

## War Era Story Project 2012

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I was born in Amsterdam, Holland in 1938. On May 10, 1940, the German Army invaded the Netherlands, even though the country was neutral. Eight million, seven hundred thousand Dutch people were taken into captivity. Cities were destroyed by day after day of the dropping of tons of bombs. Thousands of the Dutch people were taken to Germany to work in their factories. The dikes were destroyed, allowing the water to flood the country, killing thousands of animals.

Trying to find food was an ever increasing hardship. My Mother would travel on a bicycle with no rubber tires to the country to find food for all our family, even though that was something that was forbidden. No matter how quiet my Mother would try to be, the bare rims of her bicycle would always get her spotted, but she would somehow talk her way out of trouble. The place where I lived was very close to the house where Anne Frank lived, and we were going through the same type of raids that she experienced.

The Dutch underground fighters were a tough group and fought until the bitter end. Even the ladies of the red light district of Amsterdam were enlisted to help. The German SS troupes that thought they were in for a treat with the Ladies ended up floating in one of the canals.

I remember when the German high command decided to start rounding up the Jewish people to murder them and we were all made to come out of our houses and to watch as the Jewish people were lined up against a wall and shot, we had to stay until all the bodies were put on carts and hauled away. My Grandfather tried to shield my eyes so I wouldn't see but I looked anyway. I would hear one of those carts and I would look out my window and see a wooden cart piled high with bodies. I don't know how many Jews were killed, but Amsterdam had a Jewish population of fifty thousand. The Dutch Underground (or Black Hand, as they were called) kept some form of hope that the Dutch would survive.