

GABOR FENYES
RG-50.228.0002 (rec. 1990 Ft. Wayne)

Gabor was born in Budapest in 1914. His father had been a POW in Siberia during WWI and came back very religious. Gabor married his childhood sweetheart and was happy until 1938, when the changes came to Hungary with the German influence. Gabor said it was his saving grace to listen to his father and become fluent in German and English. He never thought about going to Israel at that time even though his father was helping others to emigrate.

Gabor was sent to an all Jewish forced labor camp until 1942. He loaded and unloaded supplies. They had a poor diet, but it was still possible to send and receive mail. At the time his mother and wife survived in Budapest and his father didn't die until the end of the war. Gabor was sent to a series of concentration camps, ending in Mauthausen from where he was liberated in 1945. He still celebrates that day. Since he was then in Austria and didn't want to return to Hungary, he managed to get his wife and mother out of Budapest to join him. He helped the US soldiers resettle other Hungarians in exchange for food and clothing.

One of the lessons he learned from his father was never to volunteer. He once almost did when a friend of his fathers offered him a position in a group in one of the camps; it turned out that none of the people in that group survived.

Gabor and his wife went to New York and then to Scranton, Penn. where a friend from Austria had an uncle. He got to Fort Wayne because, through HIAAS and the Joint, he got a job there as an accountant. He did once go back to Hungary after his wife died and his daughter wanted to see where the family had lived. He went back to a school reunion and found that only one other person in his class had survived.

Gabor believes that things just don't happen by themselves, but you have to help move them along.