

LEARNING WITH ANNE FRANK

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'The Annex is the ideal place to hide in', thirteen-year-old Anne Frank wrote on 11 July 1942. The Netherlands was occupied by the Nazis and in order to escape persecution, Anne went into hiding in that same Annex with her parents, her sister Margot, the Van Pels family and Fritz Pfeffer. She was to spend more than two years in this secret hiding place. She kept a diary while she was there, which would be read after the war by millions of people. In her diary, she wrote letters to Kitty, a fictitious friend, about the things that moved her, such as the arguments in the hiding place, the upbeat moments, and the invaluable support from the helpers, who brought them food. Anne Frank planned to become a famous writer after the war. But on 4 August 1944, the eight people in hiding were betrayed and arrested. Anne Frank eventually died of typhus in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

An aerial photo of the city centre of Amsterdam, 1949. ►
On this photo, Prinsengracht 263 and the annexe at the back have been marked.



15 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ANNE FRANK

1 Anne is born on 12 June 1929 in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The Frank family is Jewish.

2 In 1933, Hitler and his party come to power. They hate the Jews.

3 When Anne is four years old, she moves to the Netherlands with her parents and her sister Margot.

4 From May 1940 onwards, it's war. The Netherlands is occupied by the German army. The Nazis persecute the Jews.

5 For her thirteenth birthday, Anne gets a diary.

6 On 5 July 1942, Margot gets her call-up papers: she must report for work in Nazi-Germany.

7 On 6 July 1942, Anne, Margot, and their parents go into hiding in an empty part of her father's office building on the Prinsengracht in Amsterdam.

8 Four of her father's employees help the people in hiding: Miep Gies, Johannes Kleiman, Victor Kugler, and Bep Voskuijl. Jan Gies, Miep's husband, helps them, too.

9 Later on, they are joined in the Annex by four more people: Hermann and Auguste van Pels, their son Peter, and Fritz Pfeffer.

10 In the Annex, Anne often writes in her diary; she wants to publish a book after the war.

11 On 4 August 1944, the people in hiding are arrested. They have been betrayed.

12 It has never been clarified who betrayed the people in hiding.

13 Anne dies in February 1945 in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany.

14 Out of the eight people in hiding, Otto Frank is the only one to survive the camps.

15 After the war, Otto Frank turns Anne's diary notes into a book, 'The Secret Annex'.

Anne Frank, 1940.



ANNE AND THE HELPERS



Victor Kugler, 1900 – 1981

In 1933, Victor Kugler started working for Otto Frank's company. He was mainly occupied with the sale of spices. He often took magazines and journals to the people in hiding, to give them something to read. Every week, Anne was overjoyed when he brought her Cinema & Theater, a magazine. After the war, he explained why he had helped the people in hiding: 'I had to help them: they were my friends.'
Victor Kugler



Johannes Kleiman, 1896 – 1959

Otto Frank had known Johannes Kleiman for a long time. In 1923, Otto Frank had tried to start a bank in Amsterdam and had run into Johannes Kleiman in the process. From 1940 onwards, Kleiman worked for Otto Frank's company.

'The reason I cooperated in taking care of Otto Frank and his family during the time they had to go into hiding, is that I had come to know him as a dedicated businessman and a very decent and helpful person, for which qualities he is generally known.'
Johannes Kleiman



Miep Gies, 1909 – 2010 Jan Gies, 1905 – 1993

In 1933, Miep Gies started working for Otto Frank's company. On 5 July 1942, she went to the Frank family home with her husband Jan to collect as many things as she could for the hiding place. In an interview, Miep explained how they had divided the tasks among the helpers: 'Bep took care of bread and milk. Kugler and Kleiman kept the business afloat and brought books and magazines for the people in hiding. And it was my task to provide vegetables and meat.' Miep's husband, Jan, also helped the people in the Annex. He was a member of the Resistance and could get his hands on the ration coupons you needed to buy food.

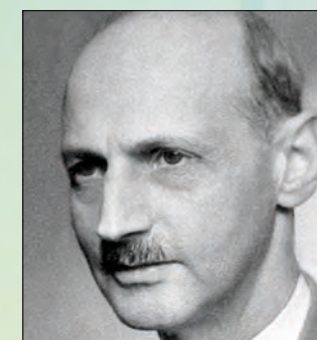
'I was able to help these people. They were powerless and didn't know where to go. I always stress the fact that we are no heroes. We did our human duty: Helping people in need. Many people didn't do that, some out of fear. If people are afraid, you cannot hold it against them. And if they admit to it honestly, as a friend of mine did at the time, I think that's brave, too.'
Miep Gies



Bep Voskuijl, 1919 – 1983

Bep Voskuijl started working for Otto Frank's company before the war. She was the youngest staff member. When the Frank family went into hiding in the secret annex, she had just turned 23. According to Otto Frank, Anne and Bep got along famously and could often be found in a corner whispering about things. After the war, Bep was often asked questions about Anne and the Secret Annex. As she wrote in a letter to Otto Frank, 'it always makes me think of everything that happened' and that she had witnessed herself. 'This great sadness will never leave my heart.'

Bep Voskuijl



Otto Frank

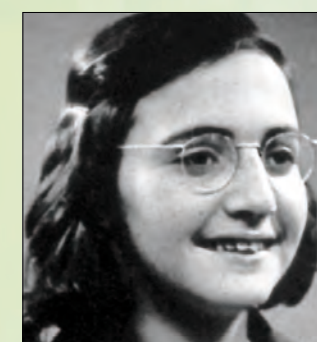
Otto speaking of the helpers

'I soon realised that the time would come when we would have to go into hiding to escape the danger of deportation. After having discussed the matter thoroughly with Mr Van Pels, we came to the conclusion that the solution would be to hide in the annex of our office building at Prinsengracht 263. This would only be possible if Mr Kleiman and Mr Kugler would be willing to take full responsibility for everything connected with our hiding and if the two secretaries of the firm would cooperate. These were Mrs Miep Gies and Miss Elisabeth Voskuijl. All four agreed immediately, although they were fully aware of the dangerous task they would take upon themselves in doing so. Under Nazi law, everyone helping Jews was severely punished and risked being put in prison, being deported or even shot.'

Otto Frank in a letter to Yad Vashem, 10 June 1971.



Edith Frank-Holländer



Margot Frank



Anne Frank

Anne speaking of the helpers

'They come upstairs every day and talk to the men about business and politics, to the women about food and wartime difficulties, and to the children about books and newspapers. They put on their most cheerful expressions, bring flowers and gifts for birthdays and holidays, and are always ready to do what they can. That's something we should never forget: while others display their heroism in battle or against the Germans, our helpers prove theirs every day by their good spirits and affection.'

Anne Frank, The Secret Annex, 28 January 1944.



Fritz Pfeffer



Hermann van Pels



Auguste van Pels-Röttgen



Peter van Pels

The Annex

- Warehouse
- Company kitchen
- Door to Otto Frank's private office
- Victor Kugler's office
- Office of Johannes Kleiman, Miep Gies and Bep Voskuijl
- Storage area
- Attic
- Landing with the revolving bookcase leading to the Secret Annex
- Washroom
- Otto, Edith and Margot Frank's room
- Room that Anne Frank shared with Fritz Pfeffer
- Common living and dining room, at night the bedroom of Hermann and Auguste van Pels
- Peter van Pels's room
- Attic
- Loft

