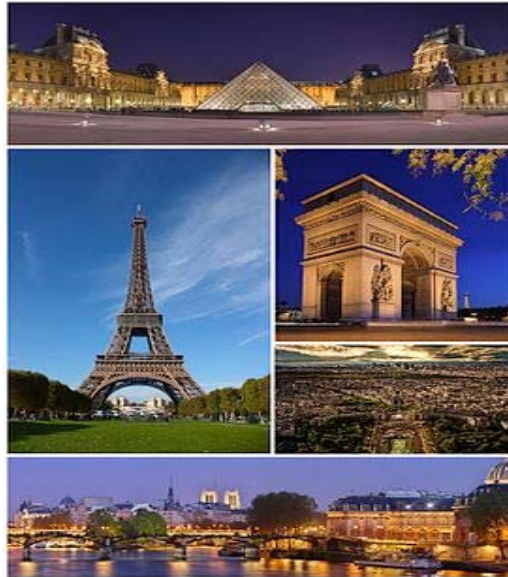


Raymonde (Ray) Fiol was born in Paris in 1936.



Her mother was a dressmaker and her father was in the handbag business. They were foreign born Jews in France and this made their lives especially dangerous under the Nazis. Ray was 3 when the Germans invaded.



She has one memory from that time: her mother wore a yellow Star of David on her clothing and a Nazi stopped her in the street and asked why Ray was not wearing a star. Children her age were not required to wear the star.



As an adult she learned about what happened to her parents during WWII. First, because they were foreign born Jews, they were forced into a labor camp and made to work the land. By 1942 they were in the Drancy transit camp. Ultimately they were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau where they were killed in January 1944.



Ray's parents arranged to have her smuggled out of the labor camp by a member of



the French Resistance.

This man took her to his home and, with his wife, protected her for the rest of the war.



The neighbors were told Ray was this couple's niece who left Paris for safety. The whole village knew the truth and kept her secret.

When she first arrived at the village, Ray had to be registered with the German authorities but nobody instructed her not to use her real, and very Jewish, last name. The German in charge had to have known she was Jewish but he did not harm her. She later learned that she resembled his daughter. Whenever she saw him she was told to be nice to him and sit on his lap. Because Yiddish was her first language and it is very similar to German, she was able to translate what the Germans said for her adoptive parents.

Her region of France was liberated by the Americans in August 1944.



Mrs. Fiol is the President of the Holocaust Survivors Group of Southern Nevada.

