

Surviving Liberation

"They made us feel like we should apologize to them for surviving."
Marie Midler Gross - 2004

May 1945-July 1945 —Because of the fierce prejudice and anti-Semitism by the local Polish population in Pabianice, the family decides to leave the area. They travel to Germany.



Marie and Eugenia standing in front of their house, circa 1945.

July 1945-1951—The family travels to the Fohrenwald displaced persons (DP) camp outside of Munich, Germany. Seventeen year old Marie lives in an international refugee organization (IRO) house with Halina and Eugenia. While attending dental school near the DP camp, Marie meets another survivor, Arthur Gross and shortly a relationship is developed.



October 29, 1949—Wedding of Marie (age 21) and Arthur Gross at Fohrenwald DP Camp.

Arthur and Marie probably in Germany, circa 1950.



Marie onboard the *General S.D. Sturgis*, 1951.



February 1951 —Shortly after graduating dental school, they are sponsored by a “cousin” in the USA. Marie and Arthur travel to Bremerhaven to emigrate to the US on the ship *General S.D. Sturgis*, arriving in New York on February 19, 1951. Previously, Eugenia emigrated alone to New York in 1949 followed by Halina and husband Frank Ruttner in 1950. Reunited, the five live together in the same house in Brooklyn.

1951-1956 —While living in New York, Arthur completes a second dentistry program at NYU. Marie works as a dental assistant. Eugenia remarries.

September, 1956 —First son Jeffrey is born on the 16th, in New York. Arthur enlists in the US Army on the 26th as a dentist, and is stationed in Munich, Germany.

January 3, 1957 —Eugenia Midler Baum dies of ovarian cancer at age 52 in New York.

April 12, 1960 —Brian, the second son, is born while the Gross family is stationed in Munich, Germany.

1961 —Marie graduates from medical school in Munich, Germany and changes her career. The family moves back to the United States. Marie practices psychiatry and Arthur is an army dentist, and later a dental microbiologist at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.



Jeff Gross' Bar Mitzvah, Philadelphia, PA, 1969.

1974-1983 —Marie and Arthur divorce in November, 1974. Arthur remarries to Elizabeth McGowan in 1976. He is later stationed at Fort Jackson in Columbia, SC, retiring as a colonel in 1983.

July 1989 —Jeffrey and Pamela Kay Gross settle in Columbia, SC, start a retina practice, and raise a family.

1997—Marie retires her psychiatric practice in Monticello, NY and spends the winter months in Tamarac, Florida. Her devoted sister Halina soon follows to Florida, living nearby.

January 1, 2004 —Arthur Gross passes away at the age of 81.

May 2004 —Marie moves to Columbia, SC to be closer to son Jeff, Kay and their 2 children, Amy and Joel.

Elizabeth, Amy, Jeff, Marie, Joel, Brian, Kay and Arthur at Amy's Bat Mitzvah reception, Columbia, SC, 2002.

