



But I Live Educational Resources

Partial Biography of David Shaffer

A child survivor, David was born in Vama-Bukovina, Romania, to Dora and Arnold Schaffer. He completed grade one at an elementary school in Vama. By the time he started grade two, Jewish children were not permitted to go to public schools. This ended his formal education.

In 1940, he and his parents were sent to a ghetto. Later, they were deported by cattle car to Transnistria, part of Ukraine. Between October 1941 and April 1944, he and his family survived in a camp named Ivashkovtsi. In spring 1944, his family was liberated by the Soviet army, and in the fall of the same year, they were able to return home. His father started a business that was later destroyed by the Communist system.

At age 16, David started working with his father loading and unloading rail cars. At 18, he started working at a factory as an assistant to the blacksmith. He graduated from high school and advanced to a job in an office. In 1955, he started engineering studies in Bucharest. However, David's family immigrated to Israel before he completed his degree. He worked at a shipyard in Haifa while finishing his degree in engineering at Technion, the Israel Institute of Technology.

David married Sidi Schaffer in 1963, and together they have three sons, Nathan, Doran, and Ayal. He is now a happy grandfather. In 1976, David settled with his family in Edmonton. His career took them to many places in Canada. In 1996, it brought them to Vancouver, where David joined the child-survivor group at the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre.

Adapted from a biography provided by the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre.