



### **Rose Wolf**

I was born in Bochum, Germany. B-o-c-h-u-m. It's a very industrialized town, and they had coal mines all over. And till I grew up, till I came to the States, I never saw a blue sky. The sky was gray from the coal mines. And when I went to school and when there was an accident, they had a certain siren, and half of the children; I mean the non-Jewish children, had parents who worked there in the coal mines. And the kids used to wait until they would know what had happened. This is one of my memories.



I had a very happy childhood I had wonderful parents. My father was interested in anything I did--everything. He didn't say, *What did you learn in school today?* He said, "What did the teacher explain to you? What did she talk about? And we also went to Jewish school – in Germany the state paid for every Jewish, Catholic or Protestant's school. I was very small and I was always sitting on the first bench and I had a teacher she had stockings that were always coming down. That bothered me so much and so I asked my father once to go with me to the store. "What do you want?" "I have to buy some stockings for the teacher." He started laughing. My father had a wonderful sense of humor. He went with me, wrapped it up very carefully. And I remember she had the same birthday as I and so I gave it to her on her birthday. I was eleven years old.



I remember one or two other things from Germany: that somebody put a hood on me and spit in my face “You dirty Jew!” I must have scrubbed my face for an hour. You know I had a new coat. When you’re a kid and you have a new coat, you run outside to play. I ran outside and somebody took the hood and put it over my face and then they spit in my face.

I saw Hitler once--from a window. Have you ever seen--you have seen movies where in unison they: "Heil Hitler!" It was so amazing, you know, when you're a child you think: maybe I should been born a Gentile. It was so powerful: the emotion of the people, the songs and the noise. You want to be like everybody else but you can't change yourself.



I felt very safe. My father was an Orthodox Jew, and he prayed every morning. Do you know what a tallis is? Prayer shawl. I used to go under there, and I would feel safe. And then when it got really bad, I didn't feel safe there anymore.



**Rose Wolf** and her family joined Larchmont Temple in 1951 when their oldest daughter was five. She goes to Chevrah Torah every Saturday morning because “you can’t beat Jeffery Sirkman.”

