

Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project

P.O. Box 25506, San Mateo, CA 94402

Name of interviewee: Burger, Ann

Date of interview: 12/22/1999

Summary: Ann Burger was born Anni Rosalie Rautenberg on 01/10/20 in Breslau Germany, (now Poland). Her father's ancestry is possibly related to Frederick the Great. Her father Arthur Rautenberg was the manager of department stores (ladies wear/menswear). They were a religious family, kosher but not orthodox since her father worked some Saturdays when he had to. By 1933 Jewish businesses were doomed. Ann had private schooling for 4 years. In 1926 there were 12 students to a class and she remembers names of teachers. Then, public school was 25-30 per class. There were only 3 Jewish girls in her class.

When Hitler took over every public school could keep 1.5% of Jews. There were only 12 Jewish girls so she stayed at school. Some teachers in the Social Democrat Party became overtly Nazi and Ann felt it. Jewish girls sat at back of the class around 1933. Ann became friends with Susan Corn (?) and Friedlinda who were Jewish girls at school. Susan now lives in San Francisco, CA. Ann was called "dirty Jew." Her cousin, Bernard Kriss (?), lost his parents and he came to live with them when he was 6 and she was 4. Ann felt bad when she and her good friend were not allowed to talk to each other anymore. There was a yellow ribbon on her father's business. Ann, aged 14, was upset to see her father depressed and lose his business in 1934. Her father went to Berlin in 1934 and made skirts/clothes. Ann's grandmother died 1935. Her grandmother was put into Jewish old age home in Liebitz(?) near Auschwitz, since Jews had to give up apartments. Ann's family left her in Hersh_____ to finish school when they went to Berlin. Ann describes how teachers treated her – some good teachers/some not. Ann wanted to be a pediatrician but could not go to university.

Once Ann finished school in 1936, she went to Berlin. In 1937 her aforementioned cousin went to Palestine. She met him again in 1970 and it was emotional for her because he was like a brother to her. In 1938, three of her father's brothers went to the U.S. In 1938, her father wrote to one brother requesting an affidavit for Ann to get her out. That brother had died. Ernest was a nephew of Ann's uncle Bernard and he went to the State Dept. every six months to attempt to get affidavits for all of them. He eventually succeeded. Ann was by now trained as an infant nurse and lived in a home sheltering illegitimate babies and looking after them. In 1938, there was still Jewish paper in Berlin offering jobs in foreign countries. A family in Stockholm was looking for someone to look after their child. Father told Ann that war was coming and to go to Sweden since they had not been at war for 100 years. At Kristallnacht, Ann's mother came through the destroyed streets to deliver the job offer to Ann. Ann

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worked in Sweden, then on June 22 got a visa to go to U.S. Her parents went to Spain for six months, Cuba for four years then Buffalo, New York,. Ann's father met her in the U.S. in 1946 when she got off the boat. Ann traveled to the U.S. and settled in San Francisco. Parents later joined her in San Francisco. She married, has children, grandchildren and loves family life.