

Holocaust Survivor Sophie Turner-Zaretsky

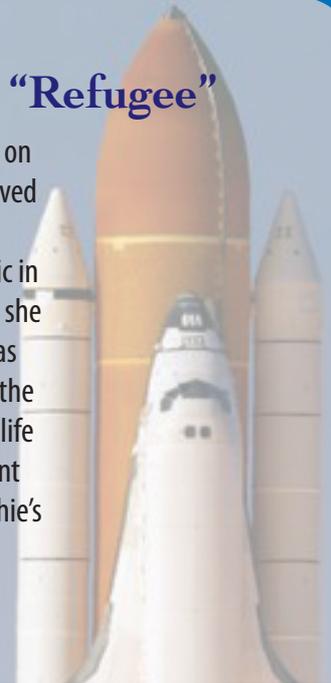


Sophie's Identity

Laura, Sophie's mother, escaped the ghetto with Sophie to Krakow. This began the hiding under false identities. Sophie, only 5, was named Zofia and her mother Bronislawa Tymejko, posing as Polish Catholics, was hired by the SS Commander in the resort town of Busko-Zdroj. Having light eyes and blond hair few suspected Sophie was Jewish and her identity was hidden from her as a child. She grew up hating Jews and after the war, they went to relatives in England when her mother told Sophie she was Jewish. Sophie had a breakdown but eventually learned about Judaism and embraced it.

The Bear "Refugee"

For over 50 years Sophie held on to the bear that she had received as a little girl. It was with her when she was Zofia, a Catholic in Poland; it was with her when she grew up in England; and it was with her when she moved to the United States to begin a new life yet again. The bear was a silent witness to the miracle of Sophie's rescue, rebirth, and success.



Living as a Refugee

Sophie Turner-Zaretsky was born as Selma Schwarzwald in Lvov, Poland on September 2, 1937 to Daniel and Laura. Her parents were educated and had a successful business exporting lumber. On June 30, 1941 the Germans entered Lvov and their lives changed forever. Her family, grandparents, aunts, and uncle were forced into the ghetto. Trying to get out with false papers at the Jewish council, Daniel was shot and killed by the Germans.



Sophie's parents Laura and Daniel Schwarzwald



*Sophie's
grandparents
Josef and Mina
Litwak*



Thousands of Jews were murdered or sent into forced labor at nearby Janowska camp. Later in 1942 they were deported to the extermination camp Belzec. Sophie's grandparents Joseph and Mina Litwak died there.



About Janowska
Labor Camp



About Belzec

The Space Shuttle Discovery

In December 2006, Space Shuttle Discovery Commander Mark Polansky took a replica of "Refugee" with him on the shuttle's mission. The Commander Polansky visited the US Holocaust Museum and met Sophie Turner-Zaretsky on February 27, 2007.

"Although we can send people into space, we still can't seem to stop them from hating and killing one another. A child's stuffed toy from the Holocaust and a photograph of a refugee from the genocide today in Darfur remind us the lessons of the Holocaust have yet to be learned."

