

Leon Rytz

Born 1927 in Warsaw, Poland. His mother had, together with Leon's aunt, a teimport.

They cooperated with a Polish family in the countryside who also sold their tea. Leon lived in Warsaw's ghetto with his family. One day, 1942, when he was out, he encountered the Nazis with several trucks that picked up boys on the rocks, boys between ten and twenty two years. Since then, Leon has never seen his family again. The trucks were driven to "Umschlagplatz" in Warsaw and Leon was deported to Majdanek. There he built barracks for one to two months, he is uncertain about the time period. Then he was deported to Treblinka. On a trip from Treblinka, Leon managed to escape into the forest and joined a group of Partisans. He participated in several of the partyisans' raids against the Nazis. But the partisans killed the Jews who joined them one after another so Leon even escaped from there. He went to Warsaw again, this was the 1943 city was in flames when he arrived. Leon was captured by the Nazis who sent him to the labor camp Skarzysko Hasag Kamienna, where he produced war material. After a failed attempted escape from there, Leon would be executed but saved by a lady unknown to him, who said that she had a diamond in her shoes that they would have if they let her brother live. When the Russian front approached, the camp was evacuated for a short time to Czestochowa and then Leon came to Buchenwald. Then there was deportation to Dora-Nordhausen, where he remained until February / March 1945 when the camp was evacuated and the prisoners were sent to Bergen-Belsen. Leon ended up with the Russian prisoners in Bergen-Belsen and, together with them, he managed to escape from there too. On their way to the front, the Russian prisoners of war released Leon on a highway and left him there. An American picked him up and drove him to the American camp in Farsleben in Germany. There he told, on Yiddish, about American Jewish soldiers what he had been involved. They cried.

The Americans were moved from Farsleben to Japan and the liberated prisoners ended up in a settlement between Hamburg and Lübeck. There Leon met a Swedish nurse who smuggled with him on one of the boats to Sweden. There he first got a quarantine in Helsingborg for three weeks. Then came the Jewish Agency and picked out all those under a certain age, about 20 boys and 20 girls, and founded a Kibbutz for them at Djurberga farm. Then he came to Borås where he spent the rest of his life. Soon after arriving there he went to the Employment Service and said he wanted to get a job / educate himself. He was not satisfied with an unqualified job. Through some luck and meeting with people willing to help, he was given the opportunity to study at the Textile Institute and a job at a restaurant that would allow him to fund the studies and where he also received food. Oscar Jacobson's son went to the same education and when they were ready, Leon got a job at his father's factory. He was well respected by the Swedish colleagues. After one year, Leon became a foreman at the factory. There he introduced a machine that sewn buttons. Previously, all buttons were sewn by hand. 1954, after eight years at Oscar Jacobson Oscar Jaboson was a men's confectionery firm founded in Borås in 1903). He decided to start his own company, sew children's clothes.

He lived with eight young men whom he met at Kibbutz and who now worked at Algot (a company that first produced work clothes, but during the 1940s he began to produce

sports and leisure clothes). He says that about 700 survivors who came to Sweden with the white buses came to Borås and got employment in the textile industry. They spend a lot of time together. He describes the 1970-1990 speech as particularly lively. He thinks that meeting with others who survived the Holocaust was important, but difficult to meet someone who had experiences that really resemble him.

Leon looks like Swedish today.

After 70 years in Sweden he became Borås Ambassador. He feels honored. He thinks that the experiences they had during the Holocaust made them think 60-year-olds when they came to Sweden after the liberation, even though they were only teenagers. He was 20 years old when he met Edit. He thinks it's amazing that he and Edit had the physical ability to build a life and a family after the hell he had gone through. Edit told her she has nightmares. Like her, Leon says he sees horrific images in front of him that reminds him of what he has been through.

He thinks that the most important thing is to care for democracy, because in a democracy you do not kill innocent people.

The most important thing about Jewish thinks he is the tradition. 1965 (or 1966?), Through a contact with the church council in Borås, he contributed to the building of a synagogue with seating for 80 seats.