

## Biography of Fred Lyon (born Fritz Lachotzki)

Fred Lyon was born in Berlin, Germany on Oct. 14, 1928, the son of Bruno and Selma Lachotzki. The early years of his childhood were happy. His family was quite well off, since the business his parents were co-owners of, a dress manufacturing company, was very successful. Although his mother and father spent much of their time at work, his aunt Thea and nanny Lina were there to take care of him and his older sister, Rosemary.

Fred began school at the local public school on Sybelstrasse, not far from their home. In 1936, however, after Jewish children were forbidden to attend public schools, he and his sister went to a private Jewish day school in Dahlem called Privat Waldschule Kaliski (PWK). 1936 was also the year Berlin held the Summer Olympics, and Fred had been very excited about attending the opening ceremonies. However, when the time came, his father told him it was too dangerous for Jews to be present at such a public occasion. Fred was bitterly disappointed.

Fred always remembered the Nazi brownshirts roaming the streets of Berlin, looking for Jews to attack. And he remembered the ugly posters of "dirty Jews" and newsboys selling Der Stuermer, the propaganda sheet of the Nazi party. Fathers of his friends were arrested, and whole families disappeared. At least their school, PWK, was a real refuge, where the children learned not just the usual subjects, but skills that would help the children survive in Palestine, if they were lucky enough to be able to emigrate there.

The Night of the Broken Glass, the synagogue the family attended, Friedens Tempel, was attacked, and because Fred's father was president of the congregation at the time, he was called to help save the Torah scrolls. Bruno took Fred along, and Fred remembered that when they got to the synagogue it was already burning, and they were unable to save the scrolls. The next morning, Bruno was arrested and taken to Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

A few months later, Fred's mother Selma was able to pay enough bribes to get Bruno out of the camp, and the family was given 48 hours to leave Germany. Selma had obtained the necessary papers to allow the family to enter England, where she had cousins who loaned the family a small cottage on the Sussex coast. It was meant to be a summer home, and therefore had no heat. It was a very uncomfortable place to spend the winter of 1939-40. Fred attended public school in the tiny village of Shoreham-by-the-Sea. Although he and Rosemary didn't know a word of English when they arrived, they became quite fluent by the time they left England for the U.S. in the late spring of 1940.

The family settled in Minneapolis, MN, where Selma had a second cousin who allowed the family to stay with him and his family when they first arrived. Fred stayed in Minneapolis for almost the rest of his life. After graduating from high school, Fred served in the U.S. Navy, graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in biology, and then became a medical doctor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, again at the University of Minnesota, graduating in 1957, and finishing his residency in 1961. Fred became a partner in an OBGYN practice and became a beloved doctor in the Minneapolis Jewish community.

Fred married Naomi Mlnarik, and they had three children: Heidi Wagner, Dan and Gregory Lyon.

During the years of the Civil Rights movement in the U.S., Fred and Naomi became very involved in their own city, working for the rights of African Americans to have access to equal housing opportunities, and supporting the first African American candidates to run for office. Fred also went to Selma, Alabama to march with Martin Luther King. After his activism became known, many African American women became Fred's patients. Fred also was an outspoken supporter of abortion

rights for women, and helped establish and run the first free-standing abortion facility between Chicago and Denver.

Fred's private practice flourished. He also became Chief of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Mount Sinai Hospital and Methodist Hospital, as well as a Clinical Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Minnesota. Fred retired from his practice in 1989.

The last ten years of his life, Fred and Naomi spent much of the year in Tucson, Arizona. Fred died in February of 2010.

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