Yizkor – Temple Israel, Sharon, MA – April 14, 2012

Hajduhadhaz, Hungary

Community Memorial Orna Stein’s mother, Lilly Goldstein (Barna), was born in Hajduhadhaz, a small village in the Hajduhadhaz region in the Debrecen vicinity, east of Budapest, Hungary. Lilly was the daughter of Menachem Emmanuel (Menyoush) and Zirl (Ciloush), both observant Jews. Before the Holocaust there were about 500 Jews in Hajduhadhaz, most of them Orthodox. The Goldstein family lived quite peacefully in Hajduhadhaz for four generations until World War II.

There was only one Synagogue, Orthodox, with an annexed Yeshiva and Heder for the young boys. There was no Jewish School, Per Se, and whoever was interested to send their kids for general education did so to the local elementary Public School. The Goldstein girls attended until the age of 13. The boys went both to Public School & Yeshiva.

There were no Hospitals, just Doctor’s clinics, and there were 2 Jewish Physicians residing there, who served the Jewish Community, as well as the others. When Orna’s Grandmother, Zirl, needed an operation, she was driven to the hospital in Debrecen, which was the Metropolitan of the area.

Jews were carpenters, shoemakers, vendors with horse and buggy, providing moving services, and brandy cookers. Grandfather, Menachem Emanuel Goldstein, had a workshop for repairs and domestic animals, as well as a brandy cookery. For generations, the Goldsteins were brandy makers. The main product they made was an apricot brandy, or Palinka, in Hungarian. Morris Goldstein, Grandfather Menachem’s oldest sibling, who died in Auschwitz, owned a local pub before the war, serving both Jews and Gentiles. Uncle Ferry Goldstein, who survived and spent the rest of his life in Jerusalem, was a Chazan in a neighboring community. There was one Jewish butcher (Shochet) in Hajduhadhaz.

As far as culture, since they were all Orthodox, it was around Jewish subjects. Orna’s Mother remembers the annual Purim Spiel. It was held at a local Hall that could house everyone (the synagogue probably wasn’t big enough to house all Jews at once). The Spiel consisted of small sketches rather than a show or play. There were no women actors allowed, so men did all the dancing and singing. Kids dressed up and were in charge of the Mishloach Manot to all Jews in area. The big deal was Mishlochim, and of course all the preparations. There was a very happy atmosphere around Purim and lots of alcohol drinking.

There was a connection between the Jews in the neighboring small towns. Also, people visited family in other communities, like Orna’s Grandmother, Zirl’s, who was originally from Tokaj and had a huge family in that area (sadly, most Tokaj family perished). The German troops, the Wehrmacht, entered Hungary in March of 1944. This was the beginning of the end of the Jewish community. Most Hajduhadhaz Jews died during the Holocaust. Orna’s Grandfather lost 3 of his older siblings in the camps. The returning survivors back to Hajduhadhaz ended up leaving in the early 1950’s, mostly to Israel.

In 1949, Lilly, along with her brother, Gershon Yosef, and her sister Clara moved to their real homeland, the young State of Israel. In 1950 their parents together with their younger sister, Rachel, joined them, in a Ma’abara named Pardes Katz near Tel Aviv.

In 1984 Orna and her parents visited Hajduhadhaz, and there was only one old Jewish woman left living there. They saw the Goldstein house. Hajduhadhaz had only dirt roads in 1984. They also visited the
Jewish Cemetery, the keys of which were entrusted to an old Gentile, and they found the graves of her Grandfather's parents and grandparents.

Not long ago, Orna's Mother heard from relatives who visited Hajduhadhaz, that the original Goldstein house was demolished, and a new house was built there instead