

WEITZ FAMILY STORY



Upper line: 1912 - Zeyda's journey from Austria to Montreal

Lower line: 1920 - Babu's journey from Austria to New York to Los Angeles



ONE

WEITZ FAMILY STORY 4

TWO

AARON AND DREIZEL 5

THREE

DORA AND ISAAC'S LIFE IN STANISLAU, AUSTRIA,
MONTREAL AND LOS ANGELES 6

FOUR

SAUL AND SADIE WEITZ 34

FIVE

PHIL AND LOTTIE WEITZ 41

SIX

PEARL AND JOE LERNER 49

SEVEN

SAM AND SYLVIA WEITZ 58

EIGHT

EDITH AND CHARLES GINCIG 70

NINE

HARRY AND BLANCHE WEITZ 75

TEN

PICTURE GALLERY 85
ISAAC AND DORA'S FAMILY

ELEVEN

ZECHARIA AND MINNA LIFE IN STASNISLAU, AUSTRIA,
MONTREAL, AND LOS ANGELES 95

TWELVE

SARA WEITZ GOLD

THIRTEEN

DOROTHY 'DAISY' GLADYS MODESTI MARGOLIN 102

FOURTEEN

EARL AARON MOSHE 104

FIFTEEN

PICTURE GALLERY 113
ZECHARIA AND MINNA'S FAMILY

SIXTEEN

A BIG THANK YOU...120

SEVENTEEN

DISCLAIMER 121

Weitz Family Story

This project started because a few years ago I created the Caplan Family History. It was intended to create a legacy for all of my father's family who might be interested in learning our family's history.

Cliff listened as I spoke with my cousins who were scattered all around the United States. I pleaded and prodded them into going through albums, searching closets and digging through boxes in the garage. They all came up with incredible treasures and shared wonderful stories with me. I then spent hours editing my phone notes and learning how to reproduce all the photos to the printed page. I wrote, Cliff watched and read his paper.

When I finished my 108 tome he was so intrigued by the contents that he asked me if I could write a history of his family. I had done so much investigating on the Caplan's that I put the Weitz project on hold. The coronavirus has given me time to investigate and write. Due to our pandemic, I was able to easily connect with all the Weitz cousins. Cliff is, unfortunately, not here, sitting across the table listening to conversations, asking questions and watching as I put together Babu and Zeyda's incredible adventure. Cliff, you have always had great pride and love for your family. This story is dedicated to you.



AARON AND DREIZEL

Galicia was a region of eastern Europe that was part of Poland before Austria annexed it. A little confusion because some of the family documents say place of residence Galicia or Poland or Austria. This depended on what year they were referring to. For our story we will just use the main place of reference, Stanislau, Austria.

What little we know about Aaron and his wife Dreizel is that they were born in Austria. He was a learned and respected Torah scholar. The family were all Hasidim. Everyone in their small town knew him and he was referred to as “gutter yid”, a good Jew.

We know that they had two children, Isaac born on March 10, 1874 and Zecharia ‘Harry’ born on September, 1884. Because of the ten-year difference in age, it’s reasonable to believe there were other children born to this couple but they did not survive. It is also a possibility that Aaron had another wife.

They owned a grocery store which Dreizel ran, helping to support their family. Because of the extreme poverty the family faced, Zecharia went to work at 11 years old. He was able to study Torah with his father at night. Isaac was more fortunate he was the son chosen to study Torah and attend the yeshiva.



DORA AND ISAAC

Once upon a time there was a girl named Dora 'Debora' Stockhamer born in Stretener, Austria, April 18, 1878, and a boy named Isaac 'Itsack' Weitz born in Stanislau, Austria, March 10, 1874. Stanislau, was an old city actually founded in 1654. In the 1900's the Jewish population thrived. From 1897 to 1919 the Mayor was an assimilated Jew.

It had become a major center of Jewish manufacturing, especially in the clothing and hide processing branches. By 1910, there were 15,253 Jews living in the City. Up until 1919, it was located in Austria. After that and until 1939, it was in Poland and then in the USSR and these days it's in Western Ukraine. If someone had been born in 1915 and lived all their life in Stanislau, they would have lived in four different countries without ever leaving town. So, when Babu returned to Stanislav from Czechoslovakia, she would have been in Poland without ever knowing it.

Dora and Isaac were born into a time when many changes were taking place in their world. These changes would affect their lives and the lives of their children. They both were born in different villages or small towns. I have absolutely no clue as how or where they met. It is recorded that their marriage took place in Austria before 1901.

Stanislau (Galicia as it was called before 1772) was originally founded in the mid 17th century as a fortress to protect the Polish commonwealth from Tatar invasions. It was actually a complete fortress town built of stone, brick and mortar. The spelling and location of the town has changed many times during its history. Under control of Austria – 1772 to 1918 it was spelled Stanislau. Poland 1919-1939, Stanislawow, Ukrainian SSR, Stanislav 1941-1991 and lastly 1991-2020 Ivano-Frankivsk Independent Ukraine. The last name change was done by Nikita Khrushchev, as an honor to the Poet Ivan Franko.

The history of the Jews in Austria begins with the exodus of Jews from Judea under Roman occupation. Over the course of many centuries, the political status of the communities in Europe rose and fell. During certain periods, the Jewish communities all over Europe, prospered and enjoyed political equality. During other periods, they suffered pogroms, deportations, mass murder and anti-semitism.

Dora and Isaac raised their children in a town in the countryside. They lived in a shingled, thatched roof house with a dirt floor, which Dora pounded daily to keep it hard. It had two rooms, a loft, a wood burning stove and no running water. The well was close by as was the outhouse and candles were their only light.



When Salomon was seven or eight and Pilio was five or six Dora sent them to school. They lived in a predominantly Jewish neighborhood. On their first day, upon entering the school and their classroom, they saw the walls filled with crosses. They took one look, left, went home and never went back.

Isaac struggled to keep food on the table. He was a peddler who pulled his cart to and from the marketplace in order to sell his wares. I have no idea what he sold. I do know that Dora baked bread at night. At 2am each morning, Dora and Pilio would walk to the market to sell the bread. Dora would bake challahs every Friday to sell in the marketplace. The older children helped by going into the woods near their house and scrounging for firewood to sell. One day when Salomon and Pilio were in the woods with their father, they heard the sound of many running feet and people thrashing through the woods. They saw police chasing thieves who had stolen food. As they hid in the foliage, they saw the robbers throw the food into the bushes as they ran. Our heroes waited in their hiding place until police and thieves had pass, collected all the food, hid it under the rags and straw in Isaac's wagon and proudly brought it home.



Stanislav Marketplace

Dora had her ways to assuage an empty tummy. Since food was scarce, she would let the children sleep late, because, Isaac's meager income was just not enough to provide more than two meals a day. She would also tell them stories to try to divert them from feeling hungry. *There was a river near their house. Dora did not know how to fish using a pole, pole fishing was illegal, however, she had her own methods. Before dawn, the older children and one of Dora's brothers who lived nearby, went down to the river. She told everyone to wade into the water and beat it with their hands. She put herbs used for sleeping into a piece of bread or gefilte fish and using this as bait, threw the pellets into the water. She told the children that she had thrown sleeping pills into the water, the fish would eat them, go to sleep and float to the surface. Everyone would collect the floating fish, fun and dinner.*

By 1911, Isaac knew that he had to do something drastic in order to feed his fast-growing family. By this time, they had eight children. But what to do?

Isaac had a younger brother, Zecharia. When he became of age, he joined the Austrian Army and rose to the rank of captain, due to his position, it was easier to obtain kosher food. He was discharged before WW1.



He was married to Minna Emily 'Miriam' Minnie Greenberg September 8, 1909. They lived near Isaac. He too, was having a difficult time supporting his wife. He heard that there was lot of immigration to Montreal. Jews have lived and prospered in Montreal for more than 250 years. Over the years they established businesses and institutions. First, in Quebec, then in Montreal. In the cities, the Jews were often peddlers and later, entered the textile industry.



In 1769 'Shearith', Israel a Spanish-Portuguese congregation opened its doors. Other congregations followed. By 1900 there were 6,000 Jews in Montreal.

It was very difficult for Zecharia to make a living due to the indigence, he wanted a better life for his wife Minna. He decided to go to Montreal but had to leave his pregnant Minna in Austria. His plan was to go to Montreal get established and then send for Minna and their child.

He arrived in Halifax in February 1910, then by train to Montreal. In Montreal, he could only get a job doing very hard labor in the shipyards. Being an observant Jew, he would not work Saturdays, which became a problem with that type of work. As a result, he would work Monday through Friday, get fired on Friday then get another job on Monday. This became a routine, working Monday through Friday and getting fired every Friday.

Zecharia befriended a man who was also an observant Jew and wouldn't work on Saturdays. They both had the same weekly schedule. They decided to move in together. They rented a basement, lived there very meagerly and started a clothing business. When WW1 broke out, they obtained a contract to manufacture uniforms for the military. They were successful and eventually had 50 people working for them and earned a good living. Unfortunately, with the outbreak of the war, he could not bring his wife and daughter Sarah, to Montreal until the war was over.

In Montreal, there was a place that was a combination steam ship agency, employment agency, postal service and restaurant called Totarinship. All the immigrants came there if they were looking for a job. If you needed letters sent to relatives in Europe, the owner of Totarinship took care of that too. He was called "dressne stoll: which is a Russian name for a place where you find addresses. Everyone in Montreal knew him. This is most likely the place Zecharia sent a letter telling his brother to come to Montreal where he could make a living, live in peace and be a part of a great Jewish community.

So, in 1913, Isaac left Dora 34, with eight children; Saloman 11, Filio 9, Peche Perl 7, Sucker 6, Indris 3, Twins 2, Aron 1.

He traveled across a couple of countries in order to reach a port where he could get a ship for Canada. He arrived in Quebec, October 1913 and traveled by train to Montreal.

By this time Zecharia had met the Geier family, who had migrated to Montreal in 1906 and the Lerner family who migrated the same year. Both families were very well established. In Montreal, most of the Jews knew each other. Bubby Geier ran a kosher boarding house at 744 St Dominique Street and Isaac needed a room. There he met Chaim 'Hyam' Lerner, who would have a great impact on his life. Isaac was a peddler in Austria. Chaim was a baker and in Montreal, worked for a bakery. Isaac acquired a wagon and got a job delivering bread. They both got along very well and became friends.



Montreal marketplace

Back to Dora. By 1913, the Germans and Russians were already in the territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Soldiers from both sides were advancing upon the town where the Weitz families lived. Dora and her children seemed to be in the middle of the conflict between the Russian and Germans. The town was being bombed. One of the bombs hit a stone wall of their house. Stones rained down. Aron, being a baby, was caught under a barrage of stones. They pulled him out. He had gotten nicked in the head and carried the scar for the rest of his life. Then the soldiers started strafing the houses. The children could hear the bullets hitting the roof. *Dora ran up to the attic to pack up some clothes. The children got together everything that they could carry from the house. Shooting and cannon fire continued. Dora rushed down with the clothes and a handful of spent bullets. She took whatever food stuff they had and they all started running. Salomon and Pilio ran to the market place to see what they could scavenge to eat. The rest of the family ran to their uncle HerschLeib's house. Soldiers were firing at each other. As they ran, bullets whizzed by, just missing them.*

One Friday, soldiers stole the loaves of challah that Dora was taking to market. Later, she found a dead Russian soldier in the road, with a loaf of challah clutched in his arms.

After a while things calmed down, the Russians took control and the Germans retreated. For six months things were better. Then, the Germans returned with a vengeance and reinforcements.

With the start of WW1, the situation in her part of the world had gone from bad to worse. Boys as young as 12, were being inducted into the army. Saul was tall for his age. One day, soldiers came and took him. We do not know how but he escaped and managed to return home.

Dora had to do something to protect her children, so she went to the Rabbi for advice. He gave her his blessing and informed her that the town elders were handling the situation. They knew that they had to help the women and children. They had a plan. They arranged for trains and evacuated the women and children to

different countries. Dora and the children were sent to Czech land, as Czechoslovakia was called then.

As they got on the train and were sitting in their seats, a Rabbi came up the aisle and stopped by their rows, blessed their journey and told them not to worry for God would take care of them. After a few miles, there was a stop and soldiers boarded the train. Their purpose, to take every boy 14 years and older off the train. They would walk up the aisle asking every boy their age. If they were the right age, they were taken off the train and inducted into the army. The soldiers walked right by the Weitz' as though they were invisible. The Rabbi's blessing worked. The Weitz family were sent to a part of the Czech Republic called Bohemia. This territory had less anti-Semitism than in other territories and antisemitism was strongly opposed by the founder and first president Tomas Masaryk. Also, in Bohemia, there was an office of the Joint Distribution Committee, founded in 1914 to provide food, medical supplies in response to the needs of displaced Jews during the War. It was done at the behest of Ambassador, Henry Morgenthau, Sr. This committee would have aided the Weitz family after they arrived in Bohemia. It still was a struggle for daily living. A great number of refugees flooded the city, all looking for work and they didn't speak the language. The government gave them .50 cents per person, a week. Dora was a survivor, as were her children. They took care of each other.

Dora was an avid knitter and yarn was impossible to get in Bohemia, and it was illegal to transport wool across the border. In order to support the six children and herself, she had a plan. She would cross the border, buy yarn, wrap the yarn around her body, underneath her clothing and cross back across the border. She would then sell part of the yarn and used a portion for her knitting. The knitted garments she would sell. Our Dora was quite a little smuggler. This strategy helped put food on the table.

Pilio got a job herding cows and horses daily from a farm to the fields for grazing. He would watch the animals and at sunset, return them to the farm. I'm certain all the children found some way in which to contribute to their daily needs.

Shortly after 1918 with the ending of the war, all evacuees were returned to their own countries. This trip home was different. All the families were put into cars, no seats, just straw on the floor. But they were happy to be going home. Part way home, the train made an overnight stop for fuel and water. The birds were singing and men were shooting guns, in joy, into the air. All of a sudden, somewhere on the train, they heard a huge commotion. Men had boarded and were robbing supplies on the train and also wealthy passengers. As they ran through the cars, they came to the car where our family was sleeping. The robbers thrust a huge bundle of tobacco at Salomon and Pilio said 'take this' and fled. What could the boys do? They hid the bounty under the straw where they were sleeping. When they reached their final destination, Stanislav, Austria, and back to uncle Herschlieb's house, they exited the train with their bounty of tobacco which was wrapped in their clothes. Since their own house had been destroyed, Dora and the children went to live with her brother Hersch and his family. They all pitched in to help support this large group. The tobacco was a great help. They sold it little by little in the market place. Neither Dora or her brother ever knew.

Here I must deviate for a few words and a little explanation about Dora's family and what happened to them before, during and after WW1. Since Debbie was able to retrieve this information, I needed to add it to our history.

Dora was one of seven children born to Izciak and Edith Stockhamer (Shtokhamer) in Stretener, Austria. Have no idea where this town was in relationship to Stanislav or how they all ended up there. Sylvia (also known as Tzia) died in Theresienstadt. She had four children. Elieser had one daughter and he was killed during WW11. Mendell had four sons, one of whom died in Auschwitz. Herschleib had four children. There is a family story that early in WW11 Mendell and Herschleib, still living in Stanislav, were forcibly removed from their homes by the Nazi's, they proceeded to take them into the street and shoot them. According to records Dora, Isaac and their six children, Ethel, her husband and their one child, Clara, her husband

and three children migrated to the US. Ethel and Clara settled in New York and Dora in California. Ethel became a milliner and Clara worked in a corset shop.



DORA, CLARA, ETHEL

Back to our main story and our family's survival. Salomon, Pilio and Sucker went to work for their uncle who bought and sold hides. They helped tanning and curing the hides for a while and learned how to cut and sew the hides into gloves which were sold in the market place. People were buying gloves, for the winter. They learned, with their uncle's help, how to cut and sew together the leather. They too were making and selling gloves.

Progroms had started again. They would have a day of peace and then soldiers would invade their town, more destructions and beatings. Not knowing the attitude of the Russians from one day to the next was terrible.

Due to the move to Bohemia, they had lost touch with Isaac and he did not find them until 1920. Dora was left alone to care for six children, the twins had died of consumption, for seven years.

Isaac's adventure - Isaac at a young age had very bad arthritis and the weather in Montreal was very hard on him. Zecharia heard about California and its wonderful weather. He decided this was where his older brother needed to go. In March of 1919, Zecharia sent Isaac to Los Angeles. The Geier family had gone to the East Adams area of Los Angeles in January 1917. When Isaac arrived in Los Angeles, he contacted the Geiers, rented a room from them, and lived with Israel and Elizabeth at 1120 East Adams.

East Adams was one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city of Los Angeles, with most of its buildings erected between 1880 and 1925. It was at this time, the wealthiest district in the city. In the 1920's, significant numbers of Jewish immigrants and their families moved to West Adams, which gave home to the largest Jewish community west of Chicago.



In 1908 Agudath Achim congregation was incorporated. The Jewish community bought a house at 21st and Central and built a small Shul.



The congregation grew and in 1936 it moved to 2521 West View Street where it still stands today, The Weitz family attended services there until around 1932.

In 1928, a group of 33 people decided that Jews who lived in the West Adams section of Los Angeles needed a synagogue with a Talmud Torah and social center close to their homes. This small group chose the name West Adams Hebrew Congregation. The new congregation purchased a lot at the corner of West Adams Street and Hillcrest Drive. In 1926, the women of the congregation, organized a sisterhood and in 1928, the congregation dedicated its first building. Originally, it was organized as a conservative synagogue with some calling it semi-orthodox. Over the years, The West Adams community grew as did the Synagogue.



In 1938, a newly ordained Rabbi from the Hebrew Theological College of Chicago, Rabbi Simon Dolgin, led the congregation. I am not certain of the year, but the name of the synagogue was changed to Beth Jacob Congregation. This Synagogue was home to the Weitz family from 1935, for many years.

Isaac's first job in Los Angeles was buying and delivering bread for a wholesale bakery owned by Mr. Solomon. Zecharia decided to visit his brother in California and see how he was doing. In January 1922, he took a train across Canada and then the US, which in those days, took five days from Montreal to Los Angeles. He fell in love at first sight, stayed for eight weeks and decided to also make California his home. He had reunited with his wife and daughter in 1919. He went back to Montreal, collected Minna, Sarah, and baby daughter Dorothy and moved them all to sunny California.

January 1920, Mr. Solomon approached Isaac. He proposed that Isaac take over the Jewish bakery, located at 2110 Central Ave. in East Adams. Isaac wanted to but knew nothing about baking. He remembered that his friend in Montreal, Chaim Lerner, was a baker. Isaac got in touch with him. At this point Chaim was fed up with being in Montreal and working for someone else, plus the war between England and Canada had begun and he was afraid he'd be drafted. So, in 1920, he took his friend Isaac up on the offer. Chaim would do the baking and Isaac would do the selling. With Zecharia's help, a partnership was formed; Isaac, Zecharia and Chaim Lerner. They grew and had quite a few employees and trucks delivering the baked goods. At this time, the bakery was located at 1130 Central Street in East Adams and still only sold their bakery items wholesale to restaurants and markets.

Zecharia soon decided that the bakery business was not for him. He went into the produce business and had his own supply sources and did quite well selling to stores and restaurants.

After a couple of months, Chaim came to the conclusion that he didn't like helping to keep books. He went to Isaac and said "I like you we are friends and I love baking. Look, just pay me as you would an ordinary baker and I'll be happy to stay on. I don't want any headaches. Business, Schmisness – who wants business? Isaac grabbed at the deal. At this time, he also joined the bakers' union.



In 1920 Isaac had finally tracked his family down. With the end of the war, Zecharia brought his family to Montreal. His wife informed him that Dora and the children had returned to Austria and were staying with her brother. He quickly sent a letter to Isaac, telling him of his families whereabouts.

The Rabbi, in Stanislau, where our family were living, received the letter from Isaac. Dora, happy to have had finally found her husband sent a picture of the family.



Back row: Dora, Pilio(11), Salomon(14) Front row: Pepchi Perl(9), Aron(3), Indis(5), Sucher(8)

It was then that he learned his twin daughters had died. *He sent train, ship tickets and more train tickets, to enable them to travel from Austria to California. The idea of travelling by train across Austria and Germany to Antwerp, Belgium, by boat to New York, and by train from New York to Los Angeles, seemed unfathomable to Dora. So, she asked the Rabbi to help her make a decision. His advice was, stop thinking, get your permits and go. He gave her his blessing for a safe trip. As they got on the train a group of soldiers came through asking boys their age, anyone pass 14 or older was taken off and conscripted into the army. The soldiers passed right by the Weitz. The Rabbi's blessings worked. The trip was arduous. Upon arriving in Antwerp, Belgium the family was transferred to the ship. To their eyes, the Laplander was huge.*



S.S. Laplander



Washroom for steerage on the Laplander

It's difficult to imagine the trip, a very long ocean crossing in steerage to Ellis Island, New York.



Immigrants leaving the ship. Their relief at finally arriving in America



The arrival hall Ellis Island 1920

It was September 22, 1920, when Dora 42 years of age, Salomon 19, Pilio 17, Pepchi Perl 15, Suchert 14, Indis 11 and Aron 9 arrived in Los Angeles. At that time, it took four days by train from New York to Los Angeles.

Isaac, with the help of Elizabeth Lerner, had bought a house two doors down from the Lerner's, 1130 East Adams. She also helped him furnish it. Lottie's family had come to Los Angeles in 1917; Canada was at war with England and Israel, her father wanted to avoid the draft.

Isaac met his family at the train station in Joe Lerner's paneled truck. They had taken all the produce out of the boxes, turned them upside down in order to create seats for his family. It is impossible for us to imagine the reunion.

Half of the city came out to meet them. it really was an overwhelming experience. There were more surprises to come. Upon their arrival at the house, Peche Perl was first to open the front door and the family crowded in. There was a living room. The dining table was loaded with food, cakes and cookies, a fully equipped kitchen was a treat. There were more surprises, three bedrooms and a bathroom with running water. Also, switches which turned on lights. Unbelievable, Dora began to cry.

They all had Hebrew names. Lottie Geier who was twelve years old at the time, decided they should have American names. So, she gave them English names: Saul, Phil, Pearl, Sam, Edith and Harry.

The Weitz's, Lerner's, Geier's and Colman's lived on the same street but the Weitz's house was the most popular, not only on their block, but of the whole neighborhood. Dora, with the birth of her first grandchild, was called Babu by her family but was known to all the other kids as 'auntie.' Their house was always open and everyone came for a special and luscious Friday treat. On Thursday nights, her older kids would peel a very large bag of potatoes then grate them. She would add yeast, flour, eggs, salt and baking powder. This made a delicious dish called, Potatoenik which she served with sour cream, coffee and challah.

At one time or another, most of the siblings and their wives lived with Babu and Zeyda. I remember one of the Weitz women telling me that while Babu would not go to her children's house to help after the birth of their first child, Babu kept a kosher kitchen, they went to Babu's. She was the best baby nurse ever.



When the bakery moved to 4658 West Adams Blvd, they not only sold wholesale, but retail as well. In no time at all, they were able to lease the space next door. This space became a deli, which Harry, now old enough, ran it with the help of his sisters, Pearl and Edith. They even had a coffee bar, long before Starbucks, which Edith ran. In approximately 1942, they broke through the wall between the bakery and the deli. Now the customers did not have to go out the door of the bakery and in the door to the deli. Eventually, Blanche and the grandchildren took their turns, either in the deli or bakery and even assisting the bakers in the kitchen.

A little coincidental information. One of our new found cousins, Chana, brought to my attention, the fact that in Galicia, Poland, Austria the name Weitz (Veitz) was very common. Veitz is the Yiddish word for 'wheat'. Our forefathers, most likely worked with wheat and were given that name. Many names, at that time, were associated with the families livelihood. It must have been a divine hand that guided Zeyda to the bakery business.



*1943 Babu, Billie (age 6), Gerald (age 10)
(In front of Weitz Brothers bakery and deli)*

Shirley spent many years in the deli. Clifford's shift was between 1:30 am or 2 am on Saturday nights, when he would help take the large pans of freshly baked bagels, danish and sweet rolls out of the oven. Being a little bit of a klutz, often the pans would slip and he would burn himself. This never deterred him. He always went back to help.

During the war years business was booming. They even supplied Shulman's deli with their much sought-after bakery goods. In 1942, Saul and Sam rented a space on La Cienega and created another small bakery. The war years and a few years after the war, were good ones for the Weitz Brothers.

By late 1940's, the bakery fell on hard times and they had to close the two smaller space. In 1953, the Weitz Brothers were approached by Seymour Friedman, the founder of Brooklyn Bagel. He wanted to rent space from Weitz' Bakery. It was great timing for the Weitz.' Soon Mr. Friedman took over the Bakery at 4658 West Adams Blvd and Weitz Brothers Bakery and Deli ceased to exist and Brooklyn Bakery was born.

Marilyn Weitz - A granddaughter remembers her grandmother

One summer in 1958, there came a knock on our door. At that time, we were living on Otsego Street in the San Fernando Valley. I opened the door, surprise! Babu's smiling face was standing there with Grandpa Sam behind her. His hands were filled with bags and boxes. 'Today, we will make dill pickles.' Julie, a year and a half was standing by my side. We all traipsed out to the back yard. Grandpa put all the goodies alongside of our ping pong table, kissed and hugged us goodbye and went to work. We put everything on the table, including Julie, unpacked, sorted the items and per according to Babu's instructions and procedure to fill the jars with cucumbers, garlic, salt, vinegar and dill. Julie's job was, with the garden hose, to fill the jars to the brim with water. It was a great day for us. One problem – we had to wait weeks until we could bite into one of Babu's fabulous Dill Pickles.

Jeffrey Weitz – A great grandson remembers his great grandmother

*Sitting with Babu Weitz and the blanket of many colors.
Thinking back to my childhood, one of my most precious memories
was the time I spent sitting with my great grandmother, Babu by her
tableside, studying Torah, talking about family and life.*

*Babu was the matriarch of our family and for me growing up, she kept
the family together and knew how to carry on and teach the traditions
of generations of Jewish learning, knowledge and celebrations.*

*I was 9 years old when she and I were sitting together one day. She
shared some stories with me of when she was in Europe with her
children, trying to make her way across the continent to come to
America (and escape the persecution of the Nazis.)*

*She told me of times when she and the kids would collect pieces of
cloth and she would sew them into aprons to sell at the marketplace
so she could get enough money to gain passage to America. She
was very handy with her hands, but as I sat there and looked at her
fingers grasping at the pages of the prayer book, I realized that her
hands were no longer able to sew and knit as she had in her youth. I
was in 3rd grade at the time and learning to knit and crochet myself.
Babu always had a blanket on her as she sat in her rocking chair.
Her eyes, straining to see the page of the Torah under the thick
glasses she wore on the edge of her nose. She would look over the
top of them and smile, pinch my cheeks with her soft but wise fingers
and kvell at our time together.*

*After visiting her one time, I decided that I was going to make her a
gift. For she had given so many gifts to our whole family and to
generations of Weitz', to the men, the women, the kids, the grandkids
and to the great grandkids. Perhaps, it was time for me to give
something back to her.*

*One of Babu's favorite stories she would tell me was that of Joseph,
his many brothers and his coat of many colors. So, I set out on a
mission to crochet a blanket for her, one of many colors, to represent
the many paths and lives she had lived along her life's journey.*

I chose a spiral pattern emanating from the center, outward toward the light, as she had been for our family. The light in the center, with scores of kids and grandkids, emanating out from the center. From her and Zeyda, from generation to generation. L'Dor V' Dor

It took me a over a month and many balls of yarn, but with pride and joy in my heart, the day came for me to bestow upon Babu's lap, the Blanket of many colors. Made with my own hands, as she had from hers for so many fortunate souls.

When I entered her room, where she was patiently sitting and praying under the dim light in her chair, she glanced up at me over the top of her glasses and smiled. The light, reflecting the ages of knowledge, sparkling in her face. Slowly I approached and unfurled the large round tapestry, gently placed it on her lap. She reached and shared with me a hug only Babu could give, an embrace that I can still feel today. The warmth of her all-knowing depth, as we shared a very special moment.

When Babu's time came to be at one with Hashem again, I went to her home to sit Shiva, and was asked if I would like to have the tapestry to keep as a memory of her. I gladly accepted that offer and to this day I still have the threads of history, all sewn into the memories of the Greatest Matriarch of our Family, 'Babu' and the blanket of many colors."



Jeffrey was 8 years old when he crocheted this afghan

Karen Gantswig – a great granddaughter remembers her great grandparents.

At Shul at High Holy days the Weitz' always sat in the same place, usually chatting. I remember the family being shushed by the rabbi. I remember eating in shifts at Babu's house because there were so many people. She made the best pear sauce, and challahs.



Babu and Zeyda's duplex across the street from the shul. They lived at 2621 Hillcrest Drive from about 1940 until the bakery closed in 1954.



*SAUL AND SADIE
December 9, 1923*

Saul was 19 years old when he arrived in Los Angeles. He was too old to start school, so he went to work in the bakery. Knowing nothing about baking, Chaim took him under his wing and taught him the fine art of making Challah, bagels, other breads, cakes, cookies and sweet rolls. In a short time, he became a very good baker.

Saul and Sadie met in September 1923, on Rosh Hashanah and married in December 9, 1923. Sadie Burak was born in Philadelphia in 1906 and came to California around 1919. She was raised by her great aunt Rifkin and uncle Joe.

Sadie rented a beautiful wedding dress for her very special day. Saul was 22 and she was 17. They lived with Babu until Shirley was 5 or 6 years old. By this time the bakery had moved to West Adams. They then lived on Wellington, in a house which had a yard with a lovely rose garden. Shirley remembered that Babu made jam out of rose petals.

One year, Babu went on a short vacation with Saul, Sadie and the children. Sadie had eczema which was extremely painful. Babu, our in-house doctor and herbalist, took sap from the tree and mixed it with other herbs and put it on Sadie's eczema and viola, it was cured. Shirley bit her nails and got infections. Babu took weed from the front lawn and wrapped Shirley's fingers - healed. When Shirley was 4 or 5 years old, she remembers going with her father to night school. His classes were in English and he needed to prepare for the naturalization process. In 1929 at the age of 29, he passed with flying colors.

Roz Tanner - A daughter remembers her parents

He loved going to the Biltmore hotel for Tea Dancing. He got up early to go to work at this laundromat so that his afternoons were free. That was his time to dance and socialize. Grandma was working at the bakery. On my 16th birthday, dad took me tea dancing – what fun. As I remember, mother never went with him.

My dad was a terrible driver, he had no sense of direction and was constantly getting lost. He came to work one day and the whole front seat of his car was bent, never found out what happened. A woman who worked for Mervin, came in and was talking about a terrible driver who should not be on the road – who was it but my father. He drank vodka – pronounced vodka with a W. So, vodka became wodka and walk with a V – Valk.

Paul Newman and Joanne Woodard were clients at the laundromat. They would drop off their dirty laundry in the morning and pick up the clean, folded clothes in the afternoon. Grandma got a kick out of Phil folding Paul Newman's under wear. Mom and dad would drink scotch out of paper cups and play gin rummy, while waiting for the laundry to wash and dry.

Susan Bernstein - A granddaughter remembers her grandfather

Grandpa Saul was great. We spent a lot of weekends with grandpa and grandma. They owned a laundromat on Sunset Blvd and they lived around the corner on Crescent Heights. He would go early to help the washer and then we would walk over to help him fold the laundry and then the big treat – Schwabs for lunch. He knew all the waitresses by name. Saturday night was date night – grandma would dress up, walk around the corner, pick up grandpa and go to Greenblatts deli for dinner. They had cocktails and I had a Shirley Temple. He always talked about wanting to have a farm.”

Steve Gould – A grandson remembers his grandparents

When I think about Nana and Papa, two memories stick out the most to me. The first is being a kid and going to their apartment on Sunset Blvd, every Tuesday for dinner. The highlight of that was Nana, knowing that I loved shrimp cocktail, would always be the appetizer on hand. She would always leave out multiple decks of playing cards, which we would take and build card houses all around the furniture. She probably was not happy that all the decks were never put back in order.

Secondly, when Nana and Papa moved to the valley and had their own condo, they had underground parking and their assigned parking spot happened to have a pole next to it. Needless to say, my Papa in his later years was not a good driver, he must have hit that pole with his car at least a dozen times. It was rinse and repeat, he would hit the pole we would get the car repaired.

Karen Ganstwig – a granddaughter remembers her grandparents

When grandpa wasn't around, grandma would make bacon sandwiches at my mom's house. She would also grab a smoke in the bathroom.

She also loved to prance around in her size 2 Jag jeans...very proud of the look.

As in many households, grandma Sadie told me I should lose weight. That said, it was a MUST that I EAT everything she served at her house.

Grandpa had the wettest kisses, and always watched boom boom (war movies) pictures on TV.

A friend of mine once asked me, 'where's Saul's accent from?'...I said, 'what accent?'

Working at the laundry on Crescent Heights with grandma and grandpa was fun. We did the laundry of movie stars.



Saul and Sadie



*Shirley, Mervin, Roz
About 1940*



PHIL AND LOTTIE
June 2, 1926

A short while after they arrived in Los Angeles from Austria, Phil became friendly with a Rabbi who lived across the street. He told the Rabbi that he needed work. The Rabbi was happy to accommodate and put him to work crushing grapes to make wine.

He also made friends with a peddler, who would rent a horse and wagon, go to 9th Street, buy fruits and vegetables, load them all on his wagon and Phil would sell the produce door-to-door. The peddler paid Phil \$1 a day – they were very long days. A couple of weeks went by, Phil approached the peddler and asked for a raise of .50 cents, the peddler refused. Phil decided to rent a horse and wagon himself. He arrived at 9th Street market extremely early, loaded up his wagon and went up and down the neighborhood streets yelling ‘fruits and vegetables for sale.’ The first day he sold all of his produce and made a profit of \$8. Our Phil was on his way. He would go door-to-door, take orders, receive money in advance, go to the market, buy the ordered produce and leave everyone’s packages neatly on their doorsteps. He even started supplying markets. He began to spread out. He got a truck (like the Helms Baker trucks) and bought a route. That business was hard. He would rise at 3am, load up and start from Golden Crust and started selling. He had a large route and in his own words, ‘worked like a dog.’ Meanwhile, he was courting Lottie Geier, his next-door neighbor. Very convenient! In the beginning they could only converse in Yiddish.

Phil found a store at Slauson & Main. He and Joe, who by this time knew quite a bit about produce, went into the produce business. For a while it was a nice little business. They then sold it and Phil had a retail bakery store, Joe bought a route and sold bakery goods.

Lottie was working in real estate. She would call people to view a property by offering sight-seeing tours as an incentive – one of the trips was touring a movie studio. If they sold a property, Lottie got a commission. Tough way to make money.

At Lottie’s Sweet Sixteen Party – Phil asked her to go steady. Problem, they fought a lot. Phil’s boyfriend asked him, “Why do you go with her, you’re always fighting.” Phil had no answer. Another

boyfriend of Phil's decided to fix him up on a blind date. The next Wednesday, Phil told Lottie that he had to go to a meeting. The next day, when Lottie's cousin went to work, her girlfriend said to her, "Boy did I have a hot date last night" and she asked, 'What's his name' and she said, 'Phil Weitz.' Phil Weitz? He's going steady with my cousin. She tells Phil and Phil says, 'Don't say anything to Lottie.'" He took Lottie out the next night and while they were driving, he says, 'I want to tell you something but you must promise me you won't get mad.' Lottie promised.' "Babu told me if I was going to go steady with you, I would have to marry you." And so, they did.

Pearl and Lottie became good friends. When Phil and Lottie became engaged, the two couples decided to go to Long Beach and spend the evening at the gambling ship, 'Rex', which was anchored three miles off Long Beach harbor. They had every game you could imagine. Poker tables, black jack, craps. Neither of the girls had ever seen anything like this. The two boys bought a five dollar roll of nickels for the girls and told them to go have fun. Neither of them had any idea what they were doing or how to play. They just kept feeding the machines nickels. One of them hit the jackpot. Coins kept spilling out of the machine, so they just took off their hats and collected all the coins.

Ileene Morris – A daughter remembers her father Phil

Dad used to grow tomatoes in a small plot of land between his house and the neighbors. His tomatoes were great and tasty, all the neighborhood would come to get some, which he gave away. After dad died and they were selling the house, my children and I went to help clean out the house. Nancy took some of the tomatoes to plant in her yard. Twenty-two years later they are still growing.

In Czechoslovakia, the older boys went to school, but the boys were called dirty Jews and they never went back. When they came to the United States, despite minimal formal education, they were very successful.

As little kids, sitting around the dinner table my father would knock under the table and say, 'someone's at the door' and we would run to

the door to see who was there. He got us every time. By the time I was 16 years old, I would go to the furniture store and help my father out. He taught me how to balance the books, without a formal education. No one could fathom how he learned book keeping. One day, I couldn't balance two columns, daddy said, "don't worry about it now, when you come in tomorrow, do it first thing and you will find the mistake." and I always did. My much younger sisters would be given chores to dust the furniture, so they felt very important that they were working too.

My father started making wine at his home in Burbank in 1930, anticipating the birth of his first child. It was to be served at the bris. Unfortunately, Lottie had a miscarriage – a boy. Ileene was born in 1932, Carol in 1937, Adrienne in 1941. The wine sat in a large glass Sparkletts bottle, in their garage from 1932 until 1950, without being opened. Upon finally opening the bottle, it was deemed undrinkable and poured out of that large container, where it had fermented for over 18 years.



1920, Phil 17 years old just arrived in Los Angeles



Phil's first car



Phil and Ileene 1932



Ileene, Carol, Adriane 1945/1946



Phil, Lottie, Carol, Adriane 1950



Ileene and Adriane 1943



25th Wedding anniversary 1951



JOE and PEARL
November 2, 1924

Joe was born in Tulchin, Ukraine, Russia. At this time, Jewish people did not have last names. Their last names were the names of their business or profession. Joe's father, Chaim, left Russia and arrived in Montreal, Canada in approximately 1903. Montreal was a small town. Joe and his mother met him in Montreal in 1904. They lived in a small two-bedroom apartment, on the third floor. Chaim worked in a Kosher Bakery, a few stores from the apartment. There were no addresses on buildings. Directions were given by landmarks or trees near the edifices.

Here, everything was lit by gas or candle light. French children went to catholic schools and Jewish children went to public schools. Tooth brushes were given to the children at school. In the afternoons, upon finishing their classes boys went to cheder and the girls went home to help their mothers.

The Lerner family first met the Colman's, the Geier's and later Isaac Weitz in Montreal. Isaac was a boarder at Chaim Lerner's apartment. In July of 1920, the Lerner's immigrated from Montreal via Port Huron, Michigan to California on the Grand Truck railroad.

Joe was a hard worker. At first, he worked for a man who had a horse and wagon and bought and sold produce. Israel Geier told Joe to get his own horse and wagon and sell store-to-store. He became known as the king of donuts and cakes.

Joe owned a half-ton truck in 1940 and when the war started. He and his truck went to work for Knudsen's. He sold milk, cream, cottage cheese and sour cream. His route was Lincoln Heights. He was also allowed to sell his produce to the Lincoln Heights jail, the Police, everyone in the drunk tank, and the prostitutes.

Joe could have made a lot of money on the black market but he was not only an honest, loyal man, but one of great integrity. He also taught himself to read and write.

Joe had many jobs but one of the most exciting was when he and Pearl had a concession at the Coliseum, known then as the Memorial Stadium. In 1932, the summer Olympics were held in and around Los Angeles. The water events were held in Long Beach and there,

Joe and Pearl also had a food concession. At this time, they were living at 60th Place and Slauson in Los Angeles. Listening to the tape, Audrey made with Joe, he describes the closing ceremony. There were 120,000 people in attendance. There was fanfare and a hush came over the stadium. It became so quiet you could hear a pin drop. Music began, the athletes entered the coliseum, took their places and the flags from all the countries in attendance were lowered. An athlete came in running while carrying the torch. Ran up a flight of stairs, slowly lowered and then put the torch out.

Joe recalls a memorable Friday night in 1932. Sam and Sylvia lived next door. At 5 pm, an earthquake struck. A cupboard in the kitchen fell, smashing all the dishes inside. Then came a big crash and the fireplace crumbled. Everyone from both houses ran outside. Sam, Sylvia carrying one-year old Clifford, Joe, Pearl, Marvin & Leon, all seven of them, piled into one car and drove to Babu's. Sadie and Shirley were there too. Babu's house was always a refuge and Friday night, Challah with sour cream, a huge comfort.

The black community were in the street praying, while telephone poles moved back and forth. It shook all day Saturday. Saul and Shirley went to Long Beach which was hit badly. They saw buildings with walls missing. They distributed bread to the survivors.

Pearl, born in 1905 and was fifteen years old when she arrived in Los Angeles. By the time, Joe started dating Pearl. He had a truck and had bought a route. House-to-house he sold lox, herring, salami, bread, cakes and of course dill pickles. According to Joe's tapes they were engaged for about 5 months and were married on November 2, 1924. Audrey had no idea where Pearl got the wedding gown in which she was married, she just remembered her mother telling her how much she hated the head piece, she thought it made her looked ridiculous. The wedding took place at the 41st Street Temple, with Rabbi Berman officiating. She was 16 and he was 24. They went by train to San Francisco for their honeymoon. The twins, Marvin and Leon were born a year later, November 12, 1925. In 1939, the twins were 14 years old. Joe and Pearl moved into a large house owned by Joe's parents, Chaim & Raizel Lerner, at 2426 Vineyard Avenue in Los Angeles. They all lived together until 1953. It was a three-

bedroom house with one bath. They turned the garage into a bedroom for Marvin and Leon.

In the mid 50's, they had a concession at the Coliseum. They were there when the Brooklyn Dodgers were bought and in 1957, became the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Pearl and Edith together took classes in citizenship and were naturalized together, on October 4, 1959. Pearl was 52 and Edith was 48. Pearl had earlier in her life, gone to night school. The other students made fun of her, she was embarrassed and stopped her schooling. She was very shy but later on in life, she desperately wanted to become a citizen and studied very hard for the test.

Audrey Weiner – A daughter remembers her mother Pearl

My brothers and I would often kid our mother, who was very bowlegged, about 'what horse she had been riding on.' It wasn't until my aunt Edith told me of the terrible diet they had and the lack of food did I realize it must have been Ricketts caused by malnutrition that caused her to be bowlegged.

Shirley Gantsing – A niece remembers her aunt

Pearl and Sadie were pregnant at the same time. Sadie gave birth to Shirley on Nov 5, 1925. Seventeen days later Pearl went into the hospital and gave birth, surprisingly, to twins. It seems as though no one in the family realized that she possibly could be carrying two children, even the doctor didn't know. The twins looked so much alike when they were infants, a couple of times, Pearl who was breast feeding, fed the same child twice. Because she did not have enough milk for two, and Sadie had lots of heavy cream instead of milk, Sadie would help her out and feed the boys.

Pearl Learner – A daughter remembers her father Isaac

I used to work at the bakery at night with Zeyda. I didn't feel right watching him walk up the hill to his house alone after work. So, I used to walk home with him. He would get the greatest pleasure

talking to me about what happened that day. I can never describe what a wonderful man he was.

Pearl Learner – A daughter remembers her mother and father

Babu and Zeyda had a weekly ritual. On Friday mornings they would go down to Grand Central market, then on to the Million Dollar Theatre, which was also downtown and see a movie together, always returning home before sundown and Shabbat.

Joe Lerner – A son-in-law remembers his father-in-law

I remember Zeyda and his mischievous little grin. He walked slowly, talked slowly, in an even tone of voice. I don't ever remember him raising his voice. Babu didn't want him to smoke so he never bought or carried cigarettes, he used to go around mooching cigarettes from us kids when Babu wasn't around. But he wouldn't take cigarettes from me until I showed him that I had another full pack in my pocket.



Leon and Marvin 1928



Leon and Marvin 1932



Audrey 1937



Joe, Audrey, Pearl 1943



Audrey and Leon 1950



SAM and SYLVIA
June 29, 1927

Sam was 15 upon arrival in Los Angeles. He didn't speak a word of English and instead of going to school, was also trained to be a baker and eventually worked alongside his brother.

He was lucky to have a friend who was a pharmacist and every night after work his friend would teach and Sam would learn reading, writing and arithmetic. He was a great study, who had a penchant for learning. He got his citizenship December 1, 1926. He was twenty years old.

Sylvia Shapiro was born in 1908 in New York. Her mother died in the 1918-1919 Spanish Flu Epidemic. Sylvia, 11 years, her two brothers, Milton, 9 years old and Bernard, 2 years were raised by their father, Louis Kulman Leiv. A few years later, he married Esther Borsin. They moved to Los Angeles between 1920 – 1924. Her father was a very successful tailor, both in New York and then Los Angeles. Sylvia became a secretary. I have no clue as to how or where Sylvia met Sam but met and fell in love, they did. They were determined to marry against the wishes of her father. He didn't think Sam was good enough, educated enough and have a profession which would earn him enough money to support a family.



Picture between 1927 and 1930

On Friday, July 19, 1929, Louis received a phone call from his lawyer, telling him that his new will was ready to be signed. Friday, the last day of the week, was extremely busy at the factory. Louis told his lawyer, he would sign it on Monday, Monday never happened – Louis died on Saturday, July 20, 1929.

Upon Louis' death, his new wife turned into a viper. Esther sold the business and the house. She took everything out of the safe deposit box. Years later Sylvia told me that jewelry belonging to her mother was kept there. There was nothing Sylvia or Sam could do aboutt

this. Her stepmother informed Sylvia and Sam that Milton age 16, who was going to school and had a part time job, would have to quit school, get a full-time job and support himself. Bernard age 10, would be put into an orphanage. Sylvia 21 and Sam 23 was not going to let that happen. Both boys went to live with Sylvia and Sam. The court awarded a total of \$500 for Milton and \$1000 for Bernard, period.

From the time Sam got to Los Angeles, he became a baker and seemed to enjoy the family business. When they had to close Weitz Brothers Bakery, I'm certain it was a sad day for the family. They had all been an integral part of the business and enjoyed working together. By 1955 Saul and Sam sold their co-owned duplex on Spaulding, where they had raised their children. Saul moved into an apartment on Crescent Heights and leased a laundromat/clothes cleaning store. Sam moved to an apartment on Shenandoah and Phil helped him go into the furniture business. Lankershim Furniture was a small furniture store on Lankershim Blvd in North Hollywood. Phil brought Harry into his furniture store in Burbank and since Harry was a natural born sales person and jokester he did very well. Joe and Pearl had another concession at Coliseum.

Marilyn Weitz remembers her father-in-law Sam

Cliff and his family were avid fishermen. I had only fished from the shore or from a dock. Sam decided that I should try my luck on a fishing boat. We got up at dawn, drove a couple of hours up the coast and Sam, Cliff, Ted, Raymond, Gwen and I went on a full day's fishing boat. You had to sail at least an hour out to where the fish were biting. All went well for the first hour, then the weather changed. The sea got rough and I got sick. This boat had other fishermen on it and no way were these eager fishers going to turn the boat around and take me back. After vomiting for an hour, I told them all, I was going to throw myself overboard and swim to shore or die trying. Sam convinced the captain to hail a half day boat that was returning to shore, to stop alongside our boat and take us off. They never do this in a rough ocean, but they did, transferring ships in a tossing sea was quite a sight – but so was dry land, which continued to rock and roll for me for hours after. I have never gotten on another boat

without a few Dramamine. But I do clean, cook and enjoy fish to this day, thanks to the fishermen in my family.

Ted Weitz – A son remembers his father

Fishing was one of dad's passions whether it was here or Mexico. When he went with his brother Harry, sons Cliff and Ted he had his own spot on the fishing boat – the very front of the boat. He did not want us kids around him so he would say 'go fish in the back of the boat with your uncle Harry.' A great way to get rid of us.

Julie Weitz - A granddaughter remembers her grandparents

My memory of Grandpa Sam-Sam the gentle, the patient one, the passionate fisherman, the loving and devoted husband. The sweet father, brother and grandfather. The sax player.

My sweetest memory is of our weekend visits. Grandma Sylvia and Sam's apartment was modest. But my brother and I always had adventures there. Helping Grandma make dinner and dessert, trying on her clothes, shoes and handbags, setting the table, and hiding under the sofa to 'surprise' grandpa when he came home from a long day. He would walk in the apartment door, kiss his wife and loudly ask how her day was - anything special happen? Boy did he play the game well – knowing that Jeff and I were hiding, and giggling under the sofa that turned magically into our overnight beds. We would then spring out, yelling surprise, laughing and hugging him as he played along. 'Sylvia, look who's here!' He played surprised, smiling with his toothy grin, overjoyed we were there. And we replayed that game for years to come. We would hide, he pretended it was an average day, we'd pop out to a smile and hugs.

My last memory of him was at that very same apartment. He sat in a soft chair in the room that doubled as our bedroom on our overnight visits. He was thin, the cancer was taking him. But his smile remained the same. Broad and toothy. He took out his sax, and he blew with what little strength he had left. Music took over his voice, it is a treasured memory. A beautiful gift to Jeff and I, just like our weekend visits.

*Jeffrey Weitz – a grandson remembers his grandfather
Fishing with grandpa Sam Weitz*

My grandfather, at age 8, taught me to fish. He would bring the fishing poles over to the house and we would practice casting a line in the backyard pool of our house. He was always patient as his eyes sparkled with a glow of knowledge and joy. Fishing was his passion, teaching his grandson to carry on the tradition was a pleasure. I was a good study, carefully mimicking his every move, to master the art of casting across the green expanse of lawn into the pool. He told me that I could not go out on the big boat until I had mastered the techniques. And so, I dedicated myself to the art of casting, the patience to watch the line unfurl and to direct it to the target.

After months of practice, Grandpa Sam, with a huge smile on his face and a soft chuckle, said it was time to try my skills on the big boat, out in the waters of Southern California. So, very early in the am hours of a crispy dew swept morning, we ventured out to meet the boat. I was so excited, that the night before, I could not sleep. Gramps had the patience of a master and always encouraged me to perfect my skills. I was ready to fish with the big guys. We arrived on the boat at 4:30am, out of San Clemente harbor, on a boat called, The Qualifier 105. My grandfather had a brotherhood of buddies that all fished together every week on Wednesdays, they were longtime friends and many of his brothers were also part of this motley crew. I was of course, the youngest of the crowd, with my blue eyes wide open. My dad and my uncle were along for the ride this bright and starry morning but they stepped aside and let grandpa lead my way.

He was the master and I was so proud to hold his warm hand as he led me up onto the boat. As we left the harbor in search of the schools of yellow tail tuna, he took me over to the big bait tank in the middle of the boat. His eyes peering into the churning waters like an eagle in search of his prey, and as I enthusiastically reached in to grab an unsuspecting anchovy from the swimming hoards, he gently grabbed my hand and pulled it back. 'Patience' he whispered; we are looking for a very special one. Minutes seemed like hours as he taught me to study the swimming bait. Then as if from another world,

I saw it. I looked at him and he smiled, a beam of morning sunlight reflected off his teeth. There, in the bait tank was the prize bait. Not an anchovy after all, but an oversized herring. Slowly I reached in and grabbed it and handed it to the master. He gently threaded the hook onto my line and directed me to my spot at the stern of the boat amongst my relatives and his buddies. The sea of fishermen parted as they allowed me a spot to dip my line in.

At the command of the captain, the boat slowed, the deck hands readied the vessel to begin the day of fishing. We watched the churning waters of the southern California ocean morph to calm, as the engines stopped. The lines were unfurled and my first cast was picture perfect. As I looked back at my grandfather he was nodding with approval, my heart was soaring, my life would be forever changed in that moment. The thrill and Zen of fishing had been planted deep in my soul, as my Grandfather whispered in my ear, 'Patience'....

I was the next in line of Fisherman in my family to carry on the tradition, as my grandfather had from his father and as I would teach my son, and so the tradition continues to this day. From that day forward, every time I have stepped onto a fishing boat, I have felt the beaming smile and warm embrace of my grandfather's arms around my soul. It is a special gift that I will cherish all the days of my life.



Grandpa Sam and the guys. What a catch.

Marilyn Weitz - A daughter-in-law remembers her father-in-law

When Cliff and I got engaged he really wanted me to have an engagement ring. I, being the practical one, convinced him that he really couldn't afford one, and it really wasn't that important. That week, I went to Sylvia and Sam's house for dinner. Sam was waiting in the living room for me, he wanted a private talk, just he and I. I had no idea what he had in mind. He hugged me, sat me down beside him on the sofa. To my amazement, he took off his Masonic Ring which he always wore, took my hand, put the ring into my palm, closed my fingers over the ring and said 'here's your engagement ring.' His ring had a lovely round diamond in it. I became very teary eyed, hugged him, thanked him for his wonderful gesture and put it back on his finger. I told him that I would miss not seeing it on his hand, but one day, long in the future, he could leave it to me. He did, I had the stone removed, reset and I wear it around my neck. There was so much gold in the ring that I had a charm of their choice, made for each of my children.



Sylvia, Clifford, Sam 1934



Date: 1950's - 1960's



Sylvia, Sam, Cliff, and Ted
1939



Cliff's Bar Mitzvah 1943

He always was a classy dresser, just look at that hat and those great shoes.



*Cliff, Bernard, Harry, Ted, Sam
Standing: Jerry Bauman
Cabo San Lucas 1960's*

Harry found a goat wandering around outside our rooms. He was a consummate jokester and so...he brought the goat into their room to join us for a drink.



Top Row (Left to Right): Saul and Sadie (Burak) Weitz, Phil and Lottie (Geier) Weitz, Sam and Sylvia (Shapiro) Weitz, Milton and Rose (Sommers) Gincig, Ira and Sophie (Phillips) Gincig, Harry Weitz and Sarah (Weitz) Goldberg
 Middle Row (Left to Right): Marvin Lerner, Joe Lerner, ?, Edith (Weitz) Gincig, Charles Gincig, Jerome Gincig, Pearl (Weitz) Lerner, Leon Lerner
 Bottom Row: Shirley Weitz (Ganstwig), Ruth Gincig (Montgomery)

*EDITH and CHARLES
 December 14, 1930*

We have to assume that Edith met Charles through his brother Jerry, who was a salesman for a pie company. Jerry met the Weitz' when he delivered pies to the bakery, one of the few confections Weitz Brothers did not make. Edith worked first, in the bakery at a coffee bar. Later she helped out in the deli. Charles met Edith and the rest is history. They were married on December 14, 1930, in the Diana Ball Room in Los Angeles. She was 21 and Charles was 22. They had two boys, Gerald and Billie. They were divorced in 1938.

Edith met Morrie Goldstein in 1947. Morrie and his brother were in the meat pickling business. They made corned beef, pastrami and tongue. I don't know for certain but it was highly probable that they met at Weitz Brothers deli, where Edith was working. We do know that they married on July 4, 1948. Their marriage was a 'His and Hers.' Edith had two boys and Morrie had two girls and two boys. That marriage was obviously successful because it lasted forty-two years.

Edith learned well from her mother and was a fabulous, avid knitter. Babu had created a pattern for an afghan and Edith made one afghan for each of the children. I was lucky enough to inherit the pattern and have made the beautiful afghans which Babu created. Anyone in the family who has one of these knitted wonders can consider themselves most fortunate – they are wonderful treasures.

Bill Gincig – A son remembers his mother

When Monique and I were married in France, the law said, people had to have a civil wedding for the marriage to be recognized. We were married in a civil wedding on, Friday, April 1, 1960. Because it was not a religious ceremony, mom, who had come to France for our wedding, said that she did not recognize the marriage and insisted that Monique sleep with her. Because, in her eyes, Monique and dad weren't married. That was both Friday and Saturday nights. They had a religious ceremony on Sunday, April 3, 1960. After that, they went on their honeymoon with mom in tow.

My mother was 'queen of Jell-O molds. When Monique and I got married in France, my mom took a huge mold, enough to feed 20-30 people, on the plane, expecting to make a giant mold for the wedding reception. Problem, Parisians, at that time, had no idea what Jell-O was – no Jell-O available in Nance, France."

Gerald Gincig – A son remembers his mother

She couldn't cook or bake worth a damn. Everything tasted like brisket. Her coleslaw you could eat through a straw – but we loved her.

My mother had gotten her driver's license before Harry and Saul, so she used to drive the truck making the deliveries. They were jealous.

When I was 14 years old and in junior high, I used to go to the bakery with my mother at 5 am, serve coffee and sweet rolls to the delivery drivers. I worked until 7am, then dashed off to Mount Vernon Jr. High School. After school, I would go back and work in the bakery or in the deli with uncle Harry.

Mom was in the hospital at the end. I went to visit her one day. She was not in her bed I was frightened and did not know what happened. I went to the nurses' station and they said that they had just checked on her. We looked down the hall, there she was, calmly walking. She had taken all the intravenous needles out and was just sauntering down the hall. The nurses put her back into bed. She looked up at me and said why are you being so mean to me?"

Debby Painter – A daughter remembers her parents Bill and Monique

When my father was in France, in the Air Force, one day he was at Temple. It was Yom Kippur and many of the French citizens took a Jewish soldier home to dinner to celebrate the holiday. My mother's brother-in-law took him home. My mother was quiet and shy (imagine that), so much so, that he thought their maid was the sister-in-law because she was so talkative. He spoke no French, she no

English, but as dad says, she could dance and that was their bond. The rest, as they say, is history.”

Karen Ganstwig – a cousin remembers

I remember Bill and Monique and the kids swimming at our Woodland Hills house. We brought in fried chicken, and Monique was appalled when we ate it with our hands. Debbie and Dedier were given silver ware.”



*Billie, Edith, Gerald
1938*

Karen Ginzig Sanchez remembers her grandmother

One day when I was three or four years old, Grandma and I went out for a walk. Before crossing the street, she looked down at me and said ‘Let me hold your hand.’ I very distinctly replied, “NO”. Grandma said to me, “You have a big mouth.” I did not have a fresh mouth. I

was merely too big a girl to have my grandma hold my hand. But with grandma Edith, you didn't argue."

Lori Gincig Hale remembers her grandma

"Every time I went to visit grandma Edith, she would meet me at the front door with a dish towel over her shoulder. One day, I finally asked, "Grandma, are you always cooking when I come to visit?"

Steven Gincig remembers his grandma

When grandma Edith was in the hospital for the last time, I would call there every other day to see how she was. The operators would not give me any information. I tried to fool them by giving them a different name each time I called. I decided to try a different approach. I called, they once again asked who was calling. "Dr Pick-a-card", I replied. I got the information.



Morrie and Edith Anniversary



HARRY and BLANCHE
November 8, 1931

Harry was nine years old when he arrived in Los Angeles. He went to school. He was 20 years old when he got his citizenship, February 28, 1931.

Harry had great flare for communicating, an outgoing personality and his love for communication made him a person of great success running the deli.

Morris Sheer, Blanche's father, was an insurance salesman. Zeyda was one of his clients. Morris, who had an attractive daughter, heard that Zeyda had a young, single son. The two fathers put their heads together and made a shidduch. Harry married Blanche November 8, 1931. He was 20 and she was 17.

In time, Blanche also helped Harry out in the deli. It really was a family affair. When Alan, their oldest son, entered Dorsey High he would go to the deli after school to help out. There were perks – fresh rye bread with sour cream. A little aside, I was impressed. Alan remembers the exact location of the bakery in West Adams. On the corner of Adams and Hillcrest, was the Shul, then a beauty parlor, a market, a butcher shop, the Weitz Brothers, and a cleaners (great remembering Alan.)

Rabbi Dolgen, the new Rabbi, came into the deli one day. 'I am the new Rabbi at the Shul', I met your father at the services. I would like to introduce myself.' Harry said, 'You look so young, what do I call you?' My name is Rabbi Simon Dolgin, you call me whatever you want Harry.' 'Okay Rabbi Murphy.' The milkman heard the story. Half an hour later, Harry gets a call from another store about three miles away, in the same neighborhood. 'I hear you have a new Rabbi Murphy in town.' 'It was a joke his name is Rabbi Dolgin.' A few years later, Rabbi Dolgin moved to Israel. In 1977, Alan, Dolores and kids, went to Israel to celebrate grandson, Jamie's Bar Mitzvah. Upon arrival in Israel, Harry calls the Dolgin's house. His wife, Shirley, answers the phone. Harry says 'Hi Shirley,' is Rabbi Murphy home.' Shirley says, 'Harry Weitz, what are you doing in Israel?' 'My grandson is being Bar Mitzvah at 10:00 at the Western Wall.' 'Simon

*isn't home right now but he will be there.' He came to the Bar Mitzvah and invited all of Allan's family for lunch at his house.
Judy Weitz – A daughter remembers her father*

One day, the whole family was watching TV. Dad left the room and went outside, snuck to the front door, knocked and we opened the door. We saw dad covered in blood or so we thought for a quick second – pretty scary, until we realized he was covered in ketchup.

There was a new Rabbi in town and dad told everyone his name was Rabbi Murphy. The rumor quickly spread around the Jewish community. When they finally met the Rabbi, he introduced himself – 'hello, I'm Rabbi Murphy.'



1950's

One night we were all watching television in our pajamas, dad did not wear pj's. No one was paying any attention to him. He quietly left the room and came back wearing one of mom's negligees, sat down and continued to watch television.

Alan Weitz – A son remembers his father

Mother told father to pick up one of the kids at school. He went to grammar school instead of junior high. Couldn't find them – wrong school.

Shirley Gantsing – A niece remembers her uncle

Uncle Harry would sit on a ladder in the deli and sing to Murphy (Rabbi Dolgin) and Jones (Rabbi Levin) and then help them fill their orders for the day camps.

Ileene Morris – A niece remembers her uncle

Uncle Harry slyly stole silverware from a restaurant where the family had gone for dinner. When he stood up, the silverware fell out of his pockets. He got arrested but was released. I think it was a scare tactic on the part of the Police.

Uncle Harry would sneak out of synagogue during the High Holidays to listen to the world series on his car radio."

Ileene Morris – A niece remembers her aunt

Aunt Edith went to Uncle Harry and asked him to change birth dates with her so that she could be the youngest child.

Harry took sister Edith to the coliseum to see a football game. At the gate, a guard started to harass Edith. When he wouldn't stop, Harry knocked him on the top of his head (he learned to box in the USA in high school.) They walked right in, took their seats and watched the game.

Jeffrey Weitz – A nephew remembers his uncle

Growing up in a family full of fishermen was amazing. From my grandfather, my uncles, my dad, it was my destiny to continue the traditions of deep-sea fishing, it was my family's brotherhood and the rite of passage. On the boat, which held as many as 30 guys, the Weitz family brothers were the dominant force. As tradition would have it, the best of the fishermen was my grandfather, who in his very soft and gently way, was the leader of the brothers. He was the one to always catch the jackpot fish on every trip.

I never went on a boat trip with him where he did not bring home the jackpot and the biggest catch of the day, without fail. However, as I quickly learned, the biggest and the best always were caught off the stern of the boat. You see the stern was for the real competitors. Those guys who could walk the walk, reeling in the big catches, elbow to elbow, flapping their prowess and muscling out anyone not tough enough to belly up to the rail and dip their line in with the Big Boys in search of the Big Fish! However, there was one Weitz brother who was not intimidated by the others, he was the youngest, the smallest and if I do say so myself, the sweetest. He was my Uncle Harry Weitz.

Uncle Harry had a wonderful twinkle of a smile and a wonderful laugh that would sooth the grouchiest of souls. Harry preferred to fish at the bow of the boat, a place where one could tell stories, giggle and laugh at his jokes, and with his forever patient teaching eyes, one could really learn to fish away from all the heyday at the stern.

When someone was messing up the other intense anglers at the stern, the joke was you would be banished to the bow to fish with Uncle Harry. However, I actually loved the bow, there was no smell of diesel fuel up there, we were always facing the waves as they broke over the boats hull and the fresh mist and spray would bring us a sparkle and scent of the open water. Harry taught me so many things about life at the front of the boat. How to take a simpler approach, to enjoy the moment instead of always trying to outpace the other guys.

He was content to take in the smells, the sounds and the sights of the ocean, for being out on the sea to him was much more than just fishing, it was about living life to its fullest. He would always giggle as we saw the dolphins breaking the surface of the water in front of the bow, the seagulls swooping down to grab the bait off the water. The splash of a jumping tuna as the misty ocean spray danced over our cheeks.

The Bow was a place of learning, laughter, joy, no judgment, no lines being tangled, no competition, just pure fishing, and we caught many fish. Not as many and perhaps not as big as those warriors at the back of the boat, but we shared many stories and laughs together, and we caught our fair share of fish. 'The Smart Ones' Uncle Harry would always say, those are the ones we would catch, so, the truth of the matter was, I preferred to 'Go fish with your Uncle Harry' as my dad and grandfather would say to me when I would mess up on the stern. And as I walked up the side planks of the boat toward the Bow, I would giggle under my breath knowing that I was going to get to share some laughs and fun with my old pal, my Uncle Harry and follow the path less travelled, to a special place which I forever hold in my heart, 'The Front of the Boat.'



2 beauties 'Yahoo' Uncle Harry 1950's



Blanche, Harry, and Judy 1941



Blanche and Harry
1941



Harry (standing), Allen, Blanche, Jackie, Judy
1944



Harry late 1940's - 1950



*Judy Weitz, Judy Williams
married May 10, 2019*

PICTURE GALLERY

DORA AND ISAAC'S FAMILY



1935 GERALD (2 years old) and ILEENE (3 years old)



*Gerald and Alan 1947
(Mervyn's Bar Mitzvah)*



SADIE and LOTTIE
Date: Between 1926 - 1930



*Back row: left to right; Sadie, Sylvia, Lottie. In front of Sadie, Edith
Front row: Leon, Pearl, Marvin*



*Lottie and Phil at Ocean Park Beach
1926 -1928*



EDITH and BLANCHE
Date: 1931



Babu, Zeyda, Ileene, Gerald
1937



*Back row left to right: Marvin, Cliff, Leon
Lower row right to left: Audrey, Ted, Shirley, Babu, Ileene, Gerald
On Babu's lap: Bill
Early 1940's*



*Babu and Zeyda 50th Wedding Anniversary
1950*



1950 Babu and Zeyda's 50th wedding anniversary

Left side of table 1: Ileene, Roz

*Right side of table 2: Carol, Gerald, Alan, Cliff, Gloria, Marvin
(standing) Shirley*

Left side of table 2: Billie, Adriane, Judy, Audrey

*Right side of table 2: Carol G. Gloria G. Ted, Mervin, Bill G.
(standing) Jackie.*



*PEARL, PHIL, EDITH, JOE, HARRY
Date: !980's*



*Standing: Lottie, Joe, Pearl, Sylvia, Roz
Sitting: Phil, Blanche, Harry, Edith, Morrie
Late 1990's*



*Standing: Lottie, Phil, Morrie, Edith, Sylvia, Sam
Sitting: Saul, Sadie, Harry, Blanche, Babu, Joe, Pearl
Babu's 90th birthday*



Saul and Sadie's 50th wedding anniversary 1973
Standing: Blanche, Harry, Morrie, Edith, Pearl, ,Joe, Phil, Lottie,
Sitting: Sylvia, Sadie, Saul, ?



Joe, Audrey, Pearl late 70's



Audrey and Pearl 1955



Marvin, Joe, and Leon late 70's



1969

1. Mitch Goodman, 2. Susan Gould, 3 Gary Goldstein, 4. Bobby Morris, 5. Linda Morris, 6. Nancy Morris, 7. Brian Goodman, 8. Debby Gincig, 9. Misha Goodman, 10. Steven Gould, 11. Didier Gincig, 12. Craig Galka

ZECHARIA AND MINNA

In my journey through the annals of time I have persisted, prodded my L.A. Weitz family, my Rabbi and finally, through becoming a genuine nuisance divine guidance, found our lost family –Aaron, Dreizel, Zecharia and Minna and their off springs. The experience has been fulfilling and exciting.

I was not aware that Zeyda had any siblings until I was introduced to the website our cousin Debby Painter had created and the research she had done on The Weitz Family. It took her many years to be able to accumulate all this information. I downloaded 'myfamilybusiness' which contains the body of her research, and, reading through the history I came upon Zecharia Weitz, son of Aaron and Dreisel, and brother to Isaac. I immediately contacted all my cousins and only one – Shirley, the eldest living granddaughter knew about Zecharia and had actually grown up with his daughter Dorothy 'Daisy.' His eldest daughter, Sarah, was ten years older and his young son Earl Aaron 'Moshe' was seven years younger. By the time I became part of the family, '1954', I never saw or heard about Zecharia or his family. In Edith's wedding picture, 1930, Harry is standing beside Zecharia's daughter Sarah (born 1910) – would have been 20 years of age in the picture)

I have reconnected with our family who live in New York, Phoenix and Los Angeles and have been emailing and speaking with Zecharia's granddaughter, Freyda, married to Earl Aaron Moshe's son, Abraham Zev. It has been exciting. Freyda and her sister-in-law, Chana Blima as well as Sarah's daughter, Alice were excited to hear of this undertaking and were happy to contribute to this project.

Zecharia 'Harry' Weitz was born Sept 3, 1884 in Boheroclozany, Austria. He was ten years younger than Isaac. Debby could find no evidence of other siblings. His story picks up in his late teens when he joined the Army and rose through the ranks to captain where he had 200 men under his command. Because of his position it was easier for him to get kosher food and keep the sabbath.

His Army career was over by the time he was in his early twenties. On Sept 8, 1909 in Stanislau, Austria he married Minna Emily 'Miriam' Minnie Greenberg, born Dec 6, 1893. She was seventeen at the time of their marriage. Minna was very intelligent and she spoke a dozen languages yet never had a formal education. She was intelligent and wise. Her mother had passed away early in her life leaving her to care for and raise eleven brothers and sisters at a very young age. Some of Minna's siblings were sent on the Kindertransport from Germany to England. Her sister Chana was saved and eventually sent to New York, where Earl put her on a train to California to live with Minna.

In February of 1910 Zecharia left by train to a seaport then an ocean voyage landing at Halifax, Canada, then another train to Montreal. Part of his story you have already perused. Note: On all his documents his profession is listed a tailor. This profession he followed in Montreal but not in L.A.

Meanwhile Minna, in order to help support her family, found work in the households of other families. She also developed another trade; smuggling. She would travel to other countries and smuggle items back to her town. Fortunately, she was only caught once. When brought to court, with baby Sara in her arms, she said to the judge, 'How do you want me to support my daughter?' She convinced him to not only drop the charges but also to return her confiscated goods. Due to her appeal the judge agreed. Amazing.

When WW1 ended, Zecharia was finally able to send for Minna and Sarah. They had been separated for ten years. They arrived in Montreal August 12, 1920.



Dorothy 'Daisy' was born Dec 28, 1921. They lived at 1465 Deloge St, Montreal. Zecharia had been in contact with Isaac and was very interested in all the news about Los Angeles and especially the Jewish area into which his brother had settled. Intrigued Zecharia decided to visit his brother and see for himself this new world. On Jan 17, 1922 he boarded the Delaware & Hudson Rail Road for Rouses Point, New York and then California. He stayed with his brother at 1120 Adams Street, the home of Israel and Elizabeth Geier who he also had met in Montreal. He stayed for 8 weeks testing the waters, liked what he saw and decided to return to Montreal. He, packed up his family and on Aug 22, 1922 moved to California. In L.A. he became part of Weitz Bros. Bakery. They bought a truck and he delivered the bakery goods to other bakeries and markets. On July 22, 1927 Earl Aaron Moshe made his appearance. By 1940 Zecharia left the bakery and went into the produce business. By 1940 he was selling his produce to stores and restaurants and doing quite well. He also had a truck which delivered produce to neighborhoods in the Adams area. Zecharia liked to help people. After finishing his deliveries, he would put together boxes of fruits and vegetables and leave them at the doors of needy people.

One of the first things Minna did was to attend night school to learn to speak, read and write English. English was one of the languages she did not know.

She also did incredible needlework and embroidery. She was a great knitter, knitting very intricate sweaters and dresses. A talent she passed down to her daughters.

Zecharia became president of his synagogue. He had a beautiful voice and while not a cantor, he led the prayers for the high Holidays, for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kipper.

According to his death certificate, he was ill from 1951 where they found wide-spread cancer. He succumbed to the disease on Sept 23, 1954, surrounded by his wife and children.

Aaron: A son remembers his mother

During the depression money was scarce and we had to be very careful with our finances. When my mother packed a lunch for me to take to school, I would bring back the wax paper, carefully folded and the paper bag my lunch was in to be reused for another lunch.

One year our family vacationed during the summer in the desert. It was very hot. Mama baked a birthday cake for me by putting it in the ground.

Aaron: A son remembers his father

The synagogues were full on Friday nights and Saturday. I would learn and study Torah with my father on Friday night and Saturday morning.

Aaron: A nephew remembers his uncle

Uncle Isaac gave a Mishna class for the community. It was a very popular class.

SARA 'SADIE' WEITZ GOLDBERG

Sara 'Sadie' Weitz was born in Austria, Oct 8, 1910 and died August 15, 1998 in Santa Barbara, California. Sarah was 12 years old when the family moved from Canada to Los Angeles. She was very much into literature, loved to read and adored opera. She attended Los Angeles High School and then went on to Polytech College where her field of interest was cultural Arts. She married Samuel Goldberg, Sept 8, 1935 in L.A. He was a commercial photographer.



*Samuel and Sara's wedding 1935
Back row standing: Samuel, Sarah, Zecharia, Dorothy
Front row sitting: Minnia, Earl Aaron 'Moishe'*

They had two daughters, Marilyn Ann, born Dec 14, 1936 and Alice Goldberg, born 1948 in L.A.

Alice: A daughter remembers her mother

I started ballet at 3 years old. My mother made all my tutu's and my costumes. At school we were given a theme, 'Baby Dolls' to create a work of art. Mother made a cradle out of tin cans. She used some of the netting that was left over from my tutus to cover the cradle. It was beautiful.



Sara and Alice (Alice is 14 months old)



Marilyn, Sara, Samuel, Alice 1945

DOROTHY 'DAISY' WEITZ MODESTI MARGOLIN

Dorothy 'Daisy' Weitz was born Dec 28, 1921 in Montreal, Canada. She attended Los Angeles High School where she met her first husband. She was 19 years old when she married Merlyn Modesti on Aug 20, 1940 in Los Angeles. He had been an air force pilot but became a truck driver. They lived at 4607 Pickford Street in L.A. in a fourplex that Minna and Zecharia owned.

The sisters and their children were very close. Dorothy loved to knit, also with different types of fabric, she would design and make clothes. Her side hobby which she thoroughly enjoyed was making wigs and creating makeups.

Minna either left or gave Dorothy two apartment buildings. One was in North Hollywood and the other one was also in the Valley.

They had two sons, Terrance Alan 'Terry' and Brett Darci. Dorothy divorced Merlyn and married Melvin Margolin on Aug 30, 1959. He was a meat cutter.

Dorothy enjoyed entertaining. Both of her sons were Bar Mitzvah and their parties were celebrated at the Sportsman Lodge in the San Fernando Valley.

Alice: A niece remembers her aunt

Aunt Dorothy made me a green felt poodle skirt with a large yellow poodle on it. She also knitted me a yellow angora short sleeve sweater to complete the outfit. Loved that skirt.



PASSOVER 1946
For left: Sara, Minna, Zacheria, Alice, Merlyn, Dorothy, Marilyn

EARL AARON 'MOSHE' WEITZ

Earl Aaron 'Moshe' Weitz made his appearance on July 22, 1927 in Los Angeles. He grew up in Los Angeles attending John Marshall. His name was Americanized to Earl Marvin.



Aaron, between 8-10 years



*Aaron at sister Sarah's wedding
1935, 8 years old*

Not only was he athletic but was on the debate team and was a boy scout. He became the school's bugler blowing the horn when the flag was raised and lowered, he also played trumpet in the school's marching band.



Earl Aaron 'Moshe' Weitz

After school he attended Beth Jacob Schul for his Torah studies. He was a very good student and both Rabbi Berman and Rabbi Dolgin encouraged him to go further with his studies. They spoke to Zecharia and suggested sending him to a school in Chicago where he would attend Yeshiva early mornings then nine to three a secular school and from four to seven Yeshiva. Rabbi Dolgen was from Chicago. His mother still lives there. She would find a good kosher boarding house and promised to take good care of him. He was sixteen in 1943, when he left for Chicago. WWII was on its second year, and although he was too young to enlist, he helped out in the summer working on farms to harvest the crops.



One day he met another boy who was working alongside him. This young man wasn't Jewish. He asked Earl how you say rain in Yiddish. Earl said 'geshem.' The boy got down on his knees praying for rain: geshem, geshem, geshem.' The heavens opened and it started pouring, the ground was soaked: they couldn't work the fields for a few days. There was motive for his praying for rain, three days of rest.

Upon completing high school, Earl went to New York to Yeshiva Torah Vodaas. Rabbi Yaakov Kaminitzky, a re-known teacher, became his mentor. He applied to Yeshiva University, was accepted and continued his education. He became very interested in medicine and psychology; He was in premed. At this school, he could combine both. His dream, finding a cure for cancer. Here he also studied for his Rabbinic ordination.

A fellow student became ill and came to Aaron for help. He needed a specialist and didn't know how to find one. In order to help his friend, Aaron did his research. He learned that Rabbi David Twersky was the best 'go to' person. He specialized in research and then

contacted doctors. His relationship in the future with Rabbi Twersky would direct him to his life's work.

In 1951, he received word that his father was ill and needed surgery. From 1951 until Zecharia's death on Sept 23, 1954, he travelled back and forth between New York and Los Angeles. In between trips, he was introduced to a lovely lady, Cheindy (Shaindel) Rottenberg. She was born in Belgium where her mother's family was involved in the diamond business, her father was a Torah scholar. With WWII in Europe and what was happening to the Jews there, the family decided it was time to leave. As luck would have it, they were able to get reservations on the last train out of France. She was very religious, intelligent and soft spoken. Aaron and Cheindy were married in 1955. Minna, Sara and Dorothy travelled across country to be with them on this momentous occasion.





*Aaron (standing cutting Challah) Cheindy, Rosa (bride's mother)
Minna*



One week after the wedding

In 1958 Abraham Zev was welcomed into their family.

Earl kept commuting between New York and Los Angeles after his father's death, as Minna needed his help. During his time in Los Angeles, he accepted the position of Executive Director for Toras Emet, an elementary school for both girls and boys. This could solve his commuting problem. In 1960 he packed up Abraham Zev and Cheindy and moved to Los Angeles where they could help care for Minna.

In late 1961, he and Cheindy were asked to start the first Bais Yaakov in Los Angeles. The name comes from a verse in the book of Exodus, 'House of Jacob.' In commentaries on the Bible, it refers to the female segment of the Jewish Nations. It was an ultra-orthodox Jewish elementary and secondary schools. There were Bais Yaakov throughout the world. It was a revolutionary approach to Jewish women's education. The Bais Jacob form of education was started by a woman after WWI and was considered a revolutionary approach to Jewish women's education. It was badly needed so that Jewish women's education was comparable to boys cheder and Talmud Tora schools. At this time, there was a high rate of assimilation among girls due to the secular influence of non-Jewish schools they were attending. The schools' primary purpose is to prepare students to be contributors to family and community as Jews, wives, professionals and mothers. Bais Yaakov girls are taught to Tanakh through the use of Jewish commentaries, with a major focus on Rashi. Cheindy helped out, she also had progressive ideas about education and developed innovative teaching materials for young children. The 60's were an exciting time for Aaron and Cheindy. She helped design the building and create a curriculum. She included extra curriculum activities which greatly appealed to the students, like skiing. This school lasted from 1961 to 1971 then, due to lack of funding, closed its doors. It was later reopened and Aaron and Cheindy continued to be involved in running the school until they left Los Angeles and returned to New York. The High School continues until today.

Minna died April 8, 1969 surrounded by her family. She was buried in Los Angeles. She had expressed her desire to be buried in Israel. Her final resting place is 'Hamenuchos' (mountain resting place) in Jerusalem.

When Cheindy was pregnant with their youngest child, Aaron had a dream about his mother Minna 'Miriam.' She told him that the baby would be a girl and they should name her 'Miriam.' She also told him that Miriam would be smart and easy to raise. They did and she was.

Between 1961 and 1970 five more children arrived to complete their family: Sarah Hendel, Chana Blima, Zechariah, Rivka and Miriam.

In 1971, Earl and Cheindy once again packed up their family and returned to New York. He was the executive director of two Jewish Elementary schools. He reconnected with Rabbi Twersky who requested his assistance in Twersky's work of helping sick people acquire the right medical care. In 1978, the family moved to Monsey, New York.

Rabbi Aaron Weitz with his vision, and a desire, started a grass root organization in his basement and developed it into a blessing. The days of the basement are long gone as they have office locations in many cities statewide in Canada, Israel, Antwerp, Mexico City and Zurich. Their humble beginnings helped ground their cause, ECHO National Institute for Health. This Organization is committed to helping patients and their families in finding the best medical care possible. The organization has dedicated themselves to answering medical questions, providing personal care, making certain that their families know their options and having the ability to refer their patients to the appropriate specialists. They are trained to answer questions regarding medical technology, procedures, therapies and medications.

Cheindy passed away on June 27, 2002. Rabbi Aaron passed away on June 8, 2016. Their lifetime of caring for others continues to inspire their children.

Chana shared this with me –

About her mother Cheindy:

She was a deeply compassionate, perceptive and a sensitive person. She welcomed her many guests with warmth and went out of her way to meet both practical and emotional needs.

About her father Aaron:

ECHO would receive calls from doctors who were expert specialists in their fields but needed a referral for an expert in another area of specialization. Doctors themselves have come to appreciate ECHO's work. Aaron was a people's person. He provided not only medical advice but a listening ear, encouragement and guidance. Noah Weinberg, Commissioner of Dept of Social Services said of Rabbi Weitz, 'He is one of the few people that started an organization for the benefit of people and has remained that way.' He never benefited from it personally. He was gentle, soft spoken, compassionate and an idealist. He wanted to make a difference in this world and achieved that goal in the multitudes he helped. The work of ECHO continues today. It is run by Aaron's son's Zev and Zecharia.

In our home years ago, we had 3 wall phones which rang constantly. People called at all hours seeking assistance with medical issues. Cheindy, our mother, took each call graciously, doing her best to get a full picture of what the person needed and helped them connect with her husband Aaron. She taught us from a young age to take the many calls that came into our home with graciousness, caring and helpfulness. Aaron, our father, would never say to callers, "I am eating supper now, can you call back later?" When he answered calls, he had all the time in the world. He really cared.

These memories of his childhood, Earl Aaron Moshe shared with his children.

I loved animals. I had dogs, cats and chickens. I also had a loft over my garage with 40 homing pigeons. I was part of a club, with other friends involved in activities with the pigeons. In order to support these activities, I worked in the summer in a drug store for three cents and hour. I also had a pet snake. I attended Hebrew School after I finished my public-school studies. One day I brought my pet snake to Hebrew School. I put it in my shirt. During class, the snake poked his head out of my shirt. My teacher was not amused and sent me home!

I slept on the porch, outdoors. I would look up at the stars and wonder about G-d. I said to myself, "I can't really make a decision about that until I learn more."

Three times I felt my life was saved. I was born with the umbilical cord around my neck and survived. In my teens, I went swimming at the beach in Santa Monica and got pulled into an undercurrent. I was pulled out to the ocean and couldn't get back. Suddenly I felt myself being thrown out of the undercurrent and was able to get back to shore. As a child, I was at another home with a gun. I played with the gun, pulled the trigger. It turned out that the gun had been loaded, but misfired and no one was harmed.

PICTURE GALLERY
ZECHARIA, MINNA'S FAMILY



Zecharia and Alice at 21/2 years old



Minna and Alice 21/2 years old



Cheindy, Aaron, (sitting) Minna, and Zev



*Abraham and Freyda's wedding
1987*

*Standing from left to right: Zecharia, Abraham Zev, Freyda, Chana
Blima*

*Sitting from left to right: Sara Hendel, Rivky, Grandmother
Rottenberg, Miriam*



*Cheindy, Miriam, Aaron
Miriam's Wedding*



*Sara Hendel and Meyer's wedding
2012*

These are Freyda and Abraham Zev's children

*Left to right: Shoshana, Rochel Leah, Freyda, Sara Hendel, Meyer,
Abraham Zev, Mordechai*



*Dorothy, Sarah, Minna, Herman Weitz, (cousin) Marilyn,
Two children hugging: Alice, Terry
1948*

A Big Thank You

.... To all of the cousins who have been with me on this incredible journey into the past. I made myself a nudge with all the phone calls, pushing you into going through your family pictures, unearthing forgotten boxes in garages and looking way back in your closets for boxes of goodies. I tried to stimulate your memories into recalling stories about your parents and Babu and Zeyda, Zecharia and Minna. You have all met the challenge and slowly came up with wonderful stories.

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*Shirley Gantzig
Karen Gantzig
Roz Tanner
Susan Bernstein
Steven Gould
Ted Weitz
Julie Weitz
Ileene Morris
Freyda Weitz*

*Gerald Gincig
Bill Gincig
Judy Weitz
Alan Weitz
Alan Aronoff
Chana Blima Weitz
Jeffrey Weitz
Alice Kimmel
Audrey Weiner*

DISCLAIMER

This family history is based on family lore. Documentation has been provided, as much as our research would allow. Dates maybe off a little due to the different calendars used at the time.

