

Questions to Consider When Viewing Video

1. How many of Sarah's siblings survived the Holocaust?
2. Where was Sarah from?
3. What restrictions were placed on Sarah and the Jews when the Nazis took over?
4. Describe the life in the ghetto where Sarah and her family were sent.
5. To which camp was Sarah sent? Where was she kept in that camp? Why?
6. How many months was she in Birkenau? What did she witness at her next camp?
7. How did she manage to get to Czechoslovakia and to work?
8. How long was she there? Who liberated her?
9. Where did she meet her brother?
10. Describe Sarah's experiences in the DP camp.
11. What happened when Sarah attempted to get to Palestine?
12. How was she finally allowed into Palestine? How long did she live in Israel?

Holocaust Survivor

Sarah Schneider Radzeli

Filmed on May 15, 2007



"We don't have to be afraid anymore."

- Sarah Radzeli

Face to Face
A Holocaust Education Program at
Congregation Shaarey Tikvah
Beachwood, Ohio

Sarah Schneider Radzeli was born in Czechoslovakia, one of four children. In 1939, when Sarah was 10 years old, Germany occupied her hometown. Sarah's grandfather lived in a part of the country which was not yet occupied, so her father moved the family to her grandfather's home. When Sarah was 14 years old, Hungarian forces occupied her grandfather's town, and soon all the Jews were sent to a ghetto.

After a short time in the ghetto, Sarah's family was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Upon arrival Sarah and her 12-year old sister were selected for work while their mother was selected to be killed. The Jews who were selected to live were taken to a hall, stripped naked, shaved, and issued striped uniforms and wooden shoes.

Sarah lived in a children's block at Birkenau, where living conditions were very difficult. After about two months, Sarah's sister was taken away to the crematorium because she was small and not strong enough to work. Sarah witnessed many inmates committing suicide by touching the electric barbed wire fence surrounding the camp.

After three months at Birkenau, Sarah joined a transport of Polish prisoners of war. She was taken to Czechoslovakia, where she worked the night shift in an ammunition factory.

On May 15, 1945, Sarah was liberated by Russian soldiers. The liberated Jews were given a choice. They were free to go. They were also free to stay where they were in order to recuperate. Sarah

chose to stay in the Czech town with some other girls that she knew. They were treated well.

After about three or four weeks, Sarah and some friends decided to go to Prague. Relief agencies had set up shelters for survivors. After some time in Prague, Sarah decided to go home. She wanted to see if anybody was alive there. When she got as far as Budapest, Sarah learned from another survivor that her brother was alive. She waited in Budapest and met her brother there.

Sarah and her brother went home together, but they did not find any other surviving family members there. They returned to Prague, where two uncles took them in. This was their only surviving family, except for a few cousins.

Seeing no future in Prague, Sarah and her brother looked for an opportunity to immigrate to Palestine, which was still under British control. In 1946 Sarah traveled to Palestine on an illegal ship, which was caught and stopped by the British. The refugees were taken to a Displaced Persons (DP) camp in Cyprus, where Sarah got married. Sarah became very sick with tuberculosis and was allowed to go to the Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. Her husband joined her in Palestine after her recovery.

On May 14, 1948, Israel became a state. In 1960, Sarah, her husband, and their 2-year-old adopted son came to the United States.