



Memories and history of our family

by Herb Meyers, complemented by Edith Meyers

I was born in Wiesbaden, Germany, on January 12th, 1921. My father was William J. Meyers (born April 2nd, 1889, in Boston, Massachusetts). My mother was Gertrude, née Hertz (born December 2nd, 1898 in Essen-Steele, Germany).

The Meyers / Jandorf families

My grandparents on the Meyers side were Emil (born in Mückstadt, Germany) and Bertha Meyers (born March 28th, 1863 in Bremen, Germany). They had three children, Erna, William (my father) and Alfred, in that order. All three children were born in Boston, Massachusetts.

My grandfather seems to have traveled back and forth several times between the US and Germany, before and after World War I. Records show that, between 1898 and 1902, he was a partner in the firm *The American Supply Co., Meyers & Co., Exporters and Importers of American Goods*. At about the same time (1891), he also had an office in Boston under the name of *The Meyers Putz Pomade Co., Manufacturers, Importers and Commission Merchants*. But grandfather Meyers was best known for his *Meyers Fichtennadeln* (Meyers Pine Needles) a powder that, when added to bath water, made it smell good and also promised all sorts of health benefits.

The first born child of Emil and Bertha Meyers, daughter Erna (born in Boston, October 21st, 1893), married Robert Jandorf, one of seven brothers who owned and operated the largest and most elegant department store in Berlin, Germany, the *Kaufhaus des Westens* (Department Store of the West), or *KaDeWe*, as the Berliners mostly called it. The store reopened after its destruction during World War II and Berliners still call it *KaDeWe* to this day.

Robert and Erna had two sons, Bernard (born June 19th, 1915) and Ernst (born 1920). In 1928, the Jandorfs - Erna, Robert and sons Ernst and Bernard - moved to Zurich, Switzerland, where they lived in a Zurich suburb until the mid-1930s when they all moved to Boston.

Both Erna and Robert Jandorf are no longer alive today. Robert suffered a stroke, following the unexpected, sudden death of his youngest son, Ernst. This occurred under especially tragic circumstances: Ernst, serving in the US Army during World War II, began feeling sick one

day before being considered for an officer's commission and, therefore, did not want to see a doctor. He died the next day of Meningitis.

The other son, Bernard Jandorf, after earning his Ph.D. at Harvard University, also joined the US Army and was commissioned an officer. At the end of World War II, Bernard continued to work as a civilian for the US Army Chemical Division at Edgewater Arsenal near Baltimore where he, his wife, Lottie, née Kaufman (born on November 19th, 1923), lived with their daughter, Evelyn (born 1950). Lottie Jandorf passed away on March 20th, 1992 at age 68. Bernard, after several years in a Baltimore nursing home, died on March 14th, 2001 at age 76. Evelyn married James Waldman (born 1945). They live in Framingham, Massachusetts, near Boston. They have two daughters, Susan Ami (born 1984) and Rachel Lynne (born 1988).

The third and youngest child, Alfred Meyers, lived in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, with his wife, Liesel, née Dahlsheimer. Together with my father, Alfred had a factory in Höchst, near Frankfurt am Main, Germany, named *Enameline-Werke*. They manufactured shoe polishes and oven polish. (In those days people cooked on wood burning ovens that had black iron surfaces that needed to be polished from time to time). Alfred continued to manage the factory after my father's death in 1925. When the Nazis closed the factory in Höchst during the 1930s, Alfred and his family moved to New York City. Having been born in Boston, he and his family were US citizens and thus could make the move without needing immigration affidavits.

In New York, Alfred, together with a partner, started a new business manufacturing and marketing a variety of chemically treated cleaning and polishing cloths (such as for silver and shoes) under the brand name of *Cadie Cloth*. Alfred and Liesel have since passed away Alfred and Liesel had two sons, Norbert (born June 10th, 1922) and Edwin, *Eddie*, (born March 15th, 1927). Norbert married Lisa, née Hadra (born June 22nd, 1922).

After several years in the US Army during World War II, Norbert studied Pharmacy and opened a drug store in Rockville Center, Long Island, where he with his wife and children lived. Later he changed to the more lucrative business of manufacturing and marketing medical instruments (artificial limbs, wheelchairs, etc.). Norbert passed away on November 10th, 2000. He is survived by his wife, Lisa, who still resides in Rockville Center.

Norbert and Lisa have three children, Barbara Constance, *Connie*, (born 1947), Eileen Randy (born 1950), and Andrew Hadra Meyers, *Andy*, (born 1956).

Norbert and Lisa have six grandchildren. They are children of Barbara Constance and Olaf Meyer:

- Claude Eric (born 1974)
- Alexa Kate (born 1978) married Mathew Weitzman (born 1978) in 2008

Children of Eileen Randy and Harris Bloom (born 1928):

- Tamara, (born 1977)
- Ruth (born 1979)

Children of Andrew Hadra (Andy) and Janet Meyers:

- Alex (born 1985)
- Paulene (born 1988)

Norbert's younger brother, Edwin, *Eddie*, lived with his parents in New York City and joined his father's *Cadie Chemical Company*. After his father, Alfred, passed away while on a vacation in Europe, Eddie took over the business, continuing to manufacture cleaning cloths, but later expanding it into manufacturing, importing and marketing of numerous convenience products.

Eddie married Helen Seed in 1950 and they have four children:

- Kenneth (born 1952)
- Sally (born 1954)
- Andrew (born 1961)
- Janet (born 1969)

Eddie and Helen now live in Ridgewood, New Jersey, and have an apartment in Hollywood, Florida. They have nine grandchildren. They are children of Sally and Merrill Goldfarb:

- Jared (born 1989) and twins Max and Alexandra (born 1996)

Children of Andrew and Lillian Meyers:

- Katherine (born 1988)
- Aaron (born 1990)
- Jacob (born 1992)
- Daniel (born 1994)

Children of Janet and Evan Colman: Twins Sam and Justin (born 2001)

The Meyers Family



Bertha and Emil Meyers



Trude and William Meyers with little Herbert



Alfred Meyers



**Erna & Robert Jandorf
with Edith Meyers**



Liesel Meyers



Cousins Herbert, Edwin, Norbert and Bernard

The Hertz family

The history of the Hertz Family, to the degree of my limited knowledge, starts with my great-grandparents, Samuel and Lisette Blumenthal in Hagen, Germany. There they lived in a house that combined a house wares store on the ground floor with their living quarters above the store. They had three children: Johanna, Rebecca and Bertha Blumenthal.

My grandmother, Rebecca (born September 28th, 1872) married Isidor Hertz (born in Dorsten, Germany, on July 3rd 1862). During the early part of their married life, they lived in Essen-Steele, a suburb of Essen, Germany, where their four children Ernst, Margaret, Gertrude (my mother) and Otto were born. They later moved to a large house in Rüttenscheid, a fashionable section on the outskirts of the city of Essen.

My grandfather, Isidor, the patriarch of the Hertz family, was a patriotic German, although he also had strong affiliation with his Jewish heritage and frequently attended services at the Essen Synagogue, one of the most beautiful of all synagogues in Germany. I remember him as always serious, traditional and very rigid. He liked smoking cigars after dinner that he kept in a special closet. He died on December 25th, 1949 in Brussels where he had emigrated.

His wife, my grandmother, Rebecca, was just the opposite of my grandfather. She had a reputation for being softhearted, kind and caring for her family, including me. She was *in full charge* of running the household, together with two servants, and arranging for all meals. Grandmother Rebecca died on July 31st, 1960, also in Brussels.

Ernst Hertz (born March 27th, 1896) was the oldest of the Hertz children. Though he was a handsome man and, by all reports, had numerous girlfriends, he remained a bachelor all his life. During the Nazi period of the 1930s, he moved first to Barcelona, Spain, and later to Buenos Aires, Argentina. At the end of World War II, he moved back to Germany, and lived in Düsseldorf where he had an export-import business until he passed away there in 1973.

Next came Margret (*Grete* - born 1897), who married a lawyer, Dr. Joseph (*Jo*) Sommer. Jo and Grete lived in Hamburg, Germany, until the early 1930s when they moved, with their son Otto, to the suburbs of Paris. During World War II, Jo and Grete went into hiding or fled to the south of France, but I am not sure about this. Their son, Otto, spent World War II in the French Expeditionary Forces in England and, later, in France. When he married Paulette Sriska they moved to Strasbourg, France, and had two sons, Claude and Serge. After the death of Otto, Paulette moved to La Réunion, an island in the Indian Ocean administered by France, to be with her son, Claude, who had married a native woman and had settled there.

The other son, Serge, and his wife live in Israel. In 2008, Paulette died in La Réunion. The third child in the Hertz family, Gertrude Hertz (born December 2nd, 1898), was my mother, but I will tell her story later in a separate chapter.

Otto Hertz (born June 18th, 1904), the youngest of the four Hertz children went to university in Berlin, then lived in my grandparents' house in Essen at the time that I was also living there as a teenager. Being in his late twenties, Otto, affectionately called *Bömmel*, was closest to me in age and often defended me against the strictness of my grandfather. He worked in his father's cloth wholesale company. Later, as Bömmel took over the leadership of the company, its name changed to *Westtuch GmbH*.

Bömmel was much less conventional, almost rebelliously by Hertz family standards. For example, he bought an electric refrigerator - a novelty in those days and affordable by few - for my grandparents' kitchen, replacing the traditional icebox, disregarding my grandmother's initial protests. He was a good looking man and had a Christian girlfriend at a time when this was considered *Rassenschande* (*racial disgrace*), a major crime in Nazi Germany, punishable by being sent to a concentration camp. But he had many other German friends, including an SS officer who called him one night in 1936, warning him to leave immediately or face arrest by the Gestapo the following morning. That evening Bömmel, as usual, said casually good-night to everyone, got into his car and left for Belgium where he would reside for the rest of his life.

Eventually, Bömmel married Ruth Maschke (a divorcee). With them, in Brussels, lived Susan (born February 9th, 1921) Ruth's daughter from her previous marriage.

Meanwhile, my grandparents remained in Germany, based on my grandfather's conviction that the Nazi era was a temporary nuisance that would soon come to an end. Thus they were trapped when World War II started in 1939. In 1942, Bömmel paid someone to smuggle them across the Belgian border, a difficult journey because, being seniors, they had to do this by running for their lives, leaving everything they owned behind, except the clothes they wore on their backs.

When the German Army invaded Belgium, Bömmel, on orders of the German occupation government, was arrested by the Belgian Security Service and spent several months in a so-called *collection camp* (really a sort of concentration camp). But he managed to escape and, together with his wife, Ruth, daughter Susan, and my grandparents, went into hiding in the basement of a farm near Brussels. While German troops occupied Belgium, they hid in that basement for two years, together with several other German refugees. The farmer supplied them with food until Allied troops pushed the German Army out of Belgium.

After emerging from their long confinement, Bömmel founded *Scabal* in Brussels, a company that would become a prestigious manufacturer and distributor of cashmere cloth for men's and women's suits.

Bömmel later divorced Ruth, but always stayed in close contact with her, providing for her daily needs, including a car, and telephoning her frequently to check on her health and well-being. Meanwhile, he married his second wife, Hannelore (born January 27th, 1931), with whom he lived happily in Brussels and their apartment in St. Jean Cap Ferrat on the French Riviera and on their yacht *Aliosha* until the end of his life in 1991.

The Hertz Family



Rebecca and Isidor Herz



Otto and his second wife Hannelore



Ruth, Otto's first wife



Ernst Hertz



Sisters Grete and Trude



Paulette and Otto Sommer with Edith Meyers

My immediate family

My mother married William J. Meyers in 1920 and moved to Wiesbaden, Germany. They apparently preferred the relaxed atmosphere of Wiesbaden, a well-known and pretty German resort town, even though William Meyers had to travel every day to his factory, the *Enameline-Werke*, in Höchst, about 30 miles away. On January 12th, 1921, I entered their lives to become the latest addition to the family circle.

In 1925, when I was four years old, my father contracted food poisoning, apparently from eating oysters during a summer holiday with my mother in Italy. This deteriorated into what I assume to have been Hepatitis A. With no remedies known in those days, my father died at a Frankfurt hospital on June 9th, 1925.

Being only four years old when my father passed away, I have, unfortunately, only the vaguest recollection of him. Among the few things that I remember is the piggyback rides on his back around our large apartment in Wiesbaden and, strangely, waving goodbye to him from the window as the ambulance pulled away to take him to the Frankfurt hospital where he passed away a few days later. I have been told by many people who knew him that he was a remarkable man.

In 1929, about four years after my father passed away, my mother married Friedrich Felix (Fritz) Wohlgemuth. Fritz, the second son of Isaac and Elisabeth Wohlgemuth, was born on December 18th, 1901, in Bingerbrück, Germany, a small town in the midst of Germany's wine producing region on the Rhine River. There, Fritz's father owned and operated *F. Wohlgemuth GmbH*, a wine and liquor producing enterprise.

Fritz had two older siblings, his sister Luzie (later Lucy) and his brother Siegfried (Siggy). After graduating high school and a brief internship at the *Dresdner Bank*, Fritz went to Berlin to study wine and liquor production in anticipation of eventually taking over his father's winery. That, in fact, happened when, in 1926, his father retired and his two sons, Fritz and Siegfried, continued to operate their father's business.

Happily, the two brothers were not *all business*. As a hobby, they formed a Jazz band in Wiesbaden in which Fritz played the saxophone and Siggy the piano. While there is, to my knowledge, no record of their performances, I assume that, from time to time, they entertained at parties.

In 1928, Fritz met my mother in Wiesbaden. They were married on July 15th, 1929 in Essen, Germany. I thereby gained a stepfather, to whom I shall henceforth refer as my father. After their marriage, my mother took on the name of Wohlgemuth. My parents took an apartment in Wiesbaden, about an hour's drive from the winery in Bingerbrück, where they lived until Au-

gust 1933. That year Hitler came into power and, foreseeing a bleak future in Germany, they decided to emigrate to Paris, France. They sold their apartment and left Germany, leaving their business and most of their possessions and income behind.

In Paris, French law, unfortunately, did not allow my father to continue his professional expertise in wine and liquor production. In its place, my father tried to develop a film business but, with no experience in this type of vocation, he was unsuccessful and lost what little money he and my mother were able to take with them when leaving Germany.

In September 1939, with the start of World War II, my father, having a German passport, was interned by the French government in Marolles Blois, a camp for German *enemy aliens*, disregarding his Jewish religion that made him a refugee from Germany. At the camp he was forced to enlist in the French Foreign Legion, where spent the next year (1939 - 1940) at Colomb-béchar, in the midst of the Algerian Sahara desert, as a French legionnaire.

When the Vichy Government took over the south of France, the legionnaires, supposedly by then demobilized, were forced to stay as laborers, working under the most inhumane, indeed slave-like conditions, on the construction of a railroad line that was envisaged by the French to cross the desert between Colomb-béchar and Oran, both in Algeria.

Meanwhile, in 1940, when the Germans invaded France, my mother, together with millions of French refugees, fled on foot to the south of France ahead of the German Army. Of course, the motorized troops easily caught up with these refugees who then filtered back to wherever they came from.

With the Germans still occupying France, my mother settled temporarily into the suburban house of her sister Grete and her husband, both having gone into hiding. Later, my mother was able to move back to their apartment in Paris. There she found that several of their belongings, including a beautiful and valuable Japanese screen, had disappeared during my parents' absence. The building's concierge accused German soldiers, but my mother suspected that the concierge stole and sold them.

After extended efforts to leave France for the United States, my mother, with the help of the American Red Cross, eventually could leave via Spain and Portugal, and make her way to the US sometime in 1940. There she rented a couple of rooms from another refugee couple on West 97th Street in New York City where I joined her.

Through her diligent and ceaseless efforts to have her husband released from the French Foreign Legion in Africa and join her in the United States, a task both difficult and costly, a visa for his emigration was eventually obtained so that, in September 1941, he was able leave Algeria and be reunited with my mother in the New York. There they decided to *Americanize*

their names to the shorter Fred and Trude Wohl and moved, together with me, to a small apartment in Long Island City.

With his experience in the wine industry my father finally was able to apply his professional experience again by becoming a plant manager at Julius Wile & Company, a prestigious importer of wines and liqueurs. Not satisfied with relying on available imports, Julius Wile & Company negotiated with Garnier Liqueurs in France to reproduce their popular liqueurs, which could not be imported from France at that time, at their plant in Teterboro, New Jersey, which my father accomplished to Garnier's enthusiastic satisfaction. Thus, my father's wine and liquor experience that had been ignored ever since his emigration from Germany in 1933, finally became fruitful again.

To be closer to the New Jersey plant, my mother and father moved from their apartment in Long Island City to a house in Leonia, New Jersey, where they lived until their deaths. My father passed away as a result of pancreatic cancer on October 6th, 1974.

My mother continued living in their Leonia house that she loved passionately. Later, after a difficult year in a nursing home, she died on January 18th, 1994, at the age of 95.

The Wohlgemuth / Goldsmith families

Meanwhile, Siegfried (Siggy) Wohlgemuth, my step-father's brother, met Lucy Edith Ullmann Goldstein. They were married on March 24th, 1932, in Frankfurt, Germany. After leaving Germany during the Nazi period, they lived, for a brief period, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, but later moved to New York City where Siggy worked as a salesman. Like my parents, they also changed their last names from Wohlgemuth to the shorter Wohl. Siggy passed away in New York in 1988. A year later, Lucy moved back to Buenos Aires where she lived until her death on January 14th, 1995.

Lucy Wohl had a son by a previous marriage, Hans Goldstein. Hans was born in Braunschweig, Germany on February 6th, 1916. During the Nazi period, he left Germany for Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he met Lisa Skolny whom he married on July 18th, 1940 in Montevideo, Uruguay. Back in Buenos Aires, Hans started manufacturing leather handbags.

Five years later, he founded *Marmicoc*, a manufacturer of a highly successful line of pressure cookers and, later, general cookware, that he guided until his death on November 18th, 2002.

In 1943, Hans and Lisa were joined by a daughter, Ines. Ines, after initially studying interior design, eventually went to the university from where she graduated as an architect. She married Leonard Pinchuk, a gastroenterologist, on July 4th, 1970. Leonardo passed away on March 20th, 2009.

Ines and Leonardo had three children, all born in Buenos Aires:

- Adrian (born 1971)
- Diego (born 1973)
- Sandra Carolina (born 1978)

Since the death of Hans Goldstein, Diego has taken over the management of *Marmicoc*, the cookware company, in which Adrian is also active, while daughter Carolina is following in her father's footsteps, being an gastroenterologist.

The Wohl Family



My mother, Gertrude (Trude)



Her marriage to Fred Wohl
in 1929



Stepfather Fred with
young Herbert



The happy couple



Grandparents Wohl with little David



Lucy Wohl



Their beloved house in Leonia, New Jersey

Herbert Meyers: My childhood in Germany

(as told by Herb Meyers)

As I remember the early days of my life, it was not unusual that the relationship between German Jewish parents and their children were not as close and open-minded as family relations are today. Children were expected to be seen but not heard. Among the more affluent families, of which mine was a part, young children usually spent their days under the care of a nanny and were kept away from participating in any discussion about unpleasant subjects.

Also, my religious education, at that time, was sparse. My parents rarely went to the synagogue in Wiesbaden. In fact, there was a well-decorated Christmas tree in our apartment at Christmas time. But I remember spending Passover and other Jewish holidays in Frankfurt with my uncle and aunt, Alfred and Liesel Meyers, where everyone, including my grandparents Meyers, gathered around a festive table with Jewish prayers and songs.

In 1933, when my parents moved to Paris, I remained in Germany because my parents felt that, being in the middle of my education there, it would be better to continue my education where I started it, namely in Germany. I moved in with my grandparents in Essen where I lived until leaving Germany in 1939.

At that point I had behind me an elementary school education plus one year at high school in Wiesbaden. In Essen I was enrolled first at the *Krupp Oberrealschule* and later, probably for racial reasons, transferred to *Humboldt Oberrealschule* (note: there were two types of high school education in Germany at that time: *Oberrealschule*, providing German, French and English language skills, and the *Gymnasium* that taught Greek and Latin to students whose parents wanted them to become lawyers or doctors).

Anti-Semitism was rampant in Germany at that time. I had a few interesting experiences at my school: Traveling by bicycle between home and school, anti-Semitic students took special pleasure of letting the air out of my bicycle tires every day, so that I had to pump them up each time before being able to return home. Also, being a pretty good soccer player, the goalkeeper on my school team, I remained on the team until anti-Semitic students let it be known that Jews were unwelcome on their team. Needless to say, being kicked off his team is a tough nut to swallow for any youngster in his teens.

Another experience that I remember distinctly when a class discussion, led by the teacher, debated the Japanese invasion of China in the 1930s. The teacher asked the class what they thought of the Japanese invasion. I got up and stated that the invasion was just an excuse to occupy a country and exploit their resources. This was not what the teacher expected, since, according to German propaganda *Lebensraum* (living space), a motivation late used by Ger-

many as pretense for invading other countries, was needed by Japan as it was by Nazi Germany. The teacher must have realized that this was not the worldview of a young teenager, but that it was obviously held at his home. He told me to sit down and called on another student to answer his inquiry.

I was fortunate that the teacher belonged to the *Stahlhelm* (steel helmet) association as indicated by his lapel insignia. That organization consisted of German war veterans and, during the early 1930s, was still allowed some opposition to the Nazi party. By telling me to sit down, the teacher obviously protected me. Had he been a convinced Nazi party member, my family could have been in severe trouble.

After a couple of years at *Humboldt Oberrealschule*, and after a Jewish student had been kicked down the school stairs by some Hitler Youth members, ending up with broken bones, I had the dubious distinction of remaining the last and only Jewish student at the school. Being a US citizen, the school could not throw me out, like the other Jewish students, because I was under the protection of the US Government that was not yet at war with Germany at that time.

I was a fair student. However, when my marks suddenly and mysteriously dropped to failing grades in several subjects, my mother was contacted by the school administration and advised that, due to my poor marks, it was no longer possible for me to attend this school. All this was, of course, manufactured by the school administration to get rid of their last Jewish student.

During the following year, I traveled by bus to the city of Düsseldorf every day for drawing lessons by a very academic Jewish painter by the name of Stern. Here I worked in a dark, musty studio, littered with gypsum figures that I was asked to use as models but that had little meaning for me. I doubt that painter Stern thought highly of his art student.

In addition, I had a private tutor by the name of Rosenberg. His nickname was *Krampe*. Since he was a sports journalist, his credits gave me access to sitting right behind the goal at football (soccer) games and, having been a goalkeeper myself, this was *heaven* for me. The poor man was eventually deported to a concentration camp, supposedly on homosexual charges. This, if true, certainly was never evident in his dealings with me. But to the Nazis, truth in accusations of this sort was not important for achieving their devious goals.

During these teenage years in Essen, I gained many good friends, including several girlfriends. My friends (many later with married names) included Eva, Helga and Gerd Stern, all cousins living in a house around the corner, Fritz Gerson, Ellen Harwitz, Edith Cosmann, Ursula Seligmann and Hans Stern. Hans, after emigrating to Brazil with his parents, created the jewelry empire of H. Stern. We saw each other frequently, listening to classical music on

an old wind-up phonograph, playing Monopoly, and going to services together at the Essen Synagogue. I am happy to say that I am still in touch with several of those who are still alive. As a teenager in Germany, I was an enthusiastic accordion player and took lessons with a music teacher. I was also active in a Jewish youth organization, the *Bund Deutsch-Jüdischer Jugend* (Federation of German-Jewish Youths) that met regularly at the Jewish *Jugendheim* (Youth Center) as well as in *Hakoah*, the Jewish sports league. I was good in sports, including track, gymnastics and soccer. This was contrary to Nazi ideology that consistently portrayed Jews as gutless weaklings, as opposed to vigorous Nazi youths.

When I turned thirteen years of age, I had my Bar Mitzvah with Rabbi Dr. Hugo Hahn, the Essen Synagogue Rabbi. Contrary to Bar Mitzvah affairs of today, we had a tiny party, just close family. Rabbi Dr. Hahn, after emigrating to New York City, became the founder and Rabbi of *Congregation Habonim*, a synagogue which, at that time, was attended almost entirely by German Jewish immigrants.

My many memories of Essen include *Kristallnacht*, the night that, following the murder of a minor German consular official in Paris by a young Polish Jew, was used by the Nazis as the excuse for igniting synagogues all over Germany, demolishing Jewish homes and businesses and arresting and deporting scores of Jewish men. I spent that night at my grandparents' house. We were joined by several nearby Jewish families whose houses had been demolished by Nazi gangs and who sought refuge in my grandparents' house that, miraculously, escaped the Nazi atrocities, possibly because I, a US citizen, lived there.

In early 1939, a memo from the US Consulate advised all US citizens to leave Germany in view of the imminently expected war. It was a difficult time for me to leave my grandparents' home where I had spent most of my teenage years.

Before left I had another experience that, by Nazi standards, could have brought serious trouble to both me and my family. Registering to leave Germany, as all Jews were required, I was called into the office of the Gestapo and questioned about any money that may be deposited in my name at a German bank. As was the practice among Jewish families in those days, money was a subject that was never discussed with their children. So I had no idea whether or not there was any money in my name, and I said so to the officer. He thought that I was lying and ordered my grandfather, as my guardian at the time, to appear at the Gestapo office. Whatever the situation was, it seems that my grandfather's explanations were successful in clarifying this point of issue and I was able to leave Germany without having caused any harm to my family.

In March 1939, I left Essen for Paris where I spent two months with my parents. On June 2nd, 1939, my father accompanied me to Boulogne-sur-Mer where I boarded the liner S.S. Nieuw Amsterdam for my trip to New York City.

Herbert Meyers: My life in the USA

(as told by Herb Meyers)

After arriving in New York on June 9th, 1939, I lived with my uncle Alfred and his family. I spoke only basic school English at that time. Luckily, a friend of my late father (William) when both lived in Boston, managed a summer camp in New Hampshire to which he invited me. There no one spoke any German and thus I learned to speak English in a hurry.

Back in New York and being as yet unskilled, I worked at various menial jobs, including as a dishwasher at a New York City department store and as an apprentice in a shoe factory. But I also attended evening high school in the city. In June 1942, after two years of school, I was awarded the high school diploma that I had been unable to obtain in Nazi Germany. A year after my arrival in the US, after my mother arrived from France and my father from the French Foreign Legion in Africa, I lived with them in two rooms sub-leased from a German Jewish refugee couple.

Meanwhile, the attack by Japan on Pearl Harbor drew the US into the war that had been going on in Europe for two years already. On September 11th, 1942, I was inducted into the US Army Air Corps where I would spend the next 3 ½ years. After a year of training inside the US, I departed for England, together with 25,000 other soldiers, on the Queen Mary, the fastest ship of those days that had been refitted as a troop carrier.

I spent two years on the B-17 Bomber airbase of Thorpe Abbot at Diss, near Norwich. A few furloughs were spent in London where I stayed with the Simons, former Wiesbaden friends of my parents, whose son, Henry, was close to my age. Though not involved in combat, I was repeatedly on the receiving end of German air raids, *Buzz Bombs* and V-2 rockets, some of them too close for comfort.

One evening, having a cup of coffee at the USO Club on our base, I chatted with a sergeant sitting at my table. He worked at the base personnel department. When he noticed my *slight accent*. I told him that it was the remains of having been born in Germany and that I spoke German fluently. This resulted, one week later, in my transfer to US Army Air Force Headquarters to serve as a German interpreter.

US Army Air Force Headquarters was located in Paris at that time. But shortly after my arrival there, US Army Air Force Headquarters was moved to, of all places, Wiesbaden, the very town where I was born. To be stationed at the place of my birth was really an amazing coincidence.

From there I moved around quite a bit, mainly to Munich, participating in the interrogations of some military and civilian war participants. This included air-raid defense personnel around Munich, as well as engineers from BMW, then a manufacturer of German fighter airplane engines.

Interrogating German war participants could sometimes be challenging. But Germans, at that time, had a frantic fear of the Russian troops who occupied the eastern part of Germany. Whenever we felt that someone was withholding information that we were seeking, threatening transfer to the Russian occupied zone worked like magic - information immediately flowed freely.

Among my memories is the interrogation of people who lived across from one of the entrance gates to the Dachau concentration camp. They told us that they were aware of a lot of truck traffic in and out of the camp but that they had *no idea* of what was going on inside the camp. As Ezra Pound once wrote: ... *believing in old men's lies, the unbelieving come home, home to lie.*

In fact, one of the most searing memories of that time was seeing pictures taken inside the Dachau camp by a photographer, forced by our troops to take photos there. I, as everyone, had been aware, of course, of the terrible atrocities in concentration camps. But actually seeing, for the first time ever, previously unavailable pictures of graves heaped high with corpses and the skeleton survivors who had managed to surmount the atrocities, was a shock I will never forget.

Upon my discharge from the Army in December 1945, I applied to and was accepted under the GI Bill of Rights (tuition paid by the US Government for the education of war veterans) at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn to study graphic design. I did well there. Towards the end of my three years of study, I participated in a national contest for the design of the 1949 Christmas Seal for the Tuberculosis Association's annual fund raising campaign, a major annual event at that time. I won first prize and \$ 1,000, an enormous sum of money in 1949. Better yet, my design, depicting a symbolic dove of peace, was actually used for that year's campaign and thus became my first *professional* success. The first issue of the Christmas Seals, being traditionally sold to the President of the United States, led to my having a copy signed by President Harry S. Truman.

During my last year of studies, my closest friend, Al Moss, and I paid a weekend visit to aunt Erna and my sick uncle Robert in Boston. To entertain us, aunt Erna had arranged for two

young ladies to show us around the city of Boston. My date was Edith Wasserman, the daughter of a friend of aunt Erna. Although Edith and I took an instant liking of each other, little did I realize, at that point of time, that the Wasserman family was about to enter the rest of my life.

Herb Meyers from age one to now



Just arrived



Il Trovatore



Army duty



My first car (compliments US Air Force)



My second car (my own)



Always busy ...



... but occasionally relaxing

The Wasserman family

The Wasserman family's history, so far as we can identify it, begins with Edith's grandparents, Moritz and Eva Graussmann. Moritz Graussmann was born July 9th, 1855 and married Eva Wachtel (born near Bamberg, Germany, on July 5th, 1861). They lived in Bamberg where Moritz dealt in hops, the grain from which beer is brewed.

Moritz and Eva had four children, Sigmund, Kurt David, Fritz, and Selma (Edith's mother). Moritz Graussmann passed away in Bamberg on March 31, 1937, at the age of 82. Grandmother Eva Graussmann continued living in Bamberg, together with son Fritz and his wife, Antonie, née Rosenfeld (born January 7th, 1898).

The Graussmanns' first two sons unfortunately lived very short lives, Sigmund died at age 16, the result of appendicitis. Kurt David was killed in World War I while fighting in the German Army. Son number three, Fritz Graussmann, born in Bamberg, Germany, on December 21st, 1892, took over the hops business in Bamberg after his father's death. Fritz was another of those patriotic German Jews who believed that Hitler was just a temporary nuisance. When the Nazis closed down his business, arrested Fritz during *Kristallnacht* and incarcerated him briefly at the Dachau concentration camp, he realized that it was time to leave Germany.

Fritz, his wife Antonie and their mother Eva left Germany in 1939 and moved to Brussels, Belgium. When the German Army invaded Belgium, the three went on a circuitous escape route, first to Paris, then to unoccupied southern France, on to Casablanca, Africa, to Lisbon and, finally in 1942, to the United States. Here, Fritz and Antonie settled in Galveston, Texas, where Fritz found a job at a local brewery owned by an old friend. He dropped one *n* from his name but held on to his first name, Fritz. Fritz Graussman died on June 5th, 1989 at the age of 97. Antonie continued living in Galveston and passed away in December 1992 at the age of 95.

Edith's mother, Selma, the youngest of the Graussmann children, was born in Bamberg, Germany on January 9th, 1900. She married Hans Wassermann (born on June 23rd, 1887, son of Isidor and Hedwig Wassermann). Hans and Selma lived in Nuremberg, Germany. There they had two daughters, both born in Nuremberg, Helen (born July 19th, 1923) and Edith (born August 25th, 1927).

Hans Wassermann had a shoe factory near Nuremberg. After the Nazis closed the plant, he became a sales representative for another shoe manufacturer until the Wassermann family emigrated to the United States.

Fortunately, Selma Wassermann had several distant relatives in the US that came to their help. Grandmother Eva had eight siblings, several of whom had moved to America many years before and had families there. One of these offered to post an affidavit, required by the

US Government as a guarantee that immigrants would not become a financial burden to the US. The Wassermanns all went to Stuttgart when their number was called by the US Consulate to obtain the visas permitting them to enter *the promised land* - the United States of America.

Hans Wassermann was in Hamburg to pick up the tickets for their trip to America, when *Kristallnacht* occurred. His trip was a fortunate coincidence, as the Nazis came looking for him at his apartment and, not finding him there, left. Fortunately, since Hans Wassermann was not particularly *Jewish looking*, he was able to conclude his journey to and from Hamburg without being arrested by the Nazis as were many other men that night and the following day.

The family was able to pack some of their personal belongings, such as clothes, dishes, pictures, linens, etc. However, valuables, such as jewelry and silver, and assets such as bank accounts and cash, had to be turned over to the Nazis. All that was allowed to be taken out of Germany was RM 10 each, a minute sum of money. The Wassermann family left shortly after *Kristallnacht* on November 30th from Hamburg on the S.S. Washington, arriving in New York on December 9th, 1938.

When they arrived in New York, an old friend of the Wassermanns greeted them and got them quickly through the inspection process (probably with the help of a few generous tips). He took them to a cousin of the Graussmanns (the Kahn family) with whom they stayed for three weeks. They were also invited by another American family (the Greenbergs) where they experienced their first Thanksgiving dinner of turkey and trimmings. But Edith did not eat anything because a black person served the food, a novel experience for Edith who took the servant's black hands to be dirty.

After briefly staying with their relatives in New York City, the Wassermann family moved to Boston. There, they dropped an *n* from their name to *Americanize* it. They first stayed with the family Eugene and Erna Noymer. Eugene Noymer, an old friend of Hans Wasserman, had left Germany for Switzerland already in the 1930s. Now in Boston, Eugene Noymer had promised Hans a job as a salesman in his leather goods business. But since Hans had a driver in Germany, he had not himself learned to drive and could not afford a car in Boston, anyway. So, he traveled by bus lugging a sample case all over New England to sell Noymer leather goods to small stores. He was successful as many of the stores had Jewish owners who had *rachmones* with this nice refugee from Nazi Germany.

Earning about \$ 15 a week to feed a family of four - his wife, himself, Helen and Edith - and later to be joined by Grandma Eva - they bought food at the farmers' market and ate the cheapest cuts of meat, such as liver, tongue, kidneys and brains. When their belongings that

they had shipped from Germany arrived in Boston, the Wassermans rented a small two bedroom apartment in the Brighton district of Boston where they and Grandma Eva lived until the 1950s. At that time, they moved to Atlanta, Georgia, to be closer to their children, Helen and Edith, who both lived there. All three passed away in Atlanta: Grandma Eva after a fall on February 22nd, 1956, Hans Wasserman after suffering from a brain tumor on December 2nd, 1968, at the age of 81 and Selma on December 31st, 1992, at the age of 92.

Hans had one brother, August, who left Nuremberg during the 1930s with his wife, Selma, and moved to Buenos Aires, Argentina. They had two children, a daughter, Margot, in Chicago and a son, Heinz, who lives in Buenos Aires with his wife, Anne. Heinz and Anna Wasserman had a son, Marcello. Heinz passed away in Buenos Aires on August 28th, 2009.

The Graussmann / Wassermann Families



**Great-Grandmother
Amilia Graussmann**



Grandfather Moritz Graussmann



**Selma Graussmann & Hans Wassermann
on their engagement day**



Grandmother Eva, Fritz and Antonie Graussmann



Selma and Hans Wasserman in the 1960s

The Spiegel family

Helen, Edith's older sister, first moved to Boston with her parents but, after finishing high school, she moved on to Galveston, Texas. There she met Frank Spiegel, a German Jewish US Army soldier stationed nearby. They fell in love and married on May 10th, 1946.

After Frank's discharge from the Army, Helen and Frank moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where Frank became a sales representative, covering the southern states for Brownell, a major company that marketed electric motors. Helen and Frank lived in a house in Atlanta for 56 years until they moved to an assisted living facility in an Atlanta suburb.

Helen and Frank had three children:

- Elisabeth (born 1950) married Bobby Goldstein in 1972. They live in Atlanta where Elisabeth is a teacher and Bobby sells tires to major truck firms. They have two children:
 - Adam (born 1978) married to Kim since 2006.
 - Sherri (born 1980) married to James Nighbert since 2010.
- Mark (born 1954) married Robin Wasserman (no relation to the Nuremberg Wasserman family) since 1994. They live in Alpharetta, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta. Mark is a stockbroker. They have three daughters:
 - Elena (born 1997)
 - Sophie (born 1999)
- Walter (born 1958) married Sharon Root in 1987. Walter is a lawyer. They spent several years in Washington, DC before settling in Cincinnati, Ohio. Their children are:
 - Jeremy (born 1990)
 - Shira (born 1993)
 - Jacob

The Spiegel Family



First arrival: Elizabeth



Helen and Frank Spiegel



Sylvia and Werner Spiegel, Frank's brother



**Marion Widstrom,
Frank's sister**



**Left to right, seated on the couch: Bobby, Liz, Robin, Elena, Sofie,
Sherry, Adam, Sharon
Seated on the floor: Mark, Jeremy, Walter, Jacob**

Edith Wasserman: My childhood in Germany

(as told by Edith Meyers)

My childhood in Germany was fairly normal and typical of those days. We had a nanny who took my sister and me out for walks, played with us and kept us entertained (remember, in those days, such things as TV, computers and iPods had not yet been invented).

On vacations and Jewish holidays, such as Passover and Rosh Hashanah, our whole family always went to Bamberg, where we celebrated the holidays together with my grandparents, uncle Fritz and aunt Antonie. Fritz and Antonie never had children, which made our visits in Bamberg rather boring for us, except when Antonie's sister joined us with her children. They were of similar ages as my sister and I and - hallelujah - they had toys to play with.

My grandparents lived in a comfortable, large house with a housekeeper and a cook. Behind the house was my grandfather's office and the hops warehouse, separated by a garden. There, I loved the little garage-type hut where they kept chickens and ducks. My grandfather and uncle Fritz, who was in the hops business with him, came home every day for lunch and naps and, in the afternoon, came home again for coffee and cake. It was a good life while it lasted.

My sister and I lived with our parents in a spacious, large apartment in Nuremberg, together with household help. I remember that I loved to go marketing with my mother at the open market in the old town of Nuremberg, near the castle. But, after 1933, when I was about six years old, the Nazis came to power and our lives changed dramatically.

Since the Nazis soon forbade Jewish children to attend public school, I was enrolled in a Jewish elementary school. The school was in a small building. My class consisted of about 40 kids. There I had some instructions in Jewish subjects, such as the meaning of the Jewish holidays and I learned a few words of Hebrew. After school, we headed straight home, grateful not to be harassed and beaten up by Nazis or other children.

Although our parents did not communicate much with us about what was going on, we sensed that life outside our home was not good and we lived in constant fear. I knew that my father was once beaten up badly by a Nazi gang and that made me furious. When my father's customers told him that they could no longer do business with Jews, he realized that it was time to leave Germany. In contrast to many older German Jews, he realized that Hitler and his gang were there to stay.

On the day, now known as *Kristallnacht*, when German Jewish homes and businesses were demolished and synagogues all over Germany put on fire, Nazis came to our home looking for my father. But he was on a train, returning from Hamburg after having purchased ship

tickets for our passage to the United States. While the Nazis also foraged trains looking for Jews to arrest, my father, not *looking Jewish*, was fortunate to escape their search.

While leaving Germany was dramatic, the ocean trip to the United States turned out to be one of the most exiting adventures in my young life. I loved the ship. I had freedom to roam around and often snuck into 1st Class (we traveled 2nd Class) to see movies there. Being December and the seas were stormy, many passengers became seasick, including my father and my sister, Helen. But my mother and I always made it to the dining room. While we ate, a band of black musicians played music, the first time I had seen a black person. Also, there was unfamiliar food, such as tomato juice. I was horrified because I thought that people were drinking blood. But I loved pineapple and ate it with every meal. I loved the trip so much that when we arrived in New York, I did not want to get off the ship.

Edith Wasserman: My life in the United States

(as told by Edith Meyers)

It took me a while to become adjusted to life in America that was so different from my life in Germany. In Boston, I was enrolled in the Baldwin Elementary School but I had a miserable teacher, Ms. Murphy, who did not want to know and did not care that I did not speak any English at that time. I did learn English when the Jewish Agency in Boston sent me for four weeks to a summer camp. There the kids were more patient, teaching me to speak English and there were a German Jewish doctor and a nurse to whom I could come if I encountered any problem. I also had a close friend, Linda, who came from Germany and who was adopted by an American family.

To sum it up, my early teens and adolescent years in the US were somewhat troubled ones for a number of reasons: (1) During the years of World War II, all Germans were considered *enemy aliens* by the US government and had to register as such, regardless of the fact that we were refugees from Nazi Germany. (2) My peers tended to look at me as *the little refugee girl* which, as any teenager, was hard to accept when I wanted to be with the *in group* instead of always feeling like an outsider.

After elementary school, I went to Brighton High School where I took a commercial course because my father thought that I could make a good living as a secretary. We never thought about college - who could afford it? But I did not have much in common with my classmates, most of whom were of Italian descent or black and I was not thrilled with my classes. The Jewish kids from the area were mostly in college prep programs. I did have a few Jewish

friends and a boyfriend, Werner, who also came from Germany, with whom I went to the prom in the High School gym, which was fun.

To earn a few dollars, while going to school, I baby sat and walked dogs. I also worked at the Noymer factory punching snaps into wallets, but was admonished for talking too much.

Being a teenager, I liked listening to the radio (no TV then) after doing my homework. I especially loved programs such as *Lux Theater*, dramatic stories, similar to soap operas but devoid of scandals and controversial subjects. I also loved listening to Frank Sinatra, the teenagers' heartthrob of those days, and *Swing bands* like those of Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman or Harry James. I also liked to go to movies and, afterwards, to an ice-cream parlor for an ice-cream soda or sundae. Those were the things teenagers loved in those days.

I did receive some Jewish education at Hebrew School in Boston and had a confirmation ceremony. But, at that time, there were no Bat Mitzvahs for girls, only Bar Mitzvahs.

After graduating high school in 1945, I worked at an office, pulling staples and photocopying material - a very monotonous and depressing job. When our family doctor suggested to look into courses at Northeastern University in Boston, I took some entrance examinations (no SAT at that time) and was accepted as one of the first female students in the University's co-op program. The university was eager to have female students as colleges were flooded with men of my age who were starting to come out of the Army. I very much enjoyed the co-op program - six months of studies, six months working to earn some money for the tuition. Additionally, I had a small scholarship for being on the honor roll and some help from my father to get me through college. I commuted back and forth to and from school by the streetcars that ran past our house with a stop right at our corner. During my six months working periods, I had good jobs at social agencies. At the university I enjoyed my professors. I also had a nice social life with many friends and many boyfriends. Things were looking up.

Edith from age one to now



Edith at age one



Edith with sister Helen



A happy teenager



**A not so happy waitress
at summer camp**



Growing up



A young lady at age 21



A wonderful mature woman

Edith and Herbert

(as told by Edith Meyers)

In 1948, I met Herbert Meyers who, after a yearlong courtship, punctuated by voluminous correspondence and much train travel between New York and Boston, persuaded me to get married and finish up my college degree later.

We were married in Boston on September 11th, 1949 (note the significance of the 9/11 date: In 1942, Herb was inducted into the Army on September 11th. In 1949, we got married on September 11th. Then on September 11th, 2001, the twin tower tragedy.). After a short honeymoon in the Catskills, as we had no money at that time to honeymoon elsewhere, we settled into a small walkup apartment in Jackson Heights, Long Island.

I took a job at a distributor of gift items, while Herb started his professional career through a procession of jobs, starting at an ad agency in Newark, New Jersey, then at the ad agency of L.W. Froehlich, specializing in advertising for a number of pharmaceutical companies. This was followed by a position as art director at Monogram Art Studio, where he especially enjoyed designing many LP classical music record covers.

On July 16th, 1952, our son, David William, was born in New York City. By that time we had moved into a larger, 2-bedroom apartment in Forest Hills, New York, that was needed for our newly extended family. I left my job to devote myself to being a loving Mom.

In 1954, on a trip to visit my family in Atlanta, Herb met, at a Jewish social club, an executive at the Atlanta Paper Company, a manufacturer of folding cartons. The company, it turned out, was desperately in search of an art director for its sizable art department. Having fallen in love with Atlanta, Herb accepted their offer and we moved to Atlanta for the next six years, living first in an apartment and, later, in our first house, not too far from Helen and Frank's house. Meanwhile, Atlanta Paper Company had become part of the Mead Corporation, a major paper manufacturer and marketer of paper and paper goods.

While living in Atlanta, another blessed event took place: the birth of our daughter, Sandra Elaine, on February 24th, 1957.

We moved back to New York in 1960, where we bought a house in New Rochelle. Herb first acted as the design coordinator at Mead's New York office, but soon switched jobs to become the design director at a prestigious competitive company, The Lord Baltimore Press (later to become part of International Paper Company). After four years there, Herb ran into Russ Sandgren, an old school buddy from his Pratt Institute days, who convinced him to join his then leading design consultancy of Sandgren & Murtha.

Our life in New York

(as told by Herb Meyers)

After six years as account manager at Sandgren & Murtha, an important event in my life took place. Following a client meeting in London, I made a short cross-channel stopover in Brussels to meet my uncle Otto before returning to the US. There uncle Otto, a lifelong entrepreneur, persuaded me to strike out on my own and offered to lend me the money to do so. Seeking partner, I met Richard Gerstman who was also looking for a partner for his then small design firm. After several meetings between us, as well as our wives, Edith and Joanne, we decided to give it a try - and I never regretted it.

As founder and managing partner of Gerstman+Meyers (G+M), our firm grew from a group of four at a small townhouse office on 55th Street to a staff of 55 - 60, occupying an entire floor on West 57th Street and becoming one of the leading brand identity and package design consultancies. Richard Gerstman and I were frequent speakers at conferences, the subject of many articles in national and professional publications, and even participated in several TV programs. In the 28 years of our activities, our firm won over 300 design awards and the respect of our clients and even of our competitors.

Additionally, I served as president of Global Design Network (GDN), a subsidiary of G+M, an affiliation of design consultancies in Canada, Europe and South America, to serve clients overseas. I also served as president of Package Design Council (PDC) for two years. Aside from loving my work, I enjoyed several professional commendations. In 1989, PDC honored me with the *Award for Lifetime Packaging Excellence and Leadership* and, in 2008 in Monaco, Pentawards, an annual international package design competition, awarded me a *Special Award for Lifetime Achievement*.

In 1996, I announced my retirement. Shortly thereafter, Gerstman+Meyers became part of Interbrand, an international brand design consultancy and a subsidiary of Omnicom.

In addition to my professional activities, I co-authored several books: *The Marketer's Guide to Successful Package Design* (coauthor Murray J. Lubliner), followed by three books co-authored with my business partner and now a close friend, Richard Gerstman: *Branding @ the digital age*, *The Visionary Package* and *CREATIVITY - Unconventional Wisdom from 20 Accomplished Minds*. The latter was based on interviews with twenty very well-known creative personalities in a variety of professions. We are currently working together again on a fourth book, based on our business experience, titled *BUSINESS OURS - Starting out and building your own business*.

While all this went on, Edith was busy with the activities of David and Sandra. This included serving as co-president of Davis School Parents and Teachers Association, volunteering as a Girl Scout leader, and participating in Temple Israel of New Rochelle activities, such as the Temple Sisterhood and the Teacher-Mom Program. She also completed her undergraduate courses at Emory University and Hunter College and, in 1955, received her bachelors degree from Northeastern University. This was followed by a three-year graduate program in Education and Guidance at Sara Laurence Bank Street College.

After graduating with a masters degree, Edith initially took a position as assistant director at the Day Care Council of Westchester, working with all of the Day Care and Early Childhood programs in Westchester. The president of the Day Care Council was Betty Shabazz, the wife of the murdered African-American activist, Malcolm X. Betty Shabazz, for some reason, took a special liking to me so that I received a big bear hug whenever I met her at various Day Care Center events.

In 1980, Edith was finally able to apply her Education and Guidance training by becoming a guidance counselor at New Rochelle High School, a position she held and enjoyed for eleven years until her retirement in 1991. Not ready to retire completely, Edith continues to participate, from time to time, in education related programs.

A happy couple



**From meeting at Boston's
Kenmore Square ...**



**... to a wedding at
Kenmore Square ...**



... and a happy life in New York



40th wedding anniversary



... and they love to travel (here at Victoria Peak, overlooking Hong Kong)

David and Sandra

Meanwhile, our children, David and Sandra went to college, married and created their own wonderful families.

David, after graduating New Rochelle High School, spent two years at American University in Washington, DC, then switched to the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. He became an accountant and worked at several offices in New Haven and New York before becoming a partner at the accounting firm of Hertz Herson in New York City.

David first met his future bride, Laurajeane Golden, in a sandbox in Atlanta, where we were friendly with her parents, Fred and Pearl (Pepper) Golden who lived in Atlanta at the same time that Edith and I did. David met Laurajeane again, about twenty years later, when he and I were walking from Grand Central Station to our respective offices. One morning, Laurajeane, also walking from Grand Central Station to her job, recognized and called out to me. Thus, David met Laurajeane again and they continued seeing each other. After five years of courtship, they were married on September 16th, 1979. They began their married life in Stamford, Connecticut, and later moved to a house in Westport, Connecticut. Laurajeane, after graduating from Bucknell University, studied law at the University of Connecticut in Hartford. She practiced law until she became a mom and decided to practice motherhood, instead.

In time, David and Laurajeane became the parents of three young men, Aaron Fred (born 1983), Steven Golden (born 1986), and Benjamin Samuel (born 1993). At this time, Aaron, after graduating magna cum laude from the School of Engineering at the University of Michigan, and obtaining his masters degree at the same university, moved to California to work at Lockheed's satellite division. Steven attended Dickinson College, majoring in business, and, at the time of this writing, is working in Stamford. Benjamin attends high school in Westport with special interest in science.

Sandra, after graduating from New Rochelle High School, first chose to attend Cornell University to study art, but later switched to the Philadelphia College of Art as a better fit for her ambition to become a graphic designer. After graduating as the valedictorian of her class Sandy worked for several years at Anspach, Grossman, Portugal, a prestigious corporate identity design consultancy in New York City, followed by 1 ½ years at Gerstman+Meyers and a period of free-lancing.

Meanwhile, Sandra shared an apartment with her friend, Susan Singer, in a New York City high-rise at 38th Street and 3rd Avenue. One day, while in the elevator on her way to the swimming pool

at the top floor of the building, she met Joseph (Yosi) Shekel (born in Safed, Israel, in 1950 to Meier and Jaffa Shekel). They were married in New York City on October 28th, 1986.

It was not long before, in 1987, in New York City, Arielle Michal Shekel became the first addition to the Meyers-Shekel family, followed two years later, almost to the day, by Talia Deborah (Tali) in 1989, in New York City. All good things being three, a third Shekel, Maya Rebecca, was added in New York City in 1993. Meanwhile, Yosi Shekel started *US One*, a chain of automobile parts and accessories stores in Long Island and, later *Paperoni*, a chain of paper goods stores. However, while very successful in these US based ventures, Yosi was eager to move back to Israel. A few months after the birth of Maya, the Shekel family moved to Tel Aviv.

Growing a family



Edith, as a new mother (with David)



David, age 7



Sandra, age 3



The college graduate



From a happy family of four (Atlanta 1959) ...



The budding artist



... to a happy family of twelve

The Shekel Family

In Israel, Yosi had family, including his mother, Jaffa, his father, Meir, his brother, Nitzan and Nitzan's wife, Orit. Yosi became a partner in *Hi-G-Tech*, a company offering wireless monitoring systems for business security. Later he developed interests in several other ventures including several facilities for terminally ill people throughout Israel. Sandra opened *Armonia*, a childhood gym. After selling *Armonia* she opened a design studio, gaining several high profile clients, including *Israir*, an Israeli charter airline.

Arielle and Tali enrolled in an art-oriented elementary school. It was not an easy first year for them as neither of them spoke or wrote Hebrew. They had to take extra lessons to catch up. But catch up they did and they are now completely bilingual.

At the time of this writing, Arielle, having completed her two years in the Israeli Defense Force (IDF), is attending Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Jerusalem, studying graphic design.

Tali has also completed her two years in the IDF. At the time Tali is planning to travel abroad - the usual modus operandi for IDF graduates - and attend college in Israel upon her return. Not interested in the arts, she plans to study philosophy with a possible career in law.

Maya is in her last year at high school and will join the IDF for her two years of duty. After that she seems to be interested, at this point of time, in a career in film directing. All of these career plans of the younger Shekels may change, of course, as the years go by.

Yosi's brother, Nitzan, and Orit had met while both were living in New York City for a period of time. But they also moved back to Israel and now live near Tel Aviv with their two children, son Ido and daughter Netta. Meir Shekel passed away in January 1997.

The Shekel Family



**The senior Shekels,
Meir and Jaffa**



The junior Shekels, Tali, Maya, Sandy and Arielle



Nitzan and Yosi Shekel



**The grown-up Shekels, Sandy,
Arielle, Tali, Yosi and Maya**



Nitzan, Orit and Ido (age 3)

And so, the memories and history of our family continue to flourish and expand every year. We hope that our children and grandchildren will live in peace so that they can enjoy lives that will be meaningful and productive.

60th Wedding Anniversary

Edith and Herb with their family celebrating 60 years of married bliss ...



... in Budapest ...



... and in Vienna



Herb Meyers
December 2010

All photos by courtesy of the author.

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