

Anne Frank was born in Frankfurt, Germany on June 12, 1929. Her father, Otto Frank, was a businessman while her mother, Edith, stayed home taking care of Anne and her older sister Margot. Anne was an outgoing and spirited child. She got into more trouble than her quiet and serious older sister. Anne was like her father who liked to tell the girls stories and play games with them, while Margot was more like her shy mother. Growing up Anne had lots of friends. Her family was Jewish and followed some of the Jewish holidays and customs. Anne liked to read and dreamed of being a writer someday.

Following the elections in Germany of 1933, which were won by the Nazi Party (led by Adolf Hitler), the Franks moved to Amsterdam in order to escape. Whilst in Amsterdam, Anne started to develop a love of reading and writing. In May 1940, the Netherlands was invaded by Germany. Laws were made to discriminate against the Jewish population. Jews throughout Nazi-occupied Europe were forced to wear a badge in the form of a Yellow Star as a means of identification, and children who wore these in school had to sit in a corner away from everyone else. Anne and her sister had to leave the school they were attending and transfer to a Jewish-only school.

Anne celebrated her 13th birthday on 12th June 1942. One of her presents was a red and white autograph book. Anne named her diary "Kitty" after a friend of hers. Each entry into her diary began "Dear Kitty". Anne wrote about all sorts of things. She detailed within her diary that she wanted to be an actress when she was old. However, her passion for films could not be celebrated as she was not allowed to visit the cinema; this was because she was a Jew. She didn't think others would be reading it. She wrote about her feelings, books she read, and the people around her. From Anne's diary we find out just what it must have been like to live in hiding for years, fearing for her life.

In July 1942, Margot, Anne's sister, was ordered to go to a labour camp. Anne's father, Otto, wasn't prepared to allow this to happen, so he came up with a plan to hide his family. On 6th July 1942, the Franks went into hiding in some rooms attached to one of Otto's companies. Four of Otto's employees – Victor Kugler, Johannes Kleiman, Miep Gies and Bep Voskuijl – along with Jan Gies and Johannes Hendrik Voskuijl, were the only people who knew that the Franks were hiding in the rooms. They became the Franks 'helpers' and were their only link to the outside world. Anne had to leave her cat, Moortje, behind, which she was devastated about.

Others were told that the family had fled to Switzerland. The Franks had to be careful not to be caught by the Germans. They covered all the windows with thick curtains. During the day they had to be extra quiet. They whispered when they talked and went barefoot so they could walk softly. At night, when the people working in the business below went home, they could relax a bit, but they still had to be very careful. Soon more people moved in with the Franks. They needed a place to hide, too. The Van Pels family joined just a week later. They had a 15 year old boy named Peter. This was three more people in that cramped space. Then Mr. Pfeffer moved in. He ended up rooming with Anne and Margot moved to her parent's room.

On 4th August 1944 the Franks hiding place was discovered by German police. Nobody knows how the police got the information about the hiding place. Miep Gies was questioned about her involvement with the Franks, but was never arrested. She went to the Franks hiding place and gathered up all of Anne's papers and her diary. She was intending to return them to Anne after the war. Miep Gies gave Anne's diary to Otto. Anne's diary was first published on 25th June 1947, in Dutch.