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Holocaust Survivors of South Jersey Project - Teaching Resources

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**Ann Holzer Biographical Information**

Ann Mergruen was born on February 14, 1923 in Berlin, Germany to Jankieo and Erna Mergruen. Ann had four other siblings, Rosel, Siegbert, Fred, and Leonhard. Their family owned their own business making clothing and uniforms. Ann worked in the business along with her siblings.

Ann's father allowed her and her siblings to go out on Kristallnacht. They saw lots of violence and people robbing stores. Shortly after, they returned home because it was getting too violent. A few days after Kristallnacht, Nazis knocked on their door at 3 am. They asked for the teenagers and when they were not there, the Nazis told Jankieo, Ann's father, to put his coat on and go with them. They later found out that Jankieo was taken to a concentration camp on the border between Poland and Germany.

Between February and March 1939, the neighbors recommended that Erna send the kids to England via the Kindertransport, which she did with some hesitation. The siblings traveled with their cousin Siegert. Erna packed a bag with their clothes. They traveled by train from Germany to Holland, stopping along the way and picking up other Jewish children. There were six children per cart. Ann was in a cart with her three family members and two strangers. When they arrived in Holland, they got on a boat that took them to England. On the boat, men offered them tea and biscuits. It was the first time they had tea and it was very strong. After one day on the boat, they arrived in England.

At first, they went to London, England. Each child was picked up by a family. Ann's two brothers stayed together, but Ann went with a different family and served as a domestic servant. She and her other sister had to clean houses and cook. In England, Ann had an aunt, Berta Kleinberg, but she did not want Ann or her siblings to stay with her and her family. Ann was able to see her siblings and other family members mainly during the holidays. Throughout their time in England, Ann's older brother kept in contact with their parents. Ann's mother went to Warsaw and was involved in the Warsaw uprising. They never saw their parents again.

Ann stayed in England from 1939 until January 19, 1949, when she arrived in New York, United States on the ship, *Queen Mary*. Ann married Nathan Holzer in 1953. Nathan was also a Holocaust survivor, having been born in Nowy Sacz, Poland on June 22, 1916. Nathan had a chicken farm in Absecon, New Jersey, and Ann joined him there. Ann and Nathan had one child, a son they named Jacob. The family moved to Massachusetts and Jacob became a doctor. Ann passed away in Boston, Massachusetts on November 8, 2005.