**Ruth Frazer – Life Before The War**

Ruth was born in Leipzig on the 6th November 2015. Her maiden name was Frischer and her parents had a Kosher butcher shop.

INT: Today is the 26th of March.

INT: OK. Number one: life before the war. Can you tell us about your early life? For example what did you parents do? And how long they lived there? Where did you live? Where did you go to school? Did you mix with other Jews? And what Jewish life was like before the Nazis. So first of all we’ll start with where were you born?

R.F: In Leipzig.

INT: When?

R.F: 6th of November 1915

INT: And did you go to school there?

R.F: The Higher Jewish School

INT: That was after a….Primary school, was it a Jewish primary school?

R.F: Yes.

INT: A Jewish primary school. And you started at age?

R.F: Six.

INT: And then?

INT: So this was a secondary school you were at?

R.F. Höhere Schule

INT : Higher School you said?

R.F: Yes.

INT: OK. What did your parents do in Leipzig?

R.F: My parents had a butchers shop from 1912-1933.

INT: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

R.F: Yes. Two brothers and one sister.

INT: Older?

R.F: Yes they are all older, all elder. Elder than I am.

INT: OK. What was Jewish life like? So you said your father went to Shul?

R.F: Yes.

INT: Tell me about that.

R.F: Just a normal Jewish life before the Nazis came.

INT: Were you quite Orthodox?

R.F: Yes.

INT: OK.

R.F: Yes because it was a kosher butcher shop, yes.

INT: All your friends were Jewish?

R.F: Yes most of them.

INT: Where did your parents come from originally?

R.F: My father came from Poland and my mother Germany, Katowice.

INT: You left {Germany}?

R.F: I left Germany end of October 1938, together with a good friend, to Switzerland, Zurich.

INT: How did you get there?

R.F: With aeroplane.

INT: From?

R.F: From Leipzig to Zurich. There was a stop in between and so this was … und so das war …

INT: Well, how was the stop? What happened?

R.F: Yes. We went with aeroplane first to Stuttgart and then by train to Zurich, Switzerland.

INT: What did you do in between? You said you left school in 1933. What did you do in between those years?

R.F: Yes. I was staying with my older brother and his family and helped there in the household.

INT: And your parents?

R.F: My parents, they went back to Poland because there was a house where they could live in.

INT: And the Germans made them leave? They had to leave Germany?

R.F: They didn’t have to leave but there was no…because the butchers shop was closed they had no more

INT: Income

R.F: Income. So they went to Poland because there was a family building where they could live without paying any…much rent.

INT: What did you do in Switzerland?

R.F: I only stayed in Switzerland for a year and we were (unterhalten) looked after by the Jewish community in Zurich.

INT: So the Jewish community supported you in Switzerland?

R.F: Yes.

INT: And why did you leave Switzerland?

R.F: Well I had to leave because the Swiss didn’t want to have any immigrants. We had to leave. They made us. We couldn’t stay there.

INT: What year was that?

R.F: This was from 1938 to 1939; one year.

INT: And where did you go after Switzerland?

R.F: After Switzerland I went to Great Britain, London. First to London and later to Glasgow. In London you were only allowed to do domestic work.

INT : We want to talk about a little bit of your life before the war. First of all when you were born and where you grew up until your early teens.

R.F: Ran a kosher butcher shop and this kosher butcher shop until 1933 when the Nazis came to power. The shop had to be closed. My parents had relatives in Poland where my father came from originally.

INT: What was the name called, the place?

R.F: They lived in a small village near Krakow called Alwernia. There this was owned by the family and there they had to pay no rent. This was very convenient for them because they had no income.

INT: Income.

R.F: They had no income. I stayed in Leipzig and stayed with my eldest brother and his family. Because I stayed in Leipzig I had a good friend there and I had no intention to go to Poland because I couldn’t speak the language and I was used to stay, I wanted to stay in Leipzig because of this good friend. I started at six in a higher Jewish Gymnasium.

INT: And it was a Jewish school right through to higher. From six until seventeen or how old?

R.F: Seventeen, yes. Also, because the Jewish school was also closed 1933 because the Nazis didn’t allow a Jewish school and I had to leave.

Then I helped in my parents butcher shop also until it was closed and as I say I stayed with my elder brother and his family.

INT: Right. What did your brother do?

INT: Fur?

R.F: Fur business.

INT: And that wasn’t closed yet?

R.F: No and until the Nazis came I helped in my fathers, in my parents / fathers butchers shop.

INT: And when that closed?

R.F: This was, when this closed, well I stayed with my elder brother. They had two small children and I helped in the household.

**Ruth Frazer – Life During The War**

INT: So when did you leave Germany? Tell us about that.

R.F: I left Germany end of 1938 together with a very good friend.

INT: And he had connections in Switzerland, that’s why you went there. Is that right?

R.F: Yes, connections.

INT: Family?

INT: What age were you then?

R.F: Twenty-three.

INT: And how did you leave? Did you walk? Or did you get a train?

R.F: No we left by train…Took the plane such a story

INT: Alright. But you flew first of all to Stuttgart and then?

R.F: The rest of the journey to Zurich by train. In Switzerland we were also by the Jewish community Supported how do you say?

INT: They helped you there, the Jewish community.

R.F: They helped yes.

INT: In Zurich.

R.F: In Zurich. But in Switzerland How do you say it, the … To try to leave the country.

INT: The Swiss government didn’t want. [the] Jews to stay.

R.F: Yes because they had too many immigrants in a small country. They also wanted to leave you, you should leave the country again. This was only for a short stay in Switzerland and they wanted you to leave the country. So I had a brother in London and there

R.F: The permission or a, a … visa to Great Britain or London.

INT: So you stayed with your brother all the time?

R.F: No I had a job with a family to work as a domestic help. ….?…. De Misses Debousire?

INT: What happened to the rest of the family?

R.F: The rest of the family. Well the parents went to Poland, my elder brother to London and the other brother to, at the time called, Palestine.

INT: And you never saw your parents again?

R.F: No. Not when the war stopped no.

INT: Right. So they presumably perished in Auschwitz?

R.F: Yes that is what we think. This was 1944. Shortly before the war ended.

R.F: I stayed with my brother and family.

**Ruth Frazer – Immigration**

INT: So where did you land? You came to London. Did you go to somebody’s house?

R.F: Yes because at the time my brother was, his family were staying in London so I was first stopped in London. But I had to start my job as a domestic help.

INT: Whereabouts?

R.F: In London? Swiss Cottage.

INT: And then?

R.F: Oh yes that’s right. I had another job in London, in Golders Green, also in the household.

INT: And after the household work?

R.F: Well there was already the war on and I, my elder brother stayed in Glasgow and I joined the family in Glasgow.

INT: Yeah but before then you did other, you did war work. Did you not work in a factory?

R.F: That was also in Glasgow.

INT: What was it like during an air raid in London? Was it…? What did you do if there was bombing?

R.F: Well we went downstairs in the air raid shelter. It wasn’t really an air raid shelter it was just down in the basement.

INT: Right. You didn’t go into a tube station?

R.F: No, no.

INT: Oh right.

INT: So you then went to Glasgow?

R.F: Yes.

INT: On holiday?

R.F: No, it was first a holiday and then I started war work in Glasgow.

INT: What was that? What kind of work was that?

R.F: Inspecting some tools and things like that.

INT: What did you think of Scotland when you came?

R.F: It was a very nice country, very friendly people, very friendly, everybody wanted to help.

INT: And not so much bombing as in London?

R.F: No, no. Das finished all. That finished all. We had two heavy air raids by the Clyde but that was (than war it quiet)

INT: Where did you live in Scotland with your brother? When you arrived in Scotland?

R.F: Yeah

INT: How long?

R.F: Until I got married.

INT: OK, so you came to Scotland in 1944?

R.F: Yes (Ja)

INT: And were there other refugees there?

R.F: Yes many from Austria and Germany. …..all refugees Ellie und Leo und, und, und Grueber, und de Kaiser All of them were refugees Ellie and Leo Grueber, und de Kaiser.

INT: And Mrs Lucas you knew.

R.F: Yes that’s right.

INT: Alright. So you had quite a nice social life in Glasgow.

R.F: Ja. Yes.

**Ruth Frazer – Settling In**

INT: When did you get married?

R.F: 1945.

INT: Where?

R.F: In Glasgow

INT: Was it South Portland Street?

R.F: Yes. Something like this.

INT: In Geneen’s?

R.F: In Geneen’s restaurant, yes and the Chuppah…Ja. … they set up a chuppah. Yes.

INT: And the Chuppah was there, alright. Who was the Rabbi?

INT: It was Rabbi Rubinstein, alright, 1945. OK. Family life in Scotland was OK?

R.F: Yes.

INT: You had your brother and sister-in-law and family.

R.F: Yes. Ja wir waren noch … Yes we still were …

INT: Lots of German friends.

R.F: Friends yes.

INT: So you had a nice life there. Until 1958?

INT:’58, you went back to Germany in 1958.

R.F: Yes. ’59. End of 1960/’59.

R.F: To Hamburg.

INT: To Hamburg, right. Why did you come back to Germany?

R.F: My, in this case, my husband’s brother was living there and he wanted to engage him, in other words, give him a job.

INT: Right.

R.F: Daddy.

INT: He had a chocolate factory and my father then went to help there. Right, tell us a bit about your work in Glasgow. Just say you had to leave, what time did you have to leave the house? Did you get a bus? What number of the bus?

INT: Right so you left your brothers house.

INT: Where?

R.F: Glasgow. Lomondside Avenue.

INT: In Clarkston, right.

R.F: Glasgow, Lomondside Avenue.

INT: So what time would you leave the house?

R.F: Quite early.

INT: Seven o’clock/ eight o’clock in the morning?

R.F: Half past seven.

INT: To get a bus?

R.F: To get the bus to town.

INT: Right so you’d go to work. You think it was a tool company?

R.F: Yes.

INT: But you don’t know the name of it. That was all secret because everything was blacked out.

INT: And you were in the storeroom.

R.F: Yes that’s right.

INT: Sorting out screws and nails and things like that.

INT: This is what you can remember. Alright. When did you finish? What time would work finish?

R.F: When I got married in 1945.

INT: Alright. Then you didn’t work after that?

R.F: I didn’t work after that.

INT: You just looked after your family.

**Ruth Frazer – Reflection On Life**

INT: And were there lots of refugees there? Did you meet other people?

R.F: Yes there were quite a few refugees otherwise. From Germany and Austria. In Glasgow I met my future husband.

INT: Where?

R.F: I was introduced with a Jewish family in Glasgow. I was introduced to my future husband. He came from Berlin.

INT: Once you were married did you work again?

R.F: No.

INT: No. You were a housewife in Glasgow.

R.F: Yes.

INT: Until 1959.

R.F: Yes. Then we left for Germany again.

INT: Why was that?

R.F: My husband’s brother was staying in Hamburg and he had a small chocolate factory and my husband came and joined him there and helped him in the factory and this was also his income.

INT: Right, OK. And generally your life’s been quite peaceful?

R.F: Yes. Ja.

INT: Quite a happy life after that?

R.F: Yes. Couldn’t’ say differently

INT: Bringing up the family.

R.F: Yes, grandchildren.