

## Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project

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

**Name of interviewee:** Boddy, Alice

**Date of interview:** 8/22/1990

**Summary:** Alice Grunwald Boddy was born in 1923 in Vienna, Austria. Her father, Ignaz Grunwald, was born in Vienna and died in 1934. He had been an officer in the Austrian army in the First World War. Alice's mother, Bertha Eisner Grunwald was born in Raycowitz, Czechoslovakia. Before the Nazis came to power, Alice lived a good life in Vienna and attended Obergast Private School. She had one brother, six years older than she and he left Vienna and settled in Chicago in 1938.

Alice was sent to London on the Kindertransport in August 1939 when she was fifteen and a half years old. She was 'adopted' in London by a Mr. and Mrs. Lewis. She remained there until February 1940 when arrangements were made for her to join a children's transport to the United States.

Alice's mother who was born in Czechoslovakia had to wait for a quota to emigrate and Alice was in a line trying to obtain the necessary papers for her mother, when she began to cry. A man walked by to assist and she explained that she was unable to get the papers for her mother to leave England and accompany her to the USA. The man was John F. Kennedy and he took Alice to the Embassy office and introduced her to the US Ambassador to England, his father, Joseph Kennedy. Alice was told not to worry and that her mother would be on the next quota list and her mother arrived in the US three months later.

When Alice arrived in New York, she was given a letter from her brother with a ticket to go to Chicago. She left by train, stopping in Cleveland to visit distant relatives. After her mother arrived, she lived with her mother and brother in Chicago and worked as a pre-school teacher in an orphanage.

Her brother was in the US Military Intelligence and helped liberate Dachau in 1945.

Alice married her first husband and had two sets of twins and was divorced in 1960. She lived in Chicago, New York and Miami before moving to San Francisco where she was married to her current husband in 1971.

As a child, Alice visited her mother's town in Czechoslovakia in the summers and spent time with relatives there. When the Nazi's invaded, all the relatives were sent to Theresienstadt and she was told that none survived. The Nazis confiscated her grandmother's property and later the Communists took ownership. The property is currently used as a retail grocery store.

Alice visited Raycowitz in 1974 and people in the town remembered her as a

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child. She was given her grandmother's passport and other possessions that were being kept by townspeople.

After the war Alice returned to Vienna and put up a headstone in a cemetery with the names of all her mother's murdered relatives. Alice's father's family all escaped from Austria with the exception of one sister who died in Auschwitz.