ANNA KOENIG Phoenix

Born: Bialystock, Poland 1925

Father: Yona

Mother: Russia

Siblings: Leah, Sprinza, Meah No other survivors from her family besides Anna

01:00 At the beginning of the war, the Germans came into the city, tried to

burn the famous temple; Russians then captured the city; young people

found brutalized by Germans; city lived under Russians for 2 years

Germans returned, 1941, torched the temple, threw in 2000 live Jews/

children, women and men

01:02 Family fled to home of an aunt, home, all possessions burned, no clothes

or food, laid low and tried to survive for 4 weeks

Germans create ghetto, 60,000 crammed into small area.

01:04 Hunger in the ghetto terrible, no water for bathing, spread of typhus

1:05 There were a few places to work, family members shared one pair of

shoes; bodies became swollen with water drunk to stave off hunger;

she worked in a factory making uniforms - got one loaf of bread as

pay for the whole week

01:06 She would sneak out of the ghetto to get food, even though many children

were shot doing that.

01:07 At the outset of the ghetto formation 5,000 men were taken from the

ghetto and never heard from again, including two of her uncles.

01:08 In Feb. of 1943 the Germans decided the ghetto was too crowded and

took people away; Anna's family hid in a basement-attic with about

40 people; babies smothered so as to not give the hiding place away.

01:12 In August 1943 Germans liquidated the ghetto; while marching she was

separated from her parents and never saw them again; stayed with

Aunt and two cousins for awhile . Forced to march to Piatrashov,

then kept for 24 hrs. no food or water, just standing, beaten by

soldier.

01:16 SS man came for the selection, she was pulled to the right, people were

separated by sex; she was carrying 1 yr. old cousin, her uncle told her

to just put the baby down and walk away and try to save herself.

01:17 Some family members took poison

01:18 Taken to Majdanek, people slittin throats; saw crematorium, during

trip in cattle cars, mothers threw babies, little children out the window

hoping someone might save them, but soldiers shot at them.

AnnaKoenig

Phoenix, Ariz

01:19 In the cattle car for 2-3 days, no food or water, as people died the bodies were pushed away. On arrival women went to showers

01:20 Those who lived were not necessarily fortunate, it means a lifetime of day and night nightmares

01:21 They were made to run like cattle, treated like animals. after the showers they were put into barracks like sardines, laying on boards

01:22 Made to get up at 4:30 for work, food minimal - some "soup" and a piece

of bread, many passed out and were beaten

01:23 After 10 days there, they were asked who had skills and they picked 150

women with sewing skills to work in sewing blankets; she got typhus while

there but she didn't go to the camp "hospital". Stayed there 11 mos.

01:24 Worked 36 hrs. at a time to be able to be in the kitchen and get an extra

piece of food; feels that is what enabled her to survive.

01;25 Moved to Auschwitz as the Russians got closer; left with permanent leg

injury where SS man beat her; leg swelled

01:26 Mengele came for selection process- she survived that and stayed there

for 5-6 mos.

01:27 Moved to a munitions factory in Chopow (ph) , hardly conscious - as if

mentally doped up; worked in tool and dye factory

01:28 As front got closer they were moved to Theresienstadt; 7 days in a cattle

car without food or water; like skeletons when they arrived; Russian

advance saved their lives; many people died soon after, some from trying

to immediately eat; liberating armies were not equipped to deal with

inmates of the camps

01:32 Worked at a hospital helping other survivors; all SS denied who they

were, supposedly the SS had a tatoo under their left arm.

01:34 They were liberated May,1945 and a group went together to Lodz, traveling

on the tops of trains; found a cousin through the Jewish Organization Registry

01:38 Returned homebut home and everything had been destroyed, accosted with

anti-semitism everywhere, married and went to American-occupied section

Germany, after two years came to U.S. because of relatives in Chicago.

Difficult adjusting at the beginning but now have two daughters and 3

grandchildren. The world knew what was happening and didn't care -

it didn't even care about the suffering of children.