

GEORGE SHAINFARBER

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE



George Shainfarber was born on January 4, 1927, in Lodz, Poland, to Jacob and Sara Shainfarber. He had one sister, Shaindel. His father was a leather goods manufacturer in a factory in Lodz. George

went to public school, which he remembered had mostly Jewish students. Life changed dramatically after the Nazi occupation; synagogues were destroyed and Jews were beaten on the streets.

In the beginning of 1940, Jews were forced to move into the Lodz ghetto. Jacob was able to keep his job at the factory located just outside of the ghetto. George managed to continue his education until he was fifteen at which time the school was closed down and he was then forced to work in a tool shop building and fixing equipment for the German troops. In 1942, George and his family learned that the Germans were sending large groups of Jewish people to the extermination camps. To avoid deportation, they hid for a few weeks in the factory where Jacob worked because it was safer than their own apartment. When they returned to the ghetto, however, it was not long before the family was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

In August 1944, the family arrived at Auschwitz-Birkenau. George and his father were separated from his mother and sister who were sent to the gas chambers. George and his father were assigned to a barrack which was so overcrowded they had to sleep on the floor.

George was only there for a short time before he was transferred without his father to Wolfsberg concentration camp in Germany where he performed mechanical work in an aircraft factory until he was liberated. Afterward, George and a friend of his from the camp went into the town of Friedland, Germany, and found a place to live.

In May 1945, George was reunited with his father who, after his own liberation, had traveled to Friedland looking for George. Jacob then returned to Lodz where he obtained a job in a factory nearby. George followed him a few months later. In 1950, George immigrated to the United States. He went to New Haven, Connecticut via New York. Ten months later, his father followed him with his new wife, another Holocaust survivor. George worked as an electrician in New Haven where he met his future wife, Edna Guberman.

On June 26, 1960, the couple was married and moved to Hartford where George worked in sales. George and Edna had two children, Gayle and Linda. In 1981, George went to a meeting of survivors in Israel. He remembered it was difficult for him to comprehend why he had survived and others had not; prior to the survivors' gathering, he had not spoken about his experiences very much. At the time of George's interview in 1998, he and his wife had five grandchildren: Jessica, Zachary, Allison, Emily, and Aaron. ■



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