

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Otto (Ossie) Langfelder

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Immigrant Stories Oral History project

Interview # IM-A-L-2012-026

Langfelder, an Austrian immigrant of Jewish descent, whose family came to the United States prior to World War II, was interviewed on the dates listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Immigrant Stories* Oral History project

Interview dates & location:

Date: May 31, June 7, June 18, June 25 & July 16, 2012

Location: Langfelder home in Springfield, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Carol Esarey, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: Susan Burke, ALPL volunteer

Edited by: Janice Culp, ALPL volunteer

Total Pages: 88 pgs Total Time: 1:21 + 1:35 + 1:06 / 1.35 + 1.58 + 1.1 = 4.03 hrs

Session 1: Langfelder's early life growing up in Austria

Session 2: Fleeing Austria, living in England during WW II & Immigration to U.S.

Session 3: Coming of age and adjusting to life in the U.S. as an immigrant

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on February 7, 2013.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in
Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Oswald (Ossie) Langfelder, *Immigrant Stories*, IM-A-L-2012-026

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Oswald (Ossie) Langfelder was born on August 2, 1926, in Vienna, Austria to a Lutheran mother and Jewish father and lived in Vienna until 1938, when the family was forced to flee for their lives to Switzerland and later to England. In 1940, the family immigrated to the U.S., where his father received a job opportunity in Chicago, Illinois. The family later settled in Springfield, Illinois, where Ossie attended and graduated from high school. Enlisting in the army at age eighteen and becoming a U.S. citizen, he served as a forward observer in a field artillery unit in the Pacific theater. His service experience included being one of the first occupational troops to enter Japan after the Japanese surrender at the end of World War II. Ossie returned to Springfield, where he soon married, raised a family of thirteen children, worked in the engineering field, and from 1987 to 1995 served as the mayor of Springfield. Wanting to preserve his story for his children and grandchildren, he wrote a collection of his memories, which he eventually published in a book entitled *My Incredible Journey*. Mayor Langfelder passed away on October 21, 2015.

Subject Headings/Key Words: German invasion and occupation of Austria in 1938; fleeing Austria in through Switzerland and England because of war and discrimination; refugee in England; immigration to U.S.; U.S. Army occupation of Japan; life as an immigrant and U.S. citizen; author of book, *My Incredible Journey*.

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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