

Portraits

Highlighting the exceptional contribution
of European Jewish Women

Anne Frank

Diarist & victim of the Holocaust
(1929-1945)

Anne was born in Frankfurt am Main in 1929, the daughter of Otto Frank and Edith Frank-Holländer. When Hitler came to power in 1933, the family suffered severe restrictions and discrimination, and emigrated to the Netherlands, where Otto took over the management of the firm Opekta, on Prinsengracht 263 in Amsterdam. During this time, Anne was encouraged by her father to read his extensive collection of books. Accordingly, her main interest in school was literature. In 1940, The Netherlands were occupied by the Germans and she had to submit to the orders issued to the Jews. In 1942, when her older sister Margot was asked to "go to work", tantamount to being deported to a concentration camp, her parents decided to go into hiding with their daughters. The Opekta building was particularly suitable for this purpose as there was a secret store, with an entrance concealed by a bookcase, and trusted Dutch employees in the company's front house were able to supply them with food and harbour them. The Franks and Hermann and Auguste van Pels moved with their sixteen-year-old son Peter and the dentist Fritz Pfeffer to the annex. They remained in these 50 square meters for more than two years. Anne wrote her famous "Diary of a Young Girl" there.



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fe/Anne_Frank_lacht_naar_de_schoolfotograaf.jpg

Anne's transformation from a child to a woman in the cramped living space is at the heart of the diary. It contains sensitive, analytical, and self-critical reflections. Growing into womanhood, she expressed how she felt about sexuality. In 1944, her hiding place was betrayed by someone unidentified. Anne and Margot arrived at Auschwitz but were transferred in November 1944 to Bergen-Belsen. Anne died there just a month before the concentration camp was liberated by British troops. Of all the inhabitants of the Secret Annex in Amsterdam only Anne's father Otto survived the Holocaust. Miep Gies had kept Anne's diary, handed it over to Otto, and he published the book. The diary is one of the highlights of world literature. It has been translated into 70 languages. "The Diary of a Young Girl" has become a bridge between Jews and many people of other religions, cultures, or ethnicities.