

## Netherlands Documentation Project Interview Summary

### RG-50.570\*0009

**Ms. Jo Wildschut** Born in  
Date interview: 21 July 2004  
Location: Gouda

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#### **Short Summary:**

Miss Jo Wildschut became a Jehovah's Witness in the 1930's. She was arrested in May 1943. She was a prisoner in Vught from the summer of 1943 until 5-6 September 1944 when she was taken to Ravensbrück.

#### **Long Summary:**

##### **Tape 1**

Miss Wildschut was from very poor background. Her father was unemployed. There were ten children. In 1934-35 she read the book *De Veensoldaten* about Jehovah's Witnesses in German concentration camps. She became interested in the Witnesses through her brother.

In 1939 Witnesses were arrested in the Netherlands for insulting a befriended head of state (Hitler). When the Germans occupied the Netherlands her father wanted to kill himself.

Jan Raapis was her teacher, she became a Jehovah's Witness. The idea of being a martyr was appealing to her.

She went into hiding because she did not want to put her parents in danger. But she kept on going from door to door to tell people about Jehovah's Witnesses. In May 1943 she was arrested in Capelle aan de IJssel. She was sent to prison in Rotterdam and then onto Concentration Camp Vught. She and her friend were the first two female Jehovah's Witnesses in Vught. They divided the barrack and began preaching. They were living in barrack 23 with about 80 people.

Ms. Wildschut talked about life in the camp, about the other prisoners. Jewish women were kept separately from non-Jews. But she was able to meet Jewish women in their barracks.

Rauter visited the camp.

About the Bunker Drama. As a punishment the camp guards had put 74 women in a very small cell. Ten of them died, one went insane. This happened when Ms. Wildschut was in the camp. She talked about the women whom she knew and who were involved.

## **Tape 2**

About the women in the camp.

September 1944, the evacuation of Vught. About the days in the train. They arrived in Ravensbrück after two and a half days.

About life in the camp, living conditions, other women, the barrack. About how she was able to meet other Jehovah's Witnesses in the camp.

She was put to work near Dachau at a farm.

About the guards in Vught.

About Jewish women in Ravensbrück.

Liberation.

### **Correct spelling of some names mentioned in the video testimony:**

Jan Raapis

Non Verstegen (?)

Mevrouw Witjas

Annie Zwart

Bep Mater

Nelly van der Landen

Ria Hillegers

Mies Merseij

Annie de Min (married Bakker)

Marie de Vries