- Abstract: Edit (nee Hamlich) Kosidois was born in Osek, Czechoslovakia. She had one older sister named Hanne. Edit describes her childhood, her family's move to Prague, her time in the Lodz ghetto and her eventual deportation to Auschwitz. Edit frequently details her working experience in various factories, including a rug factory, a shoe factory, and a straw factory. At Auschwitz, Mengele selected her to leave the camp. Edit was transported from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen. This marked a pattern of transportation for her. After a winter in Bergen-Belsen, she was moved to camp Salzwedel where she became a sort of waitress. Thereafter, Edit worked in camp Neuengamme, near Hamburg. In March 1945, the camp was bombed. Before the camp's liberation by the Americans, Rittmeister, the leader of the camp, warned the SS not to harm the women workers/prisoners. After the liberation, Edit eventually moved to Israel and married a fellow survivor.
- 1:00 Edit (nee Hamlich) Kosidois was born in 1926 in Osek, Czechoslovakia. Her family was upper middle class. Her father was a high official in a coal business. Edit had one older sister Hanne. The family was assimilated and non religious. She went to a Czech school and spoke Czech, English, and German.
- 1:10 Edit describes the family's household and history. The family did not experience anti-Semitism. Edit's parents did not believe that what was happening in Germany could happen to them.
- 1:29 In 1938 Edit escaped to Prague, she describes her life there.
- 2:00 In 1939 the Germans entered Prague. She was told that she could not attend school. She and ten other children studied secretly in different houses. She was 13. Edit's mother got sick and she took over the cooking and the housework.
- 2:09 Her father was forced to clean streets. They had to wear a yellow star and were prohibited from public places and transportation.
- 2:13 Edit describes her daily life, adolescence, social life and first boyfriend during the years 1939-1940.
- 2:25 In 1941, there was the first transport. All Jews in Prague had to register with the Gestapo. The poor went out on the first transport and the upper classes on the second.

- 2:28 On October 28, 1941 Edit went to register. She and her family were transported to the Lodz ghetto.
- 3:00 Edit describes again the registration and train ride.
- 3:10 Edit describes the horrible accommodations in the Lodz ghetto and the hunger there.
- 3:18 She was taken to work in a rug factory. Her work is described.
- 3:25 Edit describes her state of mind. The Czech Jews were not integrated into the Polish Jewish community.
- 3:29 Edit describes the hunger, the terrible food, and the typhoid epidemic during this period.
- 4:00 Edit describes the punitive hanging of someone who tried to escape.
- 4:02 She and her family were moved to a deserted school house. She details the accommodations and once again her work in the rug factory.
- 4:16 Edit describes her physical and mental condition.
- 4: 29 After work, she would sing and read.
- 5:00 Edit describes the painful hunger she felt—the fear and her life of terror. She mentions the poet Lange who died in the ghetto.
- 5:10 A friend prevented her from signing up for a transport out of the ghetto. Everybody that was transported was killed.
- 5:15 She mentions two friends, Dr. Schwartz, Hauslig and Arnstein.
- 5:20 She talks about the will to survive which kept her family and her alive.
- 5:24 Edit talks about Dr. Lampe. He was responsible for the transport of 1,000 people.
- 5:27 They performed opera, and reminisced about food and cooking. She describes the general lice infection.
- 6:00 In May 1942, the collective in the school house was abolished and they were dispersed to rooms in the Lodz ghetto.
- 6:10 Edit talks about the food rations and the black market for food.

- 6:22 They did not believe the rumors about the camps.
- 6:26 She describes her accommodations and the food they received.
- 7:00 Edit talks about the hunger and nightmares. Her father was sick and falling apart. She details their daily activities.
- 7:10 In September, the first selection happened. Her father was taken. He died at age 44. Overall, twenty thousand people were taken in the first selection.
- 7:19 In 1943 the rug factory was closed and she was sent to a straw factory where they made shoes.
- 7:30 Edit describes the ghetto 'government.'
- 8:00 She talks about ghetto children who sold candles and candies on the streets.
- 8:04 She describes her illness and the lice infestation.
- 8:07 Dead bodies were lying in the streets and were collected twice a day. Edit gives a description of the terrible work of the sanitation workers who cleaned the lavatories.
- 8:18 Until the end of 1943, they were allowed to receive mail and packages in the ghetto.
- 8:27 She talks about her friendship with Vera Popper and their outings together.
- 9:00 Edit talks more about the friendship.
- 9:05 She describes her work at the shoe factory.
- 9:14 Edit mentions the rumors about a camp that was being built for children in Lodz.
- 9:17 Edit expresses her thoughts on Rumkowski.
- 9:20 She describes the house in which they lived.
- 9:27 In August 1944 they heard that the ghetto would be abolished. She saw part of the ghetto burning. Johnny Gieske helped them move to another area.

- 10:00 On August 10, 1944, on the way to Maraschin (?), a man named Biebow told them to remain calm, that they would be taken to a work camp. They were loaded onto the train. Edit describes the train ride.
- 10:08 She describes arrival in Auschwitz and the selection by Mengele.
- 10:17 She describes initiation, showers, shaving and clothes.
- 10:24 Edit talks about *Appels*, blocks, and accommodations.
- 10:27 She describes arrival of women from Hungary and Slovakia. She gets a number. She talks again about *Appells*.
- 10:31 She describes the food and Jewish *kapos*.
- 11:00 Edit explains her feelings and the idea of giving evidence.
- 11:08 She talks about Mengele's selections. She tells of the seven day train ride to Bergen-Belsen.
- 11:12 She describes Bergen-Belsen. They stayed in tents, four hundred to a tent.
- 11:28 Edit describes the difficult winter. The SS women were more cruel than the men.
- 11:32 Edit describes a section of the camp and families in regular attire, destined for exchange through Switzerland.
- 12:00 She was taken by train to Camp Salzwedel where she worked in the kitchen.
- 12:06 She describes the ammunition factory in camp Neuengamme, near Hamburg, and her work there. She mentions Helmut and calls him a sadist.
- 12:11 Edit became ill with a skin infection. She was assigned to do room service for the SS and Spiess who treated her decently.
- 12:25 She is wrongfully accused of stealing food and is beaten.
- 12:31 She describes Allied bombings and air raids.
- 12:34 In March 1945, the factory was bombed and they were ordered to clean up.
- 13:00 Edit describes her work in the factory.

- 13:04 SS Anne Marie treated her well and helped her.
- 13:13 She describes a routine work day.
- 13:19 Edit works in “room service.”
- 13:23 She talks about Rittmeister, the head of the camp. The Swiss Red Cross came but talked only to the SS.
- 13:26 When she was sick and could not work, Rittmeister helped her until she recovered.
- 13:30 On a Sunday in March the factory was bombed and destroyed.
- 14:00 She describes Greek and Gypsy women who came to the camp and then the 1,500 from Ravensbrueck who were Hungarian.
- 14:04 Journalists came to the city after the war and were told that they did not know about the camp. Edit also expresses anger at the Swiss Red Cross who did not help.
- 14:11 Edit was elated when the factory was bombed and felt that the end of the War was near. Two thirds of the SS left the camp. Rittmeister warned the SS not to hurt the women in the camp.
- 14:18 On April 14, 1945, the Americans arrived and opened the camp. Rittmeister was arrested.
- 14:24 Edit talks about the camp infirmary.
- 14:31 Rittmeister saved thousands of women by warning the SS not to hurt the women. The men in a nearby camp were all burned.
- 15:00 She describes liberation by the American Army in April. People went into town to get food and clothes. Many became ill from the food, so the army locked the camp.
- 15:08 The Americans took the women out of the camp and housed them in a Fliegehof, which was a German air force base. They were given special food.
- 15:14 She and others went to the nearby village, Bielefeld and the Germans had to give them food and clothes.

- 15:19 When Americans left, the British came. They were taken to Heidelberg and she went back to Prague at the end of June. None of her family came back.
- 15:27 She got married after the war but divorced when her husband did not want to come with her to Israel. She left Prague because of the Communists.
- 15:29 She gives her overall thoughts about her war experiences.
- 16:00 Edit talks about the continuing effects of her Holocaust experience and how it changed her character.
- 16:10 Edit describes her second marriage to a fellow survivor and their decision not to have children because of the cruelty of the world.