

**RG-50.407.0225**

**Oral History Summary: Frankie Paper, October 30-31, 2001**

Part 1.

Frankie Paper, née Szkop, born in Paris, France on February 24, 1937 to Schal [PH] and Gabrielle Szkop, discusses: an older sister, Anita, and a younger sister, Bernadette; an extended family; her parents being born in Warsaw and immigrating to Paris as children; a modest standard of living; her father being arrested and sent to Drancy in the first German sweep in Paris; her mother appealing to the Germans and securing his release; her father fleeing to the French free zone; the family escaping to join her father in the free zone; for disguise, the family adopting a solely Christian lifestyle; finding out later that her father was working with the underground; Frankie attending Christian religious education with other children in their village (located about 14 km from Limoges); the family being very careful to hide any connection to Judaism; [Responding to a question about the family's arrest in 1944] Frankie recalls: noticing a suspicious stranger; a man appearing the next day and demanding that her sister get her father home from work; the man searching the home and throwing possessions around; the man identifying the father as Jewish by making him drop his pants; her mother and father resisting and being forced with Frankie and sister Anita into the man's car; being taken to a prison in Limoges and separated from her father; her mother giving the girls parcels containing money and advising that, should they be taken anywhere by train, they should try to escape; her mother experiencing panic attacks; hearing people being shot; believing she was going to die; being shocked to be treated kindly by a German soldier who took the girls to see their father in a different part of the prison; the girls and others in the prison becoming terrified as the area came under incessant Allied bombing attacks; witnessing prisoners, including her father, being taken on work details to find unexploded bombs; being released and told simply to "go home"; going to the Red Cross and being sent to a refuge; her mother being unable to find her younger sister, Bernadette; after finding Bernadette, returning to their village with her mother and sisters; her father being freed and discovering that he had been denounced for working for the underground; concluding that her father killed the informant and continued to work for the underground; the family returning to Paris but not having a way to remain together and having to split up; Frankie and Bernadette being sent to live with a Polish woman in Angervilliers, a village not far from Paris, and having trouble adjusting; seeing movies of concentration camps and being traumatized; not knowing what it meant to be a Jew; reflecting on that time and not understanding how that short period has been able to affect her entire life;

Part 2.

Frankie and Bernadette being reunited with the family, remember it as "the beginning of good things"; returning to school; being joined in school by Bernadette; her father developing business in Australia; her father going to Australia for nine months to determine whether the family should follow; the family moving to Australia; having two daughters [in 1960 and 1962];

finding out many years later that her grandmothers had perished in the Holocaust, one in Sobibor and the other in Auschwitz;

### Part 3.

Frankie elaborates on the story of emigrating to Australia: feeling only elation at the prospect of traveling and living in Australia; arriving in Melbourne; being introduced to Judaism; attending *Habonim* (Zionist youth movement); having trouble adjusting to school; at age 16, suffering panic attacks; she and her sisters marrying Australian men; attending synagogue for the first time; attending synagogue but being irreligious; not being able to thank God, believing it to be a hypocritical act; encountering minor acts of anti-Semitism; insisting that her daughters socialize with Jewish people (not exclusively); wanting her daughters to visit Israel to have the experience of not being in a minority; still trying to understand the impact of her Holocaust experience; empathizing with current refugees and visiting detention centers; [asked if she has a message for future generations]: “Try to be tolerant. Don’t be passive . . . don’t be a bystander. Observe the Golden Rule. You need to be counted.” Shows photos of her family.