

RG/50.266 #10  
JOSEF RIBO

I was born in a small town in Poland in 1932, one of 5 children. My father was in the lumber business and my mother was a housewife, who in the summer grew fruit, which she sold in the village market. Then the Germans arrived and started to threaten to kill all the Jews. My father was taken away, but came back a year later. Then the entire family, along with all the other Jews were herded into a ghetto. Then in 1942 we were taken to the Kosienice ghetto, where we lived under terrible conditions without hardly any food. My father sneaked out at night from the ghetto to go to the villages to sell some clothes for food, sometimes taking my oldest brother and sometimes me. One Saturday night, a very cold night, my father and I were in the village and he suggested I should stay there. He would come back for me next day. That night the SS and Ukrainian guards invaded the ghetto and took everybody away in trucks. I looked for my family, but they were gone. During the next few years I hid with some Polish peasants until it became too dangerous; in 1943 the Germans were controlling the countryside more and the Poles suggested I should look for work in a nearby ammunitions factory where Poles and Jews were working. They took me in and gave me work and food. Then the Russian army was approaching and the factory was dismantled. 3000 went to Auschwitz but I was among the 300 who were left behind to clean up the camp and factory. Then we were marched to Oranienburg; many died. At a certain point, the German political prisoners were set free and I joined them. When we came to Hamburg the war was over. I ended up at the kinderheim in Bergen-Belsen. In 1945 many of us were taken to England and in 1948, after the establishment of the state of Israel, I went there and have lived in Israel ever since. I have a wife and four children. I work in personnel management.