

Jan and Jansje Sevinga-Brouwer

This tape has no time markings.

Recorded 7/17/88

The families of the couple originated from Friesland one of the two northernmost provinces of Holland. Jan's family were farmers, while Jansje's father was an office worker for a fuel distributing company. Jan and Jansje met during the war when both were involved in the resistance. Jansje's father was exceptionally active in finding hiding places for Jews; 100 Jews mostly from the western part of the country, were placed by him and all of them survived the war. They kept two little girls for two years, later during the last months of the war joined by their mother. Jansje's parents were honored by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

When asked about specific instances of their participation in the resistance the couple was reluctant to talk about it. Jan mentioned that he was involved in "general resistance" involved with rescuing downed allied pilots and helping people in hiding. Jan belonged to a so-called "knok ploeg" (fighting band) and after raids he would stay at Jansje's house.

Jansje related that she and her father were arrested in connection with possession of illegal rationing coupons and were held in a Dutch prison for seven months. Fortunately the Dutch police did not discover their connection to the efforts of hiding Jews. An attempt by Dutch resistance fighters to rescue them failed.

At one point Jan remarked that although he is Dutch reformed, he felt that the churches did not much to help rescue Jews. He also felt that the people were really "one" during those days.

After the war Jan was drafted into the army and saw service in the Netherland Indies till 1948 when he joined the national police force.

Jan and Jansje were married in 1949 and now have 4 adult children. He is now retired.

The interviewr asked: can it happen again?

Jan: yes, the Jews are the chosen people, and other peoples don't like it.