

Peled, Aharon (Rosenfeld)

Nickname: Arke

Born 1925 in Poland

Made Aliya in 1933 to Rishon Letzion

Joined the Palmach in 1943

This is the Way it Was

I joined the Palmach in 1943 and went with the Maoz training group to Kibbutz Yagur where we were assigned to "C" Company of the Palmach. One of the unique things that united our company is the famous trek that we made from Jerusalem to Revivim, via the Judean Desert, when we carved the route of the "Descent of the Palmach", in Wadi Yorkeam. The Bedouin marveled at what we did and called it "The Jewish uphill".

For me, joining the Palmach was a gesture of my identification with the building of the State of Israel. I participated in a course of the Palyam at Caesarea and this gave me the idea of going to bring Olim to Palestine. When I was put on reserve duty I worked in the permanent staff of the Intelligence Department of the Hagana in the southern district.

During the War of Independence I joined the "Yiftach" Brigade as an officer in Brigade security and participated in the "Dani" operation and the liberation of Lod and Ramle. After this I went overseas to accompany remnants of the Holocaust to Israel. I arrived at Formia in Italy where there was a base for Aliya Bet workers and it was also a supply base for the ships of the Olim. In Naples I helped prepare the ship "Kefalos" by building the bunks for the Olim and loading it with food and water. We then sailed for Bakar in Yugoslavia. We loaded 4000 Olim from Yugoslavia and Hungary, and among the Olim were the conductor, Graziano, and Tommy Lapid.

The voyage was a difficult one as the sea was very rough and the helm broke. However, we reached Israel; there were many more who wanted to get onto the ship when we left Bakar but there was not enough room. There was a pair of twins, orphans of about 13 years of age, and they broke my heart and I had to take them onto the vessel where I hid them and took care of them. When we arrived in Israel I brought them to Youth Aliya Headquarters and saw to it that they were adopted into an Israeli family.

I am proud of the fact that I took part in the saving of the remnants of the Holocaust and I am proud that I was in the Palmach and proud of the ideals of the Palmach. As one of the generation of '48, I am proud that I was able to be a part of that "silver platter" that created the State of Israel.

When I was discharged from the army I went to work for Drom Yehuda – Eged (the national bus company A.M.) and spent many years in developing tourism in Israel. I am married and have two children and six grandchildren.