

Inge Katzenstein (born Inge Eva Berg)

Inge Katzenstein was born March 27th, 1929 in Cologne, Germany. Katzenstein lived with her family in a Lechenich (now called Erfstadt), a small town outside of Cologne. On Kristallnacht, Katzenstein's family escaped from Lechenich (where their synagogue was attacked and Jews taken prisoner). They had a non-Jewish man drive them into Cologne (while they sat on the floor of the car) where they moved into an apartment with some of their extended family. Katzenstein's father, and his brother and cousin, tried several times, and eventually succeeded in illegally crossing into Holland. They were eventually successful; however they were captured and imprisoned. They were not, however, sent back across the border, where they would be put in concentration camps. This is because Katzenstein's uncle and aunt who had previously immigrated to Holland had connections to influential people such as the queen. Katzenstein's family (Katzenstein's father and other imprisoned relations included) immigrated to Kenya before the war started on September 1st. In Kenya the Katzensteins were considered "enemy aliens", and were not allowed to leave their farm without permission. After the war, in February of 1948, the Katzensteins immigrated to America. Inge went to stenography school to become a secretary. In 1951, Inge moved to Vineland, New Jersey (where her parents had bought a chicken farm) and became engaged to Werner Katzenstein. Inge and her husband have three children: David, Michael, and Debbie. They have all been raised as Orthodox Jews, like their parents. Katzenstein has returned to Germany (Cologne) twice, once at the city's invitation. Both times Katzenstein and her family were treated "like royalty", but she was unable to shake her fear and suspicion.