

## Biography

### Anne Frank (1929-1945)

Anne Frank was a German girl who was born in 1929. She wrote a diary about her experience as a Jew during the Holocaust. Frank lived in the Netherlands when it was occupied by the Nazis during World War II (1939–1945). To avoid being captured, Frank and her family hid in the attic apartment above a business in Amsterdam for two years. The Franks were eventually found by Nazi officers and sent to concentration camps. Frank did not survive the harsh conditions of the camps. Frank's father was eventually freed from the camps. He published her diary after this. The text was later translated into English as *The Diary of a Young Girl*. Frank's diary went on to earn worldwide praise.

### Life Before Nazi Germany

Anne Frank was born Annelies Marie Frank on June 12, 1929, in Frankfurt, Germany. Her parents were Otto and Edith Frank. She and her older sister, Margot, grew up in an apartment outside of Frankfurt until Frank was five years old. At this time, Otto decided to relocate the family to the city of Amsterdam. He wanted to keep them safe. The Nazi Party, controlled by Adolf Hitler, had taken over Germany. Otto moved to Amsterdam first and then went back to the rest of the family. Frank stayed with her grandparents until her father brought her to the Netherlands in 1934.

However, the Franks' time of safety in Amsterdam did not last long. Nazi troops seized control of the city in 1940. Within two years, the Nazis had begun locating Jews and taking them to concentration camps. These camps were known for their brutal treatment of the individuals there, especially Jewish people. Camp prisoners were forced to work hard jobs for long hours. The conditions at the camp were extremely dirty, and the prisoners were fed very little. Many people died from disease and starvation. Many more were murdered by cruel guards or firing squads or were taken to gas chambers.

Frank and her family went into hiding in July 1942. This was just after her thirteenth birthday. They stayed in a secret attic apartment above the family business. They arranged to have friends bring them food and supplies. Another family, the van Pels, joined the Franks in hiding. They were also Jewish. Fritz Pfeffer, a German Jewish dentist, also joined them. The group remained in hiding from 1942 until 1944. During this time, Frank carefully recorded the events of each day in her diary.

Living in the attic was difficult. The group lived in fear of being found and had to be extremely quiet. They could not open any curtains and were rarely able to breathe fresh air. Their only contact with the outside world was with the people who were helping them. Frank was restless, and being confined in the attic wore on her as time passed. She took comfort in writing her diary entries. She also kept a separate journal. In it, she wrote short stories and quotes from books that she had read.

### Discovery and Death

Frank decided to begin editing her diary in May 1944. She wanted to become a writer one day. She planned to publish the diary as a novel when she came out of hiding. Frank's final diary entry was dated August 1, 1944. Three days later, the Franks, the van Pels, and Pfeffer were arrested. German police had received a tip about their hideout. The Franks were transported by train to the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland. In October 1944, Frank and Margot were sent to the Bergen-Belsen camp in northern Germany. Many young prisoners were sent to this camp to do labor. The sisters did not last long at Bergen-Belsen. In March 1945, both girls died of typhus. This is a disease that causes a high fever, delirium, a severe headache, and a dark red rash. Frank's mother died in Auschwitz in January 1945. Frank's father was the only survivor of the family. He was released from Auschwitz on January 27, 1945. He returned to the Netherlands in July and stayed with his former employees Miep and Jan Gies. They had helped the family while they were in hiding. Miep Gies saved Frank's diary and returned it to Otto. Frank's father read her diary. He was so moved by its contents that he decided to send it to publishers.

### Diary is Published

Frank's diary was first published as *Het Achterhuis* (The Secret Annex) in June 1947. The book was not very successful then, though. In 1952, it was published in English. The title was *The Diary of a Young Girl*. In English, the book was extremely successful. It inspired a play titled *The Diary of Anne Frank*, which opened on Broadway in 1955. The book continued to gain fame when the play was adapted into a film in 1959. The apartment that hid the Frank family was turned into a museum called the Anne Frank House. Frank's diary was translated into more than fifty languages in the years after its release.