

A Living Memorial in their own words

The Smolarz Family

Meyer and Rosalie Smolarz (Lefkovich) were living in Krzeszowice, Poland at the start of World War II. They had seven children, Solomon, Sara, Anna, Leon, Eddie, Samuel and Regina. Meyer and his sons were roofers/sheet metal workers. Meyer's parents, David and Esther, had the surname "Lefkovich". However to avoid anti-Semitic persecution, Meyer changed their name to "Smolarz" which in Polish means, "one who deals in coal tar pitch", as a roofer would.

At the time of the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939, Leon was serving in the Polish cavalry in the area of Bielsko-Biala. He was captured by the Germans, sent to a Prisoner-of-War camp, identified as Jewish, and then sent to a slave labor camp. He ended up in Concentration Camp Plaszow, near Krakow, working at a cable factory. On August 10, 1944, when the Russian Army came close to Plaszow, Leon was marched to Mauthausen in Austria. He survived the death march but many concentration camp inmates died along the way. There Leon worked digging tunnels for storing ammunition. From Mauthausen, he was sent to Gusen, where he was reunited with two of his brothers. Eddie had heard rumors that Solomon might be there and while searching for him, he found Leon, who was gravely ill and malnourished. Eddie and Solomon helped Leon regain his health in part by sharing their meager food rations with him.

Meyer's parents were David and Esther Lefkovich. Meyer was one of three children. Rosalie, and her husband Abraham had a daughter, Frances. Samuel and his wife had two children, Solomon and Sarah. Meyer died of typhus in the Plaszow concentration camp in 1943, at the age of 55. The rest of his family was killed in concentration camps.

Rosalie's parents were David and Gitel (Alerhand) Langsam. Rosalie was one of five children. Regina and Adolph were unmarried; Herman and his wife Yetta had three daughters. Cila and her husband Samuel Welber had two daughters. Rosalie was murdered in the Majdanek concentration camp at the age of 53. The rest of her family was murdered in Auschwitz.



(left)
Samuel Smolarz,
Kreshov, Poland,
circa 1930's.
Brother of Leon,
Edward, and
Solomon. Perished
in the Holocaust.



(right)
Anna Smolarz,
Kreshov, Poland circa
1930's. Sister of
Leon, Edward, and
Solomon. Perished in
the Holocaust.

The fate of the Meyer and Rosalie's children are as follows:

Sara, born 9/28/13, was married to Adolph Horszowski. Their daughter Esther was born in December of 1938. All three were murdered in the Majdanek concentration camp in 1943.

Anna, born 7/15/15, was married to Tulek Rozenbaum, a furrier. Their son, Yakov was born in 1939. All three were murdered during the Judenrein ("cleansed of Jews") in the Krakow ghetto in 1942.

Samuel, born 1/19/25, would often sneak out of the ghetto to meet up with friends but he always came home. One night he did not return. He is presumed to have been murdered.

Rivka was born 4/12/29. She was murdered in the Majdanek concentration camp in 1943.

After the war the surviving Smolarz brothers, Leon (September 17, 1917), Solomon (November 18, 1911) and Eddie (March 31, 1920), went to the Wegscheid DP camp in Linz, Austria, where Leon met and married Regina Dawidowicz. Leon and Regina decided to move to the Holyoke/Springfield area because they each had family in there. Regina's Aunt Mildred had moved to Holyoke before the war. Leon's cousins, the Rothman family lived in Springfield. They came to Holyoke in 1949 then moved to Springfield where Solomon and Eddie joined them shortly thereafter. Leon and Regina had three children, Larry, Rosalind and Sharon. See *Dawidowicz* page for Regina's story.

Solomon married Ella, also a survivor, in Europe after the war. The first of their two children, Pearl (now Monique), was born in Europe. Their son, Myron, was born in Springfield.

Eddie married Janice, who he met in Springfield. They had two children, Mark and Robin. They moved to Baltimore, MD in 1962.



Meyer and Rosalie Smolarz, Kreshov, Poland circa 1930's. Parents of Leon, Edward, and Solomon. Perished in the Holocaust.



Seated from left to right: Regina, Leon and Ella Smolarz; standing from left to right: Eddie and Solomon Smolarz.