

Nancy Grosso

Photographed with her sister Ursula Pedersen

Wartime Experience: Remained with parents in Poland

I was born in Danzig, Germany in July of 1933, to Franz and Edith Schulz. I also have a sister, Ursula, who is three years older than I am. My mother was Jewish and my father Catholic. When she was nine, my sister was sent by Kindertransport to live in England, because Jewish children were not allowed to be educated beyond the fourth grade. As a youngster I can recall being told never to tell anyone of our Jewish background. I knew that if I should let it slip, we could be sent away.

My grandmother lived in a Jewish home for the elderly. One day I saw my mother sewing jewelry and money into the lining at the bottom of my grandmother's coat. It was then that she told me that my grandmother was being sent away to an unknown destination. Soon after, I recall going to the train station to see her off. The train was full of the same elderly people we had seen at the Jewish home. We waved good-bye to them all and that was the last we ever saw of her or the others again.

My mother had a sister that lived in Warsaw with her husband and a son. The train station in Danzig was a place where messages were passed on to people looking for information about various friends and relatives. One day my mother sent me to the train station to pick up a message about her sister and her family. The message I found said that they had been taken away in the night. We never heard from them again.

As a result of the war, I lost both of my parents. My mother died in a hospital from typhoid and my father was taken by Russian soldiers to labor in various labor camps in Russia. We were never able to find him again once he was taken away.

After the war ended in 1945, I went with a Jewish transport to Berlin where a cousin of my mother found me in an orphanage. I lived with him until I immigrated to the U.S. in June of 1946 to live with my uncle and aunt in Modesto, California.