ZVI WAS BORN IN HUNGARY and escaped in 1940 at age 16 with 200 other youth. Without one of the coveted “certificates” necessary to enter Palestine legally, he managed to get as far as the Lebanese border crossing at Rosh HaNikra, where a group of Catholic priests allowed him to travel as a stowaway on their bus.

Zvi joined the Palmach and eventually became a founder of Kibbutz Ein Zeitim near the beleaguered Jewish community in Tzfat. Life was especially hard on the new kibbutz, surrounded by hostile villages and with nothing to eat on some days except stale bread. He left the kibbutz shortly after the state was founded and served in Israel’s navy before becoming a high-ranking officer in the IDF. Zvi transitioned to civilian life in the 1960s and eventually became a senior manager for the Jerusalem municipality, serving under the legendary Teddy Kollek. After the Six Day War, during which he lost a son in battle, he became responsible for uniting East and West Jerusalem and ensuring the former Jordanian neighborhoods received municipal services.

Now 92, Zvi has lived in the Seattle area since 1984. He stays busy with his children’s families in Bellevue and Los Angeles, as well as speaking about his experiences and the future of Jerusalem in today’s political climate.