

Interviewee:	<u>VANDERHORST</u> , Arnold	Date:	January 17, 2005
Interviewer:	Natalie Packel		
Audio tapes:	2 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

## SUMMARY

Arnold Vanderhorst, born in Arnhem, Holland, July 24, 1935, shares his childhood memories of surviving World War II by living in hiding. After his family bakery was sealed by the Nazis, his mother took him to a "strange" family, the Holthuis, with whom he remained throughout the war and liberation. Both his sister and grandmother were also placed with families; however, his parents perished in Auschwitz. The Holthuis family had four children, the oldest a member of the Resistance. The father was politically active, having run for mayor of Arnhem. Arnold describes his life with them, being safe, having food and an education throughout the war, and explains that he was secure enough to play with neighborhood children despite the presence of German soldiers nearby. He was tutored by Hilda Presser, wife of photographer Sem Presser. She maintained contact with him when he later entered an orphanage. At one birthday party, photographs of children were taken professionally and turned into a book, which is in a museum in Holland. Arnold describes a brief encounter with his grandmother in the forest, when he and the Holthuis family evacuated the city.

After liberation, Arnold began an odyssey of experiences. In 1945, for reasons of health, he travelled to England, where he lived for six months. He returned to Holland, reuniting with his grandmother and sister. In 1947, the three emigrated to New York via Sweden to live with an uncle who had fled earlier. Arnold explains that after several incidents of Arnold's misbehavior, his uncle and wife insisted Arnold and his grandmother return to Holland. He describes living in several different locations including two Jewish orphanages (Koningslaan and the Aemmalann Zeven for boys) and with two different families. He details his schooling experiences. In 1954, at 19, he left the orphanage and took up residence with the Perelkamp family. He describes life with them and attending a technical school until 1956 during which time he describes having difficulty concentrating on his studies because of his loneliness. He describes a close relationship with his social worker who encouraged him to seek the help of HIAS to return to the United States. He describes psychological reactions to his wartime experiences as a young child.

He found work at a brokerage house and eventually completed his education. He married and adopted two boys. In 2004, he returned to Holland for a reunion with friends.