

Biography of Rachel Garfunkel

Rachel Garfunkel was born to a middle class family in 1930 in Krakow, Poland.

When the war broke out and Cracow was bombarded, Rachel, her sister and mother fled to the little village of Grodzisko Dolne on the San River near the Ukrainian border. When the Germans started to round up the Jewish population of the area, Rachel ran back to Krakow with her mother and sister and found their father in the ghetto.

She and her sister were smuggled out of the ghetto in 1942 and spent the rest of the war with false identities with a Polish family. Rachel's father was deported from the ghetto and murdered in Auschwitz.

The sisters were reunited with their mother who survived and returned from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in May 1945. The three of them went to the Bergen-Belsen Displaced Person camp and from there to Paris, where they lived for 6 months.

Through the assistance of Rachel's mother's cousin, they moved to New York in 1946. Rachel went to school for the first time in 6 years and was able to graduate from high school after only 18 months of study. However she did not have the means to continue her studies and had to go to work.

She married a fellow survivor in 1950 and they had two children. When they retired, Rachel and her husband followed their son to Edmonton, Canada, in 1992.