

Surviving the Holocaust

Guests Interview by Sharon Ann Soudakoff

Saw Better Opportunities In America

Doris Rosen Fedrid and Esther Rosen Landman

This is part of an ongoing series of interviews with deaf survivors of the Holocaust during World War II. This personal interview took place in early 1994.

Doris was born around the year 1920. Her parents went hiding with her while Esther who was born fifteen years later in the 1940's. They were in a ghetto which was located in the worst section of the city known as Tarnopol. Her father, David was a grain dealer, and her mother, Leah was a full time housewife. They knew if the Nazis heard Esther cry, they would kill all of them. Her parents made arrangements with a non-Jewish woman to have her take care of Esther until they could come and get her.



Back row: L to R Lawrence, Esther, David, Sheldon

Front row: L to R Debbie, Leah Rosen, Sammy

(Picture of Doris and her family wasn't available)

Getting me ready to be handed over to the non Jewish woman, Esther's mother explained to her that she brought some clothing, and other things. Just before meeting with the woman, some SS Nazi saw me lying there with my clothes on the side as the woman later explained to my mother that the Nazi watched them as they spoke to each other. They decided that I was too 'clear' to have come from the ghetto so that I probably wasn't Jewish. Esther also had blonde hair. Thank G-d they thought that way.

Anyway, they placed me in a Christian orphanage while keeping my mother up-to-date about me from the non Jewish woman who came to visit me in the orphanage. At the time, my parents and Doris were working in a labor camp. They had to line up

everyday for roll call and to work for the Nazis.

They were forced to work very difficult labor. For a while, my mother was assigned to wash and sew all the army uniforms and other things there. They eventually ran away from the camp, and hid in a underground pit in a non Jew's barn. They hid there for many months.

After two years, the Russians invaded Poland and pushed the Nazis back. Then my parents came to look for me in the orphanage. When they arrived, the Mother Superior informed them that I had recently been adopted and told them where I was. Of course, the family didn't want to give me up and kicked my mother out. So my mother told her that she would go to the Russian officials whom everyone knew were against religion. The nun was afraid, and agreed that my mother could take me back. When they opened the bedroom door, they saw that I was lying in a crib. The Mother Superior wrapped me up in a blanket and handed to my mother's arms and told here to go quickly and she did! Also, my mother found out later that the first woman who was supposed to watch me was actually no-good and would not have kept me.

They do not know if both Esther and Doris was born deaf as the mother was not aware of it until Doris was very sick when she was a little girl. But it is more likely they were born deaf.

After the war ended, my mother was very sick. After being in Munich, Germany for a while and in some other smaller cities, my parents heard about some opportunities to leave for America. But when they saw that Doris was deaf, they did not want us to go to America. I was just a little girl running around so they didn't know that I was also deaf. After a while, my father wrote to America where my parents each had a brother in the U.S. already. They talked to a Senator and shortly thereafter we were allowed to go to America. We went on a army boat which was not like a cruise as my mother told me but we were in New York for a short time, then came to Denver, Colorado where my uncle lived. I attended Evans School which was an oral program then went to Colorado Springs School for the Deaf. Doris pretty much finished her education in Europe.

Esther is married to Lawrence Landman and they have five children and reside in Colorado. Doris was married to Fred Fedrid who also survived the Holocaust and there will be a story on him in the near future. They have three children, Charlie, Rose and Eleanor. Fred passed away in 1963. Doris resides in Seattle, Washington.