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Summary

Irene Unger, born 1922 in Farnad, Czechoslovakia (now Farná, Slovakia) to Nathan Kubalev [PH] and Berta Kubalev (née Berger), describes: her grandparents; attending a Hungarian-Jewish school and then a mixed religion school in Slovakia; being poor; a brother half-brother and two sisters, one of whom immigrated to Palestine in 1936; not experiencing anti-Semitism; speaking Hungarian at home; living with an uncle in Nové Zámky, Slovakia, while attending high school; the village being occupied by Hungarians, then Germans in 1939; being oppressed by the Arrow Cross and the Nazis; maintaining a fairly normal existence despite being abused; in May 1944, being sent to a ghetto, then another ghetto; living and working at a brick factory; after a few weeks, in June 1944, being taken with her mother, a sister and an aunt and transported by train to Auschwitz (told only that they were going to a work camp); going through selection, her mother being selected for execution; being taken with her sister to Birkenau; her sister becoming ill, taken away, and dying; being badly beaten; attributing her survival to religious faith; being given food by a Czech man; hearing that the Germans were losing the war and the Russians were only 80 km away; being taken to another work camp in 1945; recalling that Mengele would remove sick inmates to Auschwitz for execution; noticing that the Germans were packing up and leaving Auschwitz; being liberated on May 8, 1945; scavenging for food; meeting Russian soldiers, who gave her food; arriving home in Nové Zámky after about two weeks and finding none of her family alive; going to Feldafing and then deciding to emigrate to Israel and join her sister on a kibbutz; traveling with a group of about 17 Jews; discovering that her younger brother had been taken to Siberia, survived the war, and went to Israel; in 1946, traveling, via France, on a Greek ship to Palestine; the ship being seized by the British, taken to Cyprus, and the passengers interned; being released to Israel in early 1947; being quarantined upon arrival in Haifa and experiencing hatred by the British; upon release, remaining in Haifa until joining the Israeli army in 1948; meeting a man and getting married in 1950; having a son; starting a catering business; moving to Australia in 1952; not wanting to discuss the Holocaust with her son; being fatalistic about the Holocaust; advising future generations to struggle against oppression; still being religious. Shows photos.