

Summary of video interview by Diana Mara Henry, Aug.10, 2015:

Philip (born Falk) Maisel was born August 15, 1922 in Vilnius. Twin sister Bella Hirshorn and 6 years older brother Josef both survived the Holocaust. His mother died when he was ten; his father killed by Germans in hard labor camp in Kloga, Estonia in 1945. Phillip Maisel has been a volunteer at the Jewish Holocaust Centre, Melbourne Australia for over 25 years, videotaping Holocaust survivor testimonies and digitizing the collection. He was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in recognition of that service.

Reviews history of occupied Vilnius in wartime under Soviet governance with full citizenship for Jews and then German occupation where Jews were considered Soviet collaborators; Lithuanian people's persecution of the Jews under German direction; thousands of Jews massacred; two ghettos established; elimination of Jews unable to work; his father's decision he learn the trade of automotive electrician, which he credits with his survival. Ghetto liquidated in 9/43, sent to Estonia camps to extract shale oil.

His vow at that time to tell the world what happened to the Jews. Fulfilling his promise with videotaping the Testimonies Project. Conditions in the camps; seven camps composed the Lias-Olschiefer-Forschungsgesellschaft G.m.b.H complex. SS working for the Nazi Motor Corps - NSKK - National Socialistische Kraftfahr Kollone /Korps embarked him to travel all over Estonia stopping at the camps to repair their cars. In one of the camps he met his old friend Hirsch Glick who wrote the Partisan Song,

When the Russians came close, Germans evacuated most of the camps 23/08/1944 to Stutthof near Danzig; evacuated from Estonia on 8/16/1944. Dautmergen was the first subcamp of Natzweiler he was at; conditions terrible. Friend got him an auto mechanic job: better conditions, treated not like a complete subhuman. After four hours Appel in the swamp, the garage foreman transferred sixteen people to Frommern subcamp to work in garage. Frommern run by a Frenchman; clandestine radio, BBC news, rations "proper."

WWI boots bought by his father in the ghetto, taken from him at Struthof, returned by a prisoner; their conversation about decency. Frommern was happy compared to Dautmergen. NSKK soldiers who ran the garage devised a phony experiment to conduct so they would have a reason to stay. Death march absurd, lost touch with authorities; food comparatively adequate; two men on a motorbike" ask Jews to step forward - non-Jewish prisoners do so first, in solidarity.

In Ostrach 27 April 1945 the French arrive wearing British uniforms, driving American tanks. They want the death march survivors to fight with them, survivors refuse. On death march, Germans forced prisoners to carry grenades to lighten their load. Working after the war in Balingen for French Army C.S.T.O., UNRRA, IRO. Maisel a witness at the Rastatt trials. Kommandant Dold honored by German nation. Kapos- Jewish policemen-

camp underground- national characteristics, cruelty, decency-denazification distorted by Allies fear of another war with Soviets - all Germany supported Hitler- Catholics now ask forgiveness - Jacob Gens actions and motivations in the Vilna ghetto. "There is no objective reality." "A man shoots but G-d directs the bullet."