

Hester Kool

Zandvoort, Netherlands

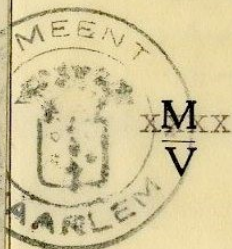
1927 -

Gesl. naam

Waas--

Voornamen

Hester--



Stempel

Handtekening:

Waas

1940 - 1942:

In May of 1940, when Hester was 13 years old, Nazi forces invaded and occupied the Netherlands. All Jewish families living along the coast were forced to relocate to the capital city, Amsterdam. The Nazis required Jews to wear yellow stars. Jewish children were segregated and no longer allowed to go to school. Hester worked as a seamstress in a factory, sewing materials for the Germans.

1942:

Hester's family received an official notice from the Nazis with orders to report to a work camp, but Hester's name was not listed. Hester wanted to go with them, but they demanded that she stay behind. Her father, mother, and brother were sent to Westerbork, a transit camp, and later deported to Auschwitz. She never saw them again.

1942 - 1945:

Hester's friend Rosa, a member of the Dutch Resistance, managed to get Hester false identity papers. Rosa, with the help of the Dutch Resistance, found a family for her to live with in a small town outside of Amsterdam.

For the two and half years the family hid Hester, they made her their maid and nanny. Hester had never before changed diapers, cleaned the house, or carried out the duties she was expected to do in this new household. Hester slept in the attic, and was rarely allowed outside. She was terribly lonely and remembers crying herself to sleep.

When the war ended, Hester learned the terrible reality that her parents and brother had been killed. An uncle in the United States offered to bring her to the U.S., but the family that she lived with refused to give her permission to leave. She ran away and immigrated to the United States, arriving in 1947. Hester moved to Seattle in 1990.

Hester with the children of the family who hid her during the war, 1945.



The artifacts on display were donated by local survivors and their families.

Explore the Holocaust Center for Humanity's artifact collection to learn more about Hester's experience.

- Hester's *Poesie* (autograph book), including an entry written by her brother
- Hester's photo while in hiding with the children she cared for.

Learn more about Hester other survivors who came to the Pacific Northwest at:

www.HolocaustCenterSeattle.org/survivor-voices

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