

Rose (Nortman) Minsky, born in Sosnowiec, Poland October 18, 1924, describes her family and childhood. She grew up in a town on the border of Germany and Poland with a large Jewish family. Her immediate family included her father, mother, sister and two brothers. In 1939, the war broke out, and Jews were forced to abandon their homes, handover their valuables, and told to wear arm bands with the Star of David. They were placed into an open ghetto where they were dehumanized, mutilated, tortured, and ultimately murdered. At this time, Rose's siblings were able to escape to Siberia where they joined the Russian resistance and left Rose with her mother and father. In 1941, she worked in the ghetto in Kattowitz. Late 1942, the Germans began deporting people to the extermination camps, so Rose pretended she was German. September 1943, they liquidated the ghetto, Rose lost all contact with both parents and was sent to a smaller camp in Bockenheim Germany where she was tasked with making parachute fabric; she was there from 1943 to 1944. Beginning of 1944, she was taken away from Bockenheim and sent to Grossrosseln; a German factory. 1945, the Germans were losing and the Russians were advancing, so the Nazi's began forcing the Jews on death marches to cover up any evidence of the Holocaust. Rose and two other girls decided to run away. They were hiding out in the forest for a couple days, where they were caught by S.S men. They tried to convincing the S.S men that they were German and they were taken to the local police station for investigation. Instead of deporting the girls, one of the S.S officers released them. They went to Magadabook camp where finally the Americans came and liberated the camp. Rose met her husband in 1945, they went to Leipzig to look for family but did not find anyone. Having nowhere to go, they illegally boarded the train to Brussels, and lived there from 1945-1949. Rose found out that her sister and brother were alive in Siberia, and she wrote to them frequently. Eventually, they were able to obtain temporary papers, and found an apartment of their own to live. From Belgium, they found out her brother was in Israel. She and her husband then immigrated to Israel in 1953. They realized that life may be better in the United States, so they moved to the Bronx NY. After living in New York for 8 months, they moved to Alabama. Life in Alabama was relatively good. They worked in a clothing factory 4 ½ years and then moved to Los Angeles CA with her siblings 1959. Rose was unhappy in Los Angeles, she said that it was too big and there was no sense of community. She then moved to Anaheim CA in 1964, opened an upholstery shop, and decided to settle there and raise her family. When questioned on her feelings of surviving the Holocaust, Rose says that she developed a "guilt complex of why am I here and not anyone else?" She constantly thought "what could I have done to save someone else". She ended by saying that the Holocaust made her much more tolerant of other people, their feelings, and it made her a better person today.