

Wilhelmina Juhlin
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Summary

Wilhelmina Juhlin, born on November 14, 1939 near Alkmaar, Netherlands, discusses her parents and their condensed milk factory; the paternal and maternal sides of her family; coming from Dutch Jewish families who could trace their roots to Amsterdam in the 18th century; her family moving in with her grandparents in Amsterdam in 1942 after the ghetto was established; her brother's birth in 1941; living in hiding with a family in Amstelveen, Netherlands for about four years; staying in contact with the family who hid her; the confiscation of her parents' factory before the move to Amsterdam; police coming to the apartment in late summer 1942 and taking her and her parents to the Hollandsche Schouwburg theater in central Amsterdam, which was used as a holding place before deportations to the Westerbork transit camp; her grandparents coming to the theater to say goodbye, during which she was able to leave the theater and go home with them; her parents' deportation first to Westerbork and then to Auschwitz, where they were killed on August 8, 1942; her mother's younger sister, who was also deported to and killed in Auschwitz; attending a conference for hidden children in New York, which spurred a deeper interest in researching this part of her family history for both her and her brother; the fates of other family members; her grandparents placing her and her brother with separate family acquaintances in Amstelveen, one Catholic and one Protestant, so they could be hidden; her grandparents' deportation in 1944 to Bergen-Belsen; her grandfather's death at Bergen-Belsen and her grandmother's survival; reuniting with her grandmother and brother and immigrating to the United States, where her mother's older sister lived in the Kew Gardens neighborhood of Queens, New York, in 1946; her grandmother's life as a single parent to her and her brother; learning what had happened to her parents when she was about ten years old; her grandmother's emphasis on learning English so she and her brother would be ready to go to school; living in the same apartment building as her aunt, uncle, and cousins; how her grandmother received restitution; her grandmother's job at a jewelry firm in Manhattan, New York; visiting the Netherlands with her grandmother and brother in the early 1950s; her grandmother's death in 1988; life in hiding; food shortages and blackouts; staying in touch with the family she hid with; the family who hid her brother; occasionally visiting her brother while they were both in hiding; receiving reparations after the war from the Dutch government; attending Colby College in Waterville, Maine and studying French literature; her brother's studies in economics at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; her three children and sharing her wartime experiences with them; and her reflections on how her wartime experiences have impacted her life.