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

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

Anne moves to the Netherlands with her parents and her sister Margot.

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

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.

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.

Anne gets a diary for her thirteenth birthday.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Anne is later joined by friends: Hanneli Goslar, Truus Wijsmuller, Willem Krabbe, Elie van de Rijt, and Jan Gies.

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

For her thirteenth birthday, Anne gets a diary.
In 1933, Victor Kugler started working for Otto Frank’s company. He was mainly occupied with the sale of spices, but he soon began to become interested in helping others. He started taking requests and contacts for the people in hiding, to give them something to read. Every week, Anne was surprised when he brought Five Children & It or The Phantom Tollbooth. Sometimes, he explained why he had helped the people in hiding. ‘You'll be happy, they are my friends,’ he said.

In 1933, Miep Gies started working for Otto Frank’s company. On 7 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 decided the tasks among the helpers. ‘The task of bread and milk went to Kugler, and he also kept the factory and company kitchen. Then there was the office of Johannes Kleiman, and Miep Gies took care of vegetables and meat. Myself and my husband had the task of taking care of the people in hiding. And it always took me to provide vegetables and meat.’

Younger workers proved to be the backbone of the Resistance. They were the ones who took care of the feeding of the people in hiding. And it was Mychal who provided vegetables and meat. Miep and Jan’s task was to provide vegetables and meat for the people in hiding. And it always took me to provide vegetables and meat.

Miep Gies was a brave woman. She admitted to it honestly, as a friend of mine did at the time, I think that’s out of fear. If people are afraid, you cannot hold it against them. And if human duty: Helping people in need. Many people didn’t do that, some where to go. I always stress the fact that we are no heroes. We did our best to help them and didn’t know anything about it. Miep’s husband, Jan, also helped the people in the Annexe. He was a member of the Resistance and could get his hands on the ration coupons promised to the Jews.

‘I was able to help these people. They were powerless and didn’t know what to do. I helped them by giving them food and by helping them in any way I could. Many people didn’t do that, some out of fear. I’ve often visited them, but they always have their hands on the ration coupons promised to the Jews.

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 I have a great deal of taste.

Johannes Kleiman, 1896 – 1959

Otto Frank had known Johannes Kleiman for a long time. In 1933, Otto Frank had tried to start a bank in Amsterdam and failed at that. He then started working 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 I have a great deal of taste.

Johannes Kleiman

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, Bep took care of bread and milk. Kugler and Kleiman kept the 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. There was this Bep Voskuijl and this Elisabeth Voskuijl. All four agreed immediately and, although they were fully aware of the dangers as said, they would take upon themselves in doing so. Under these circumstances, everyone helping the Frank family proved patriotic and indeed being put in prison (being deported or even shot).

Otto Frank speaking of the helpers

I once argued 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 family would have 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. There was this Bep Voskuijl and this Elisabeth Voskuijl. All four agreed immediately, although they were fully aware of the dangers as said. They would take upon themselves in doing so. Under these circumstances, everyone helping the Frank family proved patriotic and indeed being put in prison (being deported or even shot).

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

Anne speaking of the helpers

‘They come up with ever day and talk to the women about business and politics, to the men 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. These ordinary people display their human side or against the Germans, our helpers prove theirs every day by their good deeds and affection.’