

I was born Karl Sinai in 1937 as WWII was developing in Europe. Our family owned steel foundries and metal fabricating steam engines in Vienna. The Austrian Nazi party organized mayhem on Kristalnacht. Our home and factory were invaded, vandalized, and shortly thereafter confiscated. They killed my grandfather and his brother, driving all family members from our home, confiscating money, jewelry, valuables, and freezing bank accounts, and then moving into the house themselves, where their descendants may still be found today. These actions caused our family to flee our home and country. Bribing a railway conductor, we managed to board a midnight train, leaving for Siberia. Eventually working their way to Shanghai, the last free port accepting refugees without question or passport, my parents hoped to escape the impending conflict.

Our Shanghai experience was to last 9 bitter years, confined by the Japanese occupation troops, forcing stateless Jews into the confines of the Hongkew ghetto. Life was extremely difficult for all people, Chinese included). With the restrictions of imprisonment and callous cruelties imposed. Food was rationed. There was no running water or any sanitation. People lived forced communal lives. Rampant disease and personal hygiene made daily life miserable. All this was compounded by many bombing runs from American B52's. Many people died and all survivors were forever marred by these years.

I witnessed the fall of free China as the communist Chinese imposed their will upon the population. Eventually we were liberated, and the tedious task of processing people was done by the Red Cross. All allied countries accepted a portion of stateless refugees; some even elected to go back to their homelands...but not many. This process took almost a year. Our quota enabled us to immigrate to Australia; somehow my mother managed to pay the fare. The actual immigration took over 6 months and at one point I witnessed the suicide of one member of our group.

Our arrival in Australia was also met with suspicion and resentment from the Australians. This turmoil caused us to try a name change. My mother, being a single parent found the new stresses so overwhelming that she married quickly, hoping for emotional support.

Soon afterwards she had several emotional breakdowns, culminating in several suicide attempts. She was treated with electric shock therapy; after which it took two years for her to know herself and recognize me as her son.

The years in Australia after World War II were very difficult. Without prior schooling and without needed corrective glasses, I was truly a misfit, unable to read with a dysfunctional home life and after my mother's third suicide attempt, I was counseled by public service medical intervention to leave home and work in a food service setting and thereby never go hungry again. This led to a career beginning with butchering and ending in the hotel and restaurant food service industry. I worked in England, Switzerland, and Austria, and finally migrated to the United States to meet my father. My employment in corporate America was successful, working in country clubs and many famous hotels.

Over the years I developed interests in carpentry, home repairs, gardening, and painting. Currently I'm enjoying these hobbies, visits from the grandchildren and the love of a beautiful wife of many years.

Currently I am successful in my own retirement, enjoying gardening, painting, carpentry. I have a wonderful wife with whom we raised two children, and we are proud grand-parents. We especially enjoy the coming of a new spring and hope for many years of fresh flowers and vegetable from our bountiful garden. I hope all who come to view the museum and its many exhibits will find an understanding of life's true meaning and abhor the use of force. May the force of good be with you!