

DANIEL GESLEWITZ

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE



Daniel Geslewitz was born Gedalia Geclawicz on August 14, 1924, in Lodz, Poland, to Yitzhak and Mirla Geclawicz. Daniel was one of seven children raised in an observant Jewish home. His father

supported the family through his cabinetry business. Daniel attended heder (Hebrew: one-room school), public school, and vocational school.

Shortly after the German army entered Lodz in 1939, anti-Jewish laws forced the closure of the family's business. The following year all Jews in Lodz were ordered into the ghetto, which was established in the section of Lodz where Daniel and his family lived. In the ghetto Daniel was a forced laborer in a woodworking factory, making baby cribs, wooden shoes, and toys for German families.

Living conditions in the ghetto were harsh. As a result, Daniel's brother, Hersh, died of illness in 1941 and his father of starvation in 1942. When the ghetto was liquidated in 1944, Daniel and his family were deported to the Auschwitz II - Birkenau extermination camp; upon arrival, his mother and one sister were murdered in the gas chambers. Daniel's other sister later died during a death march when the camp was liquidated. Upon hearing that metalworkers were needed in Germany, Daniel and his three brothers registered their names. Nine days later they were sent to Braunschweig where they labored nearby in a factory making parts for trucks. The harsh conditions there led to the deaths of Samuel and Mayer. Daniel and his brother Leon managed to stay together through a series of other

labor camps, including Watenstedt, Ravensbruck, and Wobbelin. On May 2, 1945, the two were liberated in Wobbelin by French and American forces. With the aid of British soldiers, Daniel and Leon went to the Luneburg displaced persons' camp in Germany, where Daniel met his future wife, Anna. They married in 1948.

In 1950, Daniel and Anna immigrated to the United States. The couple raised their three daughters, Mirla, Susan, and Phyllis, in the eastern United States but relocated to Arizona. At the time of his interview in 1995, Daniel had seven grandchildren.



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