

**Tarav, David**

Born October 15, 1927 in Beirut, Lebanon

Came to Palestine in 1934, at age 7

Joined the Palmach in 1946

Joined the Palyam in 1947

**This is the Way it Was**

I came to Palestine in 1934 when I was 7 years old. This was an illegal aliya and we came by foot with the aid of Arab smugglers.

**Personal memories**

I grew up and was educated in Haifa. When I was 11 or 12 years old I joined the Noar HaOved movement in Haifa. Through the activities of the movement I came to understand the meaning of love of nation and homeland, and to devote myself to the dream of restoring the nation of Israel to its soil after the many years of the Diaspora. This was at the beginning of the 40's. While in the Noar HaOved I also joined the Hagana, and after that the Hapoel sea sports club in Haifa. I then fell in love with the sea.

In 1945, before the end of World War II, I went with a group of friends for training at Ein Gev. Under the leader of the group, Yiftach Zaid, I worked at fishing, which was also a continuation of my connection to the sea. In 1946 we all joined the Palmach.

In 1947 I volunteered for the Palyam and that year attended a course for small boat commanders. The course was interesting and I learned many basic things connected to the sea. When the course ended I waiting at Yagur for a call to action. The call finally came.

On the 15-16 of November 1947 we left Yagur in buses and traveled north toward Nahariya. Each of us had a blanket, a bathing suit, and a towel. We arrived at Kibbutz Gaaton and received a light meal, after which Big Benny (Marshak) gave us an encouraging speech in connection with the upcoming operation. He was a powerful speaker and taught us to tell the Ma'apilim "Nisht Moire" (have no fear) in Yiddish, since most did not understand Hebrew.

We went down to the beach after dark, near Nahariya, and laid in the sand waiting the arrival of a ship with Ma;'apilim. It arrived shortly before dawn. We got into boats hidden near the shore and rowed out to the vessel. We unloaded people into the rowboats (a number of them were quite frightened) and rowed them to shore. We returned and did this a number of times. The whole operation was concluded successfully. The vessel "Aliya", ran aground on the shore and remained there as a memorial. With dawn, we returned to Kibbutz Gaaton and later continued to Kibbutz Yagur by a roundabout route.

The ship "Aliya" brought 184 Ma'apilim. This was one of the vessels that succeeded in breaking through the British blockade. We felt very good about what we had done.

I returned to Kibbutz Menara where I had become a member at the same time that I volunteered for the Palyam. In 1950 I left Menara and returned to Haifa. It was then a very difficult period in Israel, and I worked at all sort of jobs, but then became a skilled machinist-welder and found my niche in that line of work.

I married in 1953, and am the father of three children. My eldest son served in the Navy on the submarine "Leviathan". I was employed at Soltam for 22 years and then retired. Today, I live in Carmiel near my children.