

Holocaust Survivor Biography: Frieda Weinschenker Tabak



Frieda Weinschenker Tabak was born in Lipcani, Romania. She was 9 years old in August 1939 when the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed the Non-Aggression Pact, which permitted the Soviet Union to invade Romania. Her uncle then took Frieda, her younger brother, and her parents to his home in Chernowitz, Romania.

On June 21, 1941, Germany declared war on the Soviet Union and within two weeks the German army invaded Chernowitz. By October the Nazis rounded up the Jewish population and sealed them in the ghetto and then, with the help of the Romanian collaborators, began to systematically deport them to Transnistria region.

Meanwhile the Mayor of Chernowitz, Traian Popovici, appealed to the authorities to let some of the Jewish professionals remain. Frieda and her family were among the fortunate few to obtain this permission. However, life remained difficult; food and water was nearly non-existent, all Jews were forced to wear a yellow star, observe strict curfews, and children were not allowed to attend school.

Her father was then taken to a slave labor camp in Romania. In March 1944 Frieda was liberated by the Soviet Union but her travails were not over. Her father was arrested by the Soviets and remained in a labor camp for 9 months. After he returned the family obtained false identification documents and traveled to Poland and then to Germany in a displaced persons camp. After being released from the camp she went back to school for the first time in 6 years and was placed in the 8th grade.

In 1947 Frieda and her family left Germany and arrived in Chester, Pennsylvania. She graduated 8th out of 522 students, then received a degree in chemistry from Temple University.

Frieda Tabak is widowed and has 3 children and 3 grandchildren.



This educational program has been supported by a grant from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.