

Birgit Blideman

Birgit Blideman was born in Malmö in 1925.

Grandmother came from Russia in the 19th century to Lund, where she grew up. They lived in their own house in Need, and Birgit's grandfather had an antique store there. Modern had solid knowledge of art and continued later with antiquity activities. Birgit's father was a traveling merchant. The grandparents bought him a business in Malmö, but he had to go bankrupt.

The mother held strictly Koscher; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for the fish, on Friday it was a feast and on Saturday it was also nice dinner.

Birgit went to Cheder. She thinks she was the one who was most interested in the children in the group.

First she went to folk school and then in girls' learning. There you had to try it in. She had been ranked one, but the director told her that: "It is not a matter of entering as one without getting out as one. This was the only time Birgit suffered from something that she thinks was anti-Semitism. The president would not say that to any of the other children.

She joined other Swedish Jews in Malmö. One was most at home with each other. Birgit married Erwin Leiser when she was 20 years old.

A girl, Rita, who was one year younger than Birgit, came and lived in the family after Hitler came to power in Germany.

After 9 April 1940 when Denmark occupied, many Danish Jews arrived in Malmö. It was announced in the synagogue that the Danish Jews had come and Birgit met them through the Jewish Union and the Jewish student club. The Jewish life of the city lived up with social activities, such as dance, etc. Birgit could now hang out with Jews who had cultural interests, which had not existed in Malmö before.

As for their own safety, the parents said Sweden is so good, so nobody comes here. They pretended to be uninterested, says Birgit.

When the white buses arrived with survivors, Birgit's father went there and asked if there was anybody called Seligsohn but it did not. On the other hand, there was a man named Seligman, as Birgit's father "adopted". She did not know much about the Holocaust when the survivors came, but she wanted to make an effort. From May to November 1945 she taught survival in Swedish. They never talked about what happened to them, so that they would not be badly concerned.

She thinks the public felt a great deal of compassion with the survivors. Birgit says that she never spoke of this at school, but she nevertheless knew that the teachers were of two kinds, either in Germany or in England, and those who stayed in Germany did not like her.

Since the formation of the state of Israel, she has had a great deal of commitment to the Jewish state, and has been there more than 100 times. She perceives that her dedication is an expression of her gratitude for being in Sweden forgiven.