

Transcript of the Video

Guided tour through the exhibition

All about **Anne**

The exhibition of the
Anne Frank Zentrums in Berlin

The video with translation into International Sign Language
and English subtitles is available at:

<https://www.annefrank.de/en/exhibition-berlin/>

Welcome to Rosenthaler Straße 39 here in Berlin Mitte.

I'm Veronika Nahm, Director of Exhibitions in Berlin at the Anne Frank Zentrum, and I am standing in front of the entrance to the Berlin exhibition »All about Anne«.

In the background you can see a street art portrait by the artist Jimmy C. It shows a smiling girl with chin-length hair. The artist's style combines oil painting with graffiti. Most visitors will recognize the girl as Anne Frank, because her image is part of our culture.

I am standing in a courtyard in front of a four-story building. The courtyard is a listed site. It is a vibrant mix of art, culture and contemporary history.

Who is Anne?

and

What is the Anne Frank Zentrum?

I am now standing at the start of the exhibition.

There are no people here today, but that is only because we are filming. About 40,000 people visit this exhibition each year. They can simply drop by, or organize to tour the exhibition with their school, their family or youth organisation as part of an educational programme.

Many visitors wonder what this site has to do with the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the house where Anne and her family went into hiding, that is now a museum.

We are the German partner organisation of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam.

Our mission is to create learning opportunities and locations in which children and adolescents can remember Anne Frank and her diary and link them to the world they live in today.

Anne Frank's Diary

I am now standing in front of a very important object within the exhibition: the copy, an excellent reproduction of Anne Frank's diary.

Anne wrote in her diary from 1942 to 1944, while she was in hiding in Amsterdam.

The diary is square, the size of a small school notebook.

The jacket is made of linen, and has a red and white chequered pattern. Anne wrote her diary entries as letters, she addressed them to a person and signed each entry.

She wrote in Dutch.

Her writing is very neat, and she rarely had to correct anything.

But she did add comments to earlier entries and paste in photos, so she spent a lot of time on the diary.

She wrote about her dreams and desires, about the things that moved her, but also about society and political issues.

Who is Anne?

I am now standing in the first section of the exhibition.

Here we tell the story of Anne's life in six parts.

The first part is titled 1929 to 1933, Anne's Childhood Years in Germany.

But how do we present the exhibition?

We want this exhibition to be accessible to everyone.

So we use simple language in the texts and explain any difficult words.

The most important texts and objects are translated into German Sign Language.

We have tactile displays with audio descriptions and a floor guidance system.

The exhibition can be navigated in a wheelchair and we have an elevator.

For those with hearing aids, we have induction loops and a digital FM system for better understanding.

Anne's Childhood in Germany

1929–1933

The contents of this exhibition area include a photo that I would like to show you.

The photo is located on a narrow shelf, a picture ledge, and can be switched out by the visitors.

The photo shows Anne's first home.

It is in a three-story block of flats.

There is a second photo next to it, showing the building today.

If you compare both photos, you will see that they are very similar, except that now there is a sign in front of the building commemorating Anne Frank with text and images.

There is a small archive here that visitors can use for research, with ten more photos, for example a map of Frankfurt showing the location of Anne's house.

In addition to documents and photos, we also have video interviews with contemporary witnesses throughout the exhibition.

In this video, Otto Frank talks about his experiences in Frankfurt.

He saw SA troops, a Nazi group, marching through the streets and heard them singing violent, antisemitic songs.

It was this experience that made Otto decide to leave Germany with his family.

Anne's New Home in the Netherlands

1933–1940

The first part of the exhibition ends with Otto Frank's decision to leave Germany, and the second part, Anne's New Home in the Netherlands, 1933–1940, begins.

Anne started school in Amsterdam at a Montessori school. This photo shows her in her classroom with 25 classmates and her teacher. The desks are arranged in a U shape, but some children are sitting in the middle of the classroom, and this seating plan points to the Montessori educational method, in which children and their education take centre stage.

Anne enjoyed this time period.

This is a photo of her on her tenth birthday. Her and her eight friends, the guests, posed for a group photo. They are standing in front of the Frank's flat on the Merweideplein, wearing summer dresses in the shining sun.

Of course her parents were worried, particularly after Germany invaded Poland in September of 1939, starting the Second World War.

And their biggest worry became a reality in May of 1940, when Germany invaded the Netherlands.

Anne's Life in Danger 1940–1942

The third part of the exhibition is called Anne's Life in Danger 1940–1942.

I am standing in front of an infographic, that is a picture with lots of information.

In the middle is a drawing of Anne Frank, and all around it are symbols for activities she enjoyed, for example ice skating, wearing nice clothes, eating ice-cream, going swimming.

Surrounding those symbols are quotes from laws that banned Anne from doing exactly those things, because she was Jewish.

The Germans passed antisemitic laws in the Netherlands after the invasion.

Anne's parents tried to escape to somewhere safe with the family, but it proved impossible.

And then they built a hiding place.

When Margot received orders to register for forced labour in Germany, they went into hiding.

Anne's Time in Hiding 1942–1944

The hiding place was in an old part of Amsterdam where lots of people lived.

This is easy to see when you look at the aerial shot here on the wall.

In the tactile display located on a table under the aerial shot, you can see more details about the hiding spot, for example that the complex, Otto Frank's company, was made up of a front and a rear building, and the hiding spot was in the rear building.

This complex was located on a canal, one of the many waterways in Amsterdam, next to the Westerkerk. Everyone in Amsterdam recognizes this church because it has the tallest steeple.

In this section you can see that the hiding spot was only the two topmost floors of the rear building, which was why the people hiding here had to be very quiet, to ensure that the company's customers and employees who were not in the know did not hear them.

In another part of the tactile display, you can see the room that Anne shared with Fritz Pfeffer, an old man. Sharing did not work very well, because they were very different people and got into a lot of arguments.

Next to that room was a second room in which Otto, Edith and Margot, Anne's family, slept, and above them was another family, the van Pels family, with two adults and one child, Peter.

These eight fugitives never once left the house in the two years they were in hiding.

Helpers brought them everything they needed to survive.

On September 28, 1942, Anne wrote: »Not being able to go outside upsets me more than I can say, and I'm terrified our hiding place will be discovered and that we'll be shot...«

Anne's Last 6 Months 1944–1945

On August 4, 1944, after more than two years in hiding, the eight people in hiding and two of their helpers were caught.

I am standing in front of an illustrated map that shows where the people in hiding and their helpers were taken.

First they were taken to a prison in Amsterdam, and then deported to a concentration camp in the Netherlands, Westerbork.

They were sent on the last train from Westerbork to Auschwitz in September of 1944.

Otto Frank remembers the journey.

The quote is written here on the wall of the exhibition:

»Even today, there are still a lot of things I cannot talk about. There are a lot of things that I don't want to talk about any more either. For example, about what I felt when we were driven out of our hiding place in Amsterdam or when my family was torn apart on the ramp in Auschwitz.«

Anne and Margot were deported to Bergen-Belsen without their mother. There they caught typhus in the winter and suffered under the conditions in the camp.

In February of 1945, Margot died, and Anne followed shortly afterwards.

Here we can see a photo of a symbolic tombstone that was placed in the Bergen-Belsen memorial in 1999.

Anne and Margot's names and the date of their deaths are engraved on the stone. But we do not know where the two of them are actually buried.

Only Otto Frank survived, he was freed from Auschwitz on January 27, 1945.

Anne's Diary and Otto's Return 1945–1947

It takes Otto Frank several months to journey back to the Netherlands.

He travels together with other survivors, and arrives back in Amsterdam in June of 1945.

In this photo in the exhibition, we can see him together with four of his helpers. He is wearing a suit and tie. To his right is Miep Gies.

After the family was imprisoned, she took the diary and kept it safe before returning it to Otto Frank.

He decides to honour Anne's wishes and publish the diary.

The book is first published in 1947.

Here in the exhibition, we have an edition from 1948 with the title

»Het Achterhuis« – The Annex.

Why are Diaries Important?

In the second section of the exhibition, we establish links to the present. One such link is that the diary of Anne Frank, written more than 70 years ago, is now read all around the world.

Here we see an illustrated map of the world with the word »Diary« printed in many different languages.

Next to that is a bookshelf containing different translations of the diary. The diary has been translated into over 70 languages.

The people who read the diary think about history, but they also get to know a girl from the past.

And they think about themselves, about their own ideas, feelings, dreams for the future, political beliefs.

We encourage our visitors to write down these thoughts with a participation station, where they can write letters to their future selves.

They can then either put the letters in an envelope and throw them into a letterbox, publishing their thoughts, or they can put them into an envelope and take them home, in which case their thoughts remain a secret.

How does Antisemitism manifest itself?

Another link to the present is that there is still antisemitism in the world.

In our exhibition, we display examples of antisemitism before 1933 and after 1945, for example this flyer that was handed out during the performance of a play about the diary of Anne Frank and which reads: »Anne Frank never lived«.

We display examples of modern antisemitism, printed on blue cards with white writing, on a picture ledge, and here, too, we have an archive so that visitors can do research and display the examples they find interesting.

These examples show antisemitism in many different locations: on the playground, in school, on public transport, on the internet or in restaurants, and they also show different types of antisemitic violence, from insults up to extreme physical violence.

Visitors can reflect on their own experiences with antisemitism. They can write them down and think about the role they themselves played in the events. And they can write down who they told about the incident, for example whether they reported it to the »Research and Information Centre on Antisemitism«.

What does Commemoration look like?

In this section of the exhibition we have pictures of various memorials as examples of how our modern society thinks about and deals with history.

The memorials are displayed as photos, but we also show models of the four stumbling stones that were laid in Aachen for Anne, Margot, Edith and Otto.

We ask our visitors to think about:

What does commemoration look like? And what memorials are missing today? Are there aspects of history, of the Shoah but also other histories, that are not discussed today in public?

Visitors can design their own memorial as a sketch, or as a sculpture using a variety of materials, such as paper, cardboard, feathers or Lego, and then display them here for others to see.

Who determines who am I?

The final section of the exhibition asks: Who decides who I am?

Anne pondered this question often in her diary, because she discovered that it was not always easy to fulfil the expectations she set out for herself, and because the people she was hiding with had their own thoughts about who she should be, trying to push her into roles she was not comfortable with.

Anne used her diary to talk about who she was as a person, but outside forces, including the National Socialists, tried to reduce her identity to only one aspect.

She was perceived to be Jewish and persecuted because of it.

Our exhibition includes ten life stories from both old and young people in video format.

They talk about who they are and how they deal with racist, antisemitic and other discriminating assumptions about their identity.

And visitors can also take part in this final section of the exhibit:

I am standing in front of a magnetic wall covered in small purple cards containing more than 100 words from the diary.

These words describe facets of identity, for example brave, sporty, Jewish, confident.

Visitors select words that describe them today, and add them to this thought bubble next to a mirror.

Then they can stand in front of the mirror and look at the words that describe them.

If they like what they see, they can capture the memory with a selfie.

We have made it to the end of the tour,
and if you want to know more about Anne Frank,
then **please come and visit our exhibition**, with or without taking part in an
educational programme.

Or visit our website at **www.annefrank.de**

You can get in touch with us via social media such as
Facebook and Instagram, order books or movies from our online shop,
become a museum supporter as part of our Freundeskreis, donate,
find out more about our walking tours – there are so many options.

I would like **to thank you very much** for your time and wish you all the best.
I hope to see you soon.