KALLAI, Danay
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Abstract

Danay Kallai was born June 19, 1933 and grew up in New Pest (Budapest), Hungary. She thinks her Catholic family had Jewish roots.

Kallai's father, who worked in the post office, was inducted into the army in 1942 and sent to the front. He was very sick when he returned home.

An old woman and her son, Janchi Bartos, were one of three families in the Kallai's house. Janchi wore an Iron Cross armband, but belonged to a partisan group and had a Jewish fiancée, Zsuzsa. The Arrow Cross kept checking on Jews. Many partisans saved Jewish people from the ghetto, Danay says.

Danay tells of someone who tried to save a man named Uncle Jeno and his family by taking them to a winery in the countryside. But they were picked up and never seen again. One of Danay's close friends, Eva Biro, and her father also helped save people. Eva Biro wore a yellow star, but attended school until the Arrow Cross took power in October 1944.

When Jews were lined up in Budapest neighborhoods of Rakospalota and New Pest to be taken away on wagons, people beat, kicked, pushed them, and screamed that they were thieves and crooks and were ruining Hungary. Danay, who watched for an hour until her mother called her inside, had nightmares for months. A woman named Paula committed suicide. Danays adds that they found an old woman hiding in a basement. "We knew she was Jewish, because Jews have typical Jewish features."

Jews were taken to a movie theater and to a house basement, where they were tortured.

The Kallai family took food to the ghetto as long as its gates were open. After the ghetto was emptied, Danay entered it, including her former house on Vaci Street, one of many that had been bombed. She says the Arrow Cross men had taken all valuables, including paintings, carpets, and china from homes in the ghetto. She took only one book from her former home.

The Russians took over on January 7, 1945. The Kallai family moved to Tolna, Hungary. Danay notes that very few Jews returned after the war ended.