

Mrs. Sylvia Katz



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Mrs. Katz



- ❖ Born In Poland in 1927
- ❖ 13 when the war broke out
- ❖ 5 years in the concentration camp
- ❖ Liberated April 27, 1945
- ❖ Came to Canada in 1947
- ❖ Married in 1950
- ❖ 2 Children
- ❖ 5 Grandchildren



Deportation



- ❖ Letter From the government came for her father to clean for the Germans.
- ❖ Decided to send Mrs. Katz instead because they would treat her nicer
- ❖ Depurated from Poland to Skarzysko-Kamienne



Skarzysko-Kamienne



- ❖ Labor Camp.
- ❖ Mrs. Katz spent 5 years working.
- ❖ Would work prisoners to death.
- ❖ Was in Poland.
- ❖ Evacuated to Germany when the Russians got too close to Poland.



Help In The Camp



- ❖ While Mrs. Katz was in the labor camp she had help from a Gestapo Nurse.
- ❖ This Nurse, helped Mrs. Katz and got her jobs.
- ❖ She also would recommend Mrs. Katz to get a better job.
- ❖ This Nurse saved Mrs. Katz life a few times.

Work



❖ Munitions Factory

❖ Hospital

❖ Cleaned men's barracks

❖ Cooked

❖ Cooked and Clean for a Gestapo
Nurse



Munitions Factory



- ❖ This was Mrs. Katz first job.
- ❖ She and twelve other girls worked all day every day.
- ❖ They measured shells for the guns.



Hospital



- ❖ Worked there for awhile.
- ❖ Harsh Conditions.
- ❖ Was exposed to many different things.



Men's Barracks



- ❖ Moved onto cleaning the mess barracks after working in the hospital.
- ❖ Had a few to clean a day.
- ❖ One day and inspection came by the head Gestapo.
- ❖ Mrs. Katz was then asked to cook.



Cooked and Cleaned



- ❖ While Mrs. Katz was Cleaning, and working she worked for the Gestapo Nurse.
- ❖ Who had been giving her work.



Evacuated to Germany



- ❖ When the Russians got to close to Poland, Skarzysko-Kamienne was evacuated to Germany.
- ❖ Once there Mrs. Katz could no longer wear her own clothes.
- ❖ But she kept her job.
- ❖ She describes it as, “They picked up and moved to Germany.”

Typhoid



- ❖ While Mrs. Katz was in Germany, she got typhoid fever.
- ❖ She remembers that her cousin who had the same name had it too.
- ❖ She became unconscious when the fever became to high
- ❖ While she was unconscious, guards came to take her and her cousin to be killed.
- ❖ But Gestapo nurse had told them that Mrs. Katz was a hard worker.
- ❖ Mrs. Katz was saved

Evacuated to Leipzig



- ❖ Thief was before liberation where all the prisoners of the camp were 'Walked to Death'.
- ❖ Mrs. Katz says, "If you went to get a piece of grass to eat or got sit down, you were shot."
- ❖ They were also walking past the battle fields.
- ❖ "We say the bullets and everything" said Mrs. Katz



Sanatorium



- ❖ Mrs. Katz was taken here to be nursed.
- ❖ This is where she started to eat more frequently.
- ❖ She had teaspoon a day.
- ❖ The reason she was feed like is, was to stretch her stomach.
- ❖ Many other survivors died because they dug into food and didn't stop.



Liberation and Going Home

- ❖ Mrs. Katz was liberated just outside of Giebelstadt, Germany.
- ❖ In April 27 1945.
- ❖ Mrs. Katz wanted to go home because she thought that someone in her family would be alive.
- ❖ Once Mrs. Katz got back no one in her family had lived through the Holocaust.
- ❖ She then ran into her neighbor, who was the Mayor of Poland who told her to run and that 3 Jews have already been killed.
- ❖ The Reason they were killed, was because the people who had taken their homes were scared that they were going to take them back.

Going Home



- ❖ Mrs. Katz decided to leave her name at the post office incase someone was looking for her.
- ❖ No one ever did.
- ❖ She later decided to go back to Germany.
- ❖ She then ran into a girl that was in the camp with Mrs. Katz.

Getting Work After the War

- ❖ Mrs. Katz had even finished public school.
- ❖ So she didn't know how to read or write.
- ❖ She wanted to be a telephone operator, but since she hadn't been able to finish school she couldn't.
- ❖ Mrs. Katz then got a lead on a job and went for it.
- ❖ It was a job to be a guard in the women Jail.
- ❖ She took a 6 week high school course and graduated.

Working In The Jail



- ❖ While she was working in the jail Mrs. Katz, realized that she couldn't treat the women prisoners like she had been treated.
- ❖ She then had saved up enough money and deduced to leave Poland and go back to Germany.

Israel



- ❖ Once Mrs. Katz was in Germany she contacted a Jewish group that would help her.
- ❖ She was supposed to go to Israel but couldn't yet.
- ❖ But before this could happen Mrs. Katz went into a Displaced Persons (DP) Camp.

DP Camps



- ❖ This DP Camp that Mrs. Katz went to was in Fuerstenfeldbruck.
- ❖ While she was there she was able to learn new skills.
- ❖ One skill that she learned was sewing.



The author of the "Memory Note" never mentioned how many concentration camps there were. About one million prisoners can be estimated to have perished in these camps.

Finding Family



- ❖ Mrs. Katz had received a note that said there was some of her family in America.
- ❖ But later Mrs. Katz found out that it was actually Canada and her family was in Toronto.
- ❖ She then got in contact with her family.
- ❖ Her family wanted to bring her over to Toronto so they could be together.

Getting Papers



- ❖ For Mrs. Katz to go to Canada she had to be 17 and under.
- ❖ This was a law that Mackenzie Kings made.
- ❖ By this time Mrs. Katz was 19-20 and wasn't allowed in.
- ❖ Now for Mrs. Katz to get into Canada she needed to take her cousin's identity.
- ❖ But the all ready had the same name it was just for her age.
- ❖ Her cousin was 17 and no one knew about her death yet.
- ❖ The government had given Mrs. Katz the papers and she could go to Canada.

Canada



- ❖ So her stuff went to Israel and she went to Canada.
- ❖ Once she got to Canada she moved in with her Aunt.
- ❖ She then had to go and learn English.
- ❖ She picked it up very easily, that is one thing that Mrs. Katz prides her self in.
- ❖ Then Mrs. Katz got a job working in a factory.

Social Life



- ❖ In Toronto there was a 'New Comers' club.
- ❖ This was where all the refugees would gather and hangout.
- ❖ Mrs. Katz had started to date one man who later proposed to her.
- ❖ But Mrs. Katz didn't like him as a husband and more as a friend.
- ❖ So she declined his proposal.

Social Life Con't



- ❧ One night her and her ex-boyfriend/ friend went to a party.
- ❧ Where one guy kept calling Mrs. Katz a very affectionate name.
- ❧ Mrs. Katz asked him why he was calling her such an affectionate name when his girlfriend was right next to him.
- ❧ But the man did come over to Mrs. Katz's group.
- ❧ He then told her friend, "Why didn't you introduce me to such a nice girl before."

Social Life Con't



- ❖ Mrs. Katz and that man who would later become her husband and the father to her children, got her phone number and asked her out the next night.
- ❖ They then became very happy with each other and got engaged in the May of 1950, and married in June.
- ❖ They bought a house and wanted a family right away since they didn't have anyone.
- ❖ They had two children



Thank you Mrs. Katz for sharing her story with us!