

***“Our heads were shaved! We could neither talk nor cry anymore, our inner being, our hearts, were like a stone. When there were roll calls, people were just falling over and died!”***

*“We had many lice and because of it our skin was full of wounds and bleeding. I felt so ashamed!” Lila remembers.*

*Lila was now alone and without family in the concentration camp, but she had some good friends there. Finally she was transported to Bromberg-Brahna, an external camp of Stutthof. There they had to work in a factory (Dynamit Nobel AG Bromberg) where they produced war ammunition. This is where she was until the end of the war. Finally, in the beginning of 1945 the Russian Army came and liberated them, as the Nazis ran away. “Even after the liberation many people died,” she says to us “and the people that did survive looked so horrible. We couldn’t recognize them anymore.”*



Lila

**Baruch** was also in Auschwitz. He had prisoner number 55091. Thoughtful, he said: “I can’t believe myself, that I was really there. We had to steal food from the dogs of the Gestapo to have something to eat. The dogs were in cages and we reached through the stanchions to get their food. The dogs bit our hands!”

Baruch was also imprisoned in other, terrible concentration camps: in Buchenwald and Bergen - Belsen. He had to work very hard, harvesting the fields and also had to work with glass-wool. Therefore his whole body was wet, cut and wounded.

Both of them haven’t spoken about their terrible painful past in the Shoah for a long time. “We did not want to make it hard on our children, therefore we didn’t tell them,” they said. “But by now, we are also telling our grandchildren and today pupils learn about it in school.”

Baruch wants first and foremost that it will not be forgotten! Lila was thanking us, again and again, that we listened. She was so glad to talk about it and stressed over again, that it was very important for her.

#### **After the war / liberation:**

Lila went after the liberation with friends to Lublin, in the east of Poland and had to stay there for a while, because there were no trains going south yet. Finally they were able to go home, sitting on the roof of the train, because there were so many people traveling and trying to get back to their hometowns. “We still had lice and scabies. I can remember everything. I remember every step we made,” Lila says.

When Lila came back to her home, she was able to take over the mill from her parents. She even accommodated and took four Jewish children on, who had also survived. She wanted to help them.

Baruch: When Baruch was finally able to get out of the concentration camp, he went to his only uncle left, who took him to his home. This uncle later became the “match-maker” between Baruch and Lila. In all the joy, they also share about the sadness on their wedding day, as all their guests cried, because they had no family/ parents left to celebrate with them. “The only thing left were photos of our parents!” Afterwards they lived near Chust, in the Ukraine. Even after the war, they still were full of fear of the Gentiles, and so they wanted to return to their own people. In 1973 they immigrated home, to Israel.

In Israel: Baruch and Lila have two children. Lila’s work was for many years to be the cook at the Jewish Agency. She shared with us, that life in Israel was also very difficult in those days. Her brother, Phillip Fischel, immigrated to Israel earlier, in 1971, but he died shortly after, which was again very painful for Lila. At first she did not understand, why she had no answer to her letters to Phillip.

She also shares that her son did some research on the Internet about his family and to all their shock he found an entry, that his mother died – but Lila is alive! Very interesting also, is that a cousin of Lila was involved in the Eichmann process.

A nice anecdote: Before the war Lila gave valuables—jewelry and gold—to a worker, so he may hide and keep it for her. When Lila came back to her town, a good friend of hers dressed up as a policeman and went to that worker, claiming her valuables back. This man got so afraid of this “policeman” and actually gave everything back. Lila got her jewelry back!

#### ***After the war in the Ukraine:***

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Lila's parents