

strike for three days. Most of the strikers were not Jewish, but they felt that what was happening to the Jews mattered to all people living in Amsterdam. It was the only such strike anywhere in Europe during World War II that protested Jews being deported to concentration camps. Still, the Nazis sent the young Jewish men to the camp and forced the strikers back to work.

When more Jews were taken to camps, the Dutch began hiding Jews in their homes. The most famous Jew in hiding was Anne Frank, a teenager who wrote a diary while hiding with her family for two years in Amsterdam.

Two women and a child are being evacuated from their home in the Dutch town of Kerkrade in September 1944.



Books and a secret passage were not enough to keep Anne Frank safe forever. Here is the bookcase that concealed a hallway to the annex where she, her family, and other refugees hid from capture by German soldiers during World War II.

The Anne Frank

by Cynthia Levinson

Anne Frank, 13, knew her family was in danger. German soldiers had rounded up other Jews in Amsterdam, and forced them onto trains to unknown destinations. No one returned.

On the morning of July 5, 1942, Anne's father said, when the time comes, "We shall disappear of our own accord and not wait until they come and fetch us." The time came sooner than they expected. That afternoon, Anne's 16-year-old sister, Margot, received orders to transfer to a forced labor camp. Instead, the Franks immediately moved into a secret **annex** behind Mr. Frank's office building at 263 Prinsengracht (prin-sen-chrach).

A narrow hallway connected the building to the annex, which was invisible from the street. Even the

door from the hall into the annex was soon hidden behind a specially built swinging bookcase.

Eight refugees squeezed into the four small rooms and attic of the annex. For the next 25 months they remained there; they couldn't make a sound during the day, go outside, or open the curtains.

Anne wrote in her diary: "Not being able to go outside upsets me more than I can say, and I'm terrified our hiding place will be discovered and that we'll be shot."

Only four employees in Mr. Frank's jam and spice business knew their boss was hiding on the other side of the wall. His assistant, Miep Gies (meep ch-ees) and the others agreed to help, although they could be sent to concentration camps if the Nazis

An **annex** is an addition to a larger building.





This statue displays the gesture of liberation. The veteran soldier pictured in front of it knows first hand how to fight for one's liberty.

Corrie Ten Boom, who lived in Haarlem near Amsterdam, wrote a book called *The Hiding Place* about her family's experiences hiding Jews behind a false wall in their house. About 40,000 Jews went into hiding all over the Netherlands, and about 15,000 of them survived until the war ended in 1945. They lived because the Dutch had the courage to resist the Nazis and do what they believed to be right.

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House

learned they were harboring Jews. Gies shopped for the refugees' food. When food became scarce, she had to bicycle long distances and share her rations with them. Anne said the pickled kale they ate one night smelled like "bad plums . . . and 10 rotten eggs."

Others helped entertain them. Anne wrote, "They come upstairs every day and . . . put on their most cheerful expressions . . . [W]hile others display their heroism in battle . . . , our helpers prove theirs . . . by their good spirits and affection."

Then, on August 4, 1944, "the door opened," Gies later said, "and a man was standing right in front of us with a gun in his hand and it was pointed at us . . ." Someone had betrayed them.

"I always emphasize that we were not heroes. We did our duty as human beings." said Miep Gies.

Of the eight refugees, only Anne's father survived. When World War II ended, he lived with Gies and her husband, and he published Anne's diary, as Anne had hoped to do herself.

The house at 263 Prinsengracht deteriorated and was nearly demolished. A newspaper stated, "The plan to demolish the Secret Annex must be stopped! If there is one place that speaks clearly of the fate of the Dutch Jews, then this is it." Supporters saved the house and, in 1960, turned it into a museum. In 1999, Queen Beatrix opened an expanded museum, which now attracts a million people every year.

Visitors can see the Secret Annex, including Anne's room, her photo collection, and diary.

They can also look through the attic window at a chestnut tree that Anne loved but could never reach.



Learn about

Anne Frank, the house where she hid, and the Netherlands during the war, at www.annefrank.org.

Cynthia Levinson writes about history, culture, and science for *FACES* and other kids' magazines.