

Transcript:

Sonya DuBois

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Interviewer: When did you leave Europe? When did you leave home?

Sonya DuBois: '52 and we went to New Jersey. I go to school there and...

Interviewer: Why did they leave?

Sonya DuBois: The trite comment that everybody uses is to give my child a better chance in life. Pop was a carpenter and there weren't many jobs around. He was given a job on the Holland America Line as a ship's carpenter. I used to hear the Love Boat kind of stories before they became a thing on TV. And that job was obtained through my natural family. I mean it's just...and distant, distant relation was a big muckety muck on the Holland America Line and he made a job available for him and he sailed for what...when he started in '48 I think and that lasted for about three years when they started making a decision to move. And in 1952 our sponsor was also...she's a sister to my grandmother and I never knew it. It's her granddaughter who contacted me in '98 and said I think we may be cousins, so I think she's second cousin, I'm not quite sure how that, you know...since I'm an only child, I never had a family, it's kind of hard to figure out how that works.

Interviewer: So far as they were no other survivors that...

Sonya DuBois: No, what is...because I've gotten some documentation. She's a wonderful, Bev is wonderful genealogist and has a packet this fat and it shows that my dad had a sister who was not married during until after the war or during the war and they both were killed, then there was a

middle child born that didn't live. It was a stillbirth. So it's he and his sister. Mother was from a large family, she was one of five. And everybody did the natural thing, gathered their children around and went because when we last went to Holland, I was so hoping that somebody did the brave thing, you know, gave their kid away and somehow I had a first cousin somewhere, but there were three boy cousins out of two...two marriages and they perished as well. They were...one was, as the records read about 4...they were 4, 10 and 12, all boys. One renamed after my grandfather, died in the Soviet War. You know, Can you imagine giving your only child, your baby away?

Interviewer: Every time I hear those kinds of stories I'm just dumbfounded.

Sonya DuBois: Yeah. And I didn't fully understand that until I had grandchildren of my own. And I have little, you know, I have three little grandsons and I know what a 20-month-old is like. You know they just dote on their mother, you know. Who's idea it was, you know, I'm sure they...I'm sure they agreed on it, but when I talk about it, I always say, "Daddy gave me away." And for a long time when I first started thinking about that I was very upset and very hurt.

Interviewer: Sure. When did you found out?

Sonya DuBois: I want to talk to Don.

Interviewer: I'm sorry, I'm just being curious. It's just of course...you know

Sonya DuBois: Almost when I was...before we came to the states.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Sonya DuBois: I was nearly 12 years old, but it was handled in a very offhand manner just...and that's why I'm saying hidden children have their own unique

little family. You know, I didn't physically suffer like people who were in camp, so do I have a right to call myself a survivor, yeah you bet I do, but it took me a long time. I'm just now beginning to justify that feeling.

Interviewer: Sure. Sure.