

Deepening Understanding

UKS2 Non-fiction Text

Biography of Anne Frank by Laura Curtis



"The good news is that you don't know how great you can be! How much you can love! What you can accomplish! And what your potential is!" Anne Frank

Anne Frank will forever be remembered for her inspirational diary which was written during her time in hiding throughout the Holocaust in World War 2. Since its discovery, her diary has been read by millions and to this day, it remains an enduring symbol of hope and optimism in the face of terrible adversity.

Anne (born Annelise Marie) Frank was born on 12th June 1929, in Frankfurt, Germany. Whilst growing up, Anne and her older sister Margot were cared for by her mother (Edith) whilst her father (Otto) ran a small business. Anne loved nothing more than listening to her father's stories and she dreamed of growing up to be a writer herself.

Anne had a happy start to life. She was an outgoing, spirited child who enjoyed playing with her many friends. Being Jewish, Anne and her family followed many of the traditional Jewish traditions and customs. However, when Anne was only four years old, Adolf Hitler became leader of the Nazi Party in Germany. He soon began expressing his hatred for people of the Jewish faith, blaming them for all of the country's misfortunes. Consequently, in 1934, Otto made the decision to move the family to the Netherlands in the hope of finding safety.



Settling quickly into Amsterdam - which became their new town - Anne learnt the language and enjoyed school, where she had many friends. The Frank family felt safe there away from the persecution. However, in May 1940, Germany, which was intent on dominating the whole of Europe, invaded the Netherlands. Unfortunately, Anne and her family did not have time to escape and it was at this time that Anne's life was to change forever.

Under the discriminatory Nazi regime, the Jews were not allowed to have jobs or have businesses. As result, Otto Frank handed over his company to his non-Jewish friends. Despite this daily discrimination, the Franks tried their hardest to continue living their lives. It was on Anne's 13th birthday that she was given the gift of a red diary - a diary that was to ultimately become one of the most treasured possessions in the world.

Throughout 1940, the Nazi's persecution of the Jews intensified: they were forced to wear yellow stars - the Star of David - so those of a Jewish faith could be easily identified. One day, an order came through that Margot was to be sent to a concentration camp; her parents were adamant that they would not let this happen. Therefore, they took the brave decision to go into hiding. They had good foresight to prepare a secret hideout - the entrance was hidden behind a bookcase. The place itself was small: the first floor had a bathroom and a small kitchen; the second floor had two bedrooms (one for Anne and Margot, and one for their parents); and at the very top of the building was the attic, where Anne would go for some solitude. To minimise the suspicion of carrying a suitcase upon entering the hideout, they had all worn their clothes in layers. In addition, to ensure their hideout was not discovered by the Germans, the Franks took obvious precautions: they walked barefoot; they spoke very quietly during the day, whilst people worked in the offices below; and they covered the windows with thick curtains.

After only a week of living in the hideout, another family joined as they too needed a place to hide. They were the Van Pells family, which included a fifteen-year-old boy (Peter) with whom Anne became firm friends. The final Jew to join them was a gentleman named Mr Pfeffer. Eight occupants living in such a cramped space was not easy. However, they had no choice due to their lives being at stake.

For nearly two years, Anne, her family and the other occupants all lived together and all the time, Anne wrote about the experience. She wrote in



a diary that she never expected to be read and did not believe that anyone would actually be interested in the 'musings of a thirteen-year-old school girl'. She gave her diary a name and each entry began with the words 'Dear Kitty'. Her diary was her solace from the hardships that she had to endure every day yet it was not a place where she outpoured her grief and negativity. Instead, it was where, amongst detailing ordinary mundane happenings, she captured her hopes and her dreams. Her quotes reveal both her resilience and strength to continue living her life. With courage, she believed that one day she would be free to walk in the sunshine once more: "I don't think of all the misery but of the beauty that still remains...where there's hope there's life."

Until the summer of 1944, Anne, along with her family and all of the other people in the secret hideout, remained undiscovered as well as safe in their little hideout. They knew that the war was drawing to a close; they knew that the Germans were being defeated by the Allies. They had hope. It seemed that they would all survive and could be free. Unfortunately, this was all to change on 4th August 1944 when Anne was only 15. Her hiding place was discovered and she - along with all her family - were sent to a Nazi concentration at Bergen-Belsen where she later contracted Typhus. Regretfully, Anne had survived for so long in hiding but she died when the end of the war was so near - she sadly passed away (along with her sister) only one month before the camp was liberated by Allied soldiers.

Anne's father - Otto Frank - was the only family member who was to survive the war and upon his return to Amsterdam, discovered his daughter's diary safe in the attic. The book was later published under the name of 'Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl' and it has since gone on to be published in 65 different languages all around the world.

Anne Frank remained positive in the face of almost unimaginable peril: at any moment, she knew that she and her family could be discovered yet she continued to believe and have faith that all would be well. Her quotes and her strength and her courage that she poured into her now world-famous diary will forever remain as an inspiring testament to the power of hope when life is hard. Even though she had few years upon this earth, her legacy will last forever.

