

Bendel, Uzi

Born the 28th of February 1928 in Tel Aviv
Joined the Palyam in 1945

This is the Way it Was**From the naval branch of Hapoel Tel Aviv to the Palyam**

I was born in Tel Aviv to parents, both of whom were born in Palestine. My father was born in Rosh Pinah and my mother was born in Jaffa. I completed elementary school at Tel Nordau and then studied at the Max Fine Technical School. I was a member of the nautical branch of the Noar HaOved and a member of the "Hagana" in Tel Aviv. I was mobilized into the Palyam by Shmuel Poznansky (Samek) who was in charge of the nautical branch in Tel Aviv in 1945.

When I arrived at Caesarea I was given 3 or 4 older people to instruct. I was fearful of instructing people older than myself because I thought that they wouldn't pay attention to what I said. I noticed after a short time that their attitude toward me was okay, and continued since then until I was mobilized into the navy.

In the Palyam I was used as a driver, and also took part in unloading the olim from the ships. We were caught at the Nitzanim shore while unloading the "Shabtai Luzinski" and almost the entire 4th Battalion was sent to Cyprus. When we came back, I worked on the "Shark" at smuggling olim from Cyprus.

On one voyage with the "Narcissus" we were caught in a storm while sailing from Cyprus. The engine ran in "Forward" against the waves but the vessel sailed backwards. We asked for help and the "Maoz" (K-24), with Captain Mila Brenner, came alongside and tied the two vessels together. We were then towed into Haifa. After that I worked on the "Galila" until all the camps in Cyprus were emptied. I then transferred to the navy as a sailor and finished my tour of duty there.

My military duty over, I went to work for "Dan", (the Tel Aviv Bus Company) and remained with them until I retired, and then set up my own transport company and filling station. I did reserve duty in the transport corps and ended my service as a major in the reserves.