IMPORTANT

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Interview Transcript Title Page

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Forename:	Annick
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Name of Interviewer:	Dr. Bea Lewkowicz
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REFUGEE VOICES

Interview No. RV266

NAME: Annick Lever

DATE: 12th May 2022

LOCATION: London

INTERVIEWER: Dr. Bea Lewkowicz

[00:00:00] *Today is the 12th of May 2022. My name is Bea Lewkowicz and we're conducting an interview with Mrs Annick Lever in London. Can you please tell me your name?*

My name is Annick Lever.

And where and when were you born Annick?

I was born in France in a little village called Thénac which is near Saintes. And I was born on the 23rd of November 1943.

Annick, thank you very much for having agreed to be interviewed for AJR Refugee Voices. Can you tell us a little bit about your family background?

Well, as I said, I was born in France and I have - my father was not Jewish and because of the events I was brought up by a lady, a non-Jewish lady, who was a wonderful woman and really looked after me beautifully. And then eventually I discovered my family. I went to Holland, and they sent me over to England where I met my husband. And there we got married in 1967, and that's where I stand now after fifty-four years.

Can you tell me a little bit, how did your mother find herself in the village or in the place you were born? Tell us a little bit about her story.

You want –

Yeah.

Okay. First of all, if I could tell the story like here –

Sure.

I never knew I was Jewish. I was brought up as a Catholic. **[00:02:00]** My father was Catholic, and it was agreed actually when I was one that I would be brought up as a Catholic. And one day, I was about eleven years old, long time after the War, I was going with a friend to buy some milk and then suddenly I found myself with a rope round my neck and there were some young boys pulling the rope and calling me 'dirty Jew.' I had no idea what they were talking about. As I said, I didn't know I was Jewish. It was a game for them to remove the rope, went home, never spoke about it. Never asked any questions. And I'm sure you know that I do speak to young people and one of the things I always say to them, 'Please, please, if you want to know something about your family, don't wait, ask. When you go home you must ask,' because I never did, and I would like to know so much more which is very sad really. But if you want to know more about the family itself, my mother had two – sorry, my mother had two sisters. The grandparents, the grandfather was born in Belgium, the grandmother in Holland, and the grandmother was actually quite – she was the first girl to go to a university in Holland. She spoke seven languages.

What was her name, do you know?

Her name – yes, her name was Ellen and before she was married, she was Ellen Van Duuren and then married my grandfather and became Ellen Fox. And then when they had their first – when they got married, they lived in Belgium, and they had their first daughter, and then they moved to France where my other aunt was born, and then my mother who was the youngest. **[00:04:08]** And they lived – they were both born in Paris. My eldest aunt then got married. She married a Dutch man and they lived in Holland. When War was declared they were in Amsterdam, and they themselves have quite a story to tell. The aunt and uncle themselves

were hiding under a staircase for two years, and my aunt lost all her hair. They grew afterwards. They were very close to Anne Frank. My uncle knew the father. In the same street I understand they were hiding there. Their two children had been taken by the underground and hidden somewhere else. That is the aunt there, and then my grandparents, just before War was declared but things were already happening in, you know, in Germany and Austria, but they decided to come down to the south-west of France, the Atlantic coast, to Royan. They said – I was told they were, like, coming on holidays but they knew it was not really a holidays. In fact, they came I think with very little and then as they were there because that was in October – sorry, in August, in August '39, and then in September of course War was declared. And I think my grandfather was able to go back to the apartment in Paris and get a few more things but, you know, with his car, very little really. Then they were able to live in Royan which is by the seaside. If anybody knows that region it's very well-known and lovely beaches. And they stayed in Royan for I think about two years there. **[00:06:03]** My aunt and my mother at the time when they arrived, they were two young women. I think my aunt was twenty-two and my mother I think was only twenty then, and they both – of course it was not long before they both met some young men. Neither of them were Jewish, but the grandparents were not that religious. But, you know, it was a little bit not so – how would I say – they were not so keen on the idea of their daughters marrying out, but in the circumstances, they let it happen. And my aunt was the first one to get married. And then my mother – my parents got married. My aunt had her daughter at the beginning of 1943, she was born in January, and then at the end of '43 I was born, and as I found out, my father wanted a boy [laughs], but it was not quite the boy he was expecting [laughs]. But something very odd because I was given some diaries which belonged to my mother. The last diaries she wrote, the last three years of her life, and in it it says that my father wanted a boy and also, they wanted to call him Alain. And the other thing is that my husband is actually called Alan. That's quite odd actually because I had those diaries long after I was married. Anyway, to carry on with their stories, they were trying to live the best they could when they were in Royan. Life of course had become quite difficult. I understand that my grandmother came from quite a well-to-do family. **[00:08:01]** I mean, that if you think before the War they already had a car, you know, when cars started, and a chauffeur. That was my great-grandparents from my mother's side.

Sorry to interrupt. What were their professions, do you know?

I'm not sure. I think they were in business. I think they were dealing in textiles but I'm not 100 percent sure.

And Annick, just to be clear before we go on, so all of this – when did you find this out? You didn't know – didn't –

I didn't know any of that.

So how old were you –?

I never heard.

So when –?

What I did – [laughs] I found out a lot more when I was seventeen, but what I have to say was, the reason I'm able to tell most of the story is when I was a child, I had a very odd habit. I used to fall asleep at the table after a meal, but often I was not sleeping. I pretended to sleep, and I could hear Mimi, the lady who brought me up, tell my stories. Whenever there was somebody around people would always ask because I was of course the odd child if you like. And I could hear the story being told. Now nobody knew that I could hear that. I never, never said anything, never asked, which is very odd. In my bedroom there were two photos. One of my aunt and one of my mother, and many a time I remember being in bed ill and Mimi dusting around, and dusting those pictures for quite a long time, and I never asked who they were.

And she never said who they were?

And she never said. And when I was twelve, because I was brought up as a Catholic, I was prepared for Communion and I remember, I think it was a few days before my Communion, I remember Mimi saying she wanted to tell me something, but she said, 'No, I think your

father will tell you', and neither her nor my father said anything. **[00:10:12]** They were going then to tell me what had happened, but nobody said anything. And when I was seventeen, I got a letter from the aunt in Holland who wanted to have contact again. I think a letter came through a solicitor, and I went to Holland. By that time, I had stopped studying because I was ill. I had glandular fever, but it was very severe. They thought it was going to be quite drastic. Anyway, I survived, and I had to stop all my studies. So the letter arrived, so I went to Holland, and I stayed with them for about two months. And actually, something quite funny -I should say that being brought up as a Catholic in France- although it's a secular country, in school you never have meat on a Friday. You always – you know, it's quite amusing actually. I think it's more or less still like that. And I had never eaten meat on a Friday. Not really religious reasons, it's more tradition, habits. Now I'm in Holland, I've arrived, I think I arrived on the Thursday. I can't remember exactly when, but I'd say it was a Thursday, and my aunt – they were not religious any more. Their menorah was in a cupboard. They didn't want to know after what they went through. But, you know, tradition, they still – and the eldest son who were then married, lived also in Amsterdam, and he always came for shabbat meal on Friday night. **[00:12:07]** And he was there of course the first Friday I arrived, and my aunt serves me with a chicken soup [laughs]. It smells very nice, but what do I do? I'd never had meat on a Friday. Am I allowed to eat it? And I'm there for quite a while wondering what to do, and my aunt says to me 'Is everything all right?' So – yes. He hasn't finished, I close the doors.

Yes, the Friday night.

Yes, so I'm there, you know, looking at that soup wondering what to do [laughs]. And my aunt says, 'Something wrong?' You know, I know them for twenty-four fours. What do I do [laughs]? So, I took my spoon and started to try, and it was so delicious I finished the soup, and I can assure you that now I do eat meat on a Friday [laughs]. But for me, that's something which marked me because it was a different life, different thing. They then thought and decided with – you know, my aunt and uncle had two children who were both married, they were older than me, and they decided that maybe I should find out about my Judaism and my roots. And they thought maybe if I came to England I would also try to- and I was doing English at college, but – you know, in secondary, but it was never my forte as

you may hear now [laughs]. So they thought maybe I should, you know, I should go to England and see what would happen. Anyway, as I say, I came back to my hometown to Saujon and then by that time I didn't go back to studying but I wanted to be a nurse, specialised for children. **[00:14:11]** And I went to work into a children hospital on an island near us, thinking of, you know, going – in fact, I was supposed to go and study at the French hospital Salpêtrière but Mimi wouldn't let me go. She didn't want me alone in Paris. She was very protective. Then another letter arrived from Holland saying they had found a family for me in England, so I was in the – and I worked in another hospital for a little while, and then I packed everything and came to England. I was nineteen, I turned twenty as I arrived. It was in August, in August '63. I came to a wonderful family in Bristol as an *au pair*, a Jewish family of course. That was the whole idea. And then –

So they wanted to reintroduce you to Judaism.

To teach me. I knew nothing about Judaism. Never – you know. In fact, I tell you something odd, but Mimi's daughter, considered like my sister, told me when my boys were bar-mitzvahed, she said she did not realise that I was Jewish. They never saw me as being Jewish. For them, you know, I was still a Catholic. Interesting.

Annick, by the time you got the letter, did you know about the existence of your aunt at all? Did you know about it?

The first time, not really. And yet again, never asked, but I had vaguely heard of the story that they had come just after the War and taken, you know, everything. That's when the diaries – they took my mother's diaries as well at the time. **[00:16:02]** But, you know, that was all really, I never – but before I left to go to Holland, my father took me out for a meal and he gave me all my mother's jewellery, and for the first and only time told me about the family. He didn't really say what happened, he just said he was very – I think very close to the grandmother who was, you know, quite an intellect and a very interesting woman. And just told me about them and that he had promised my mother – because she asked him never to marry again, and he'd never married again. And that was it. Never said anything else, and I think I was embarrassed to ask anything. It was very delicate. Very, very – now, if it was

now, they would be bombarded with questions, but then at that time I just felt I could not ask anything.

No, there was a silence. You understood as a child it's not to be asked.

Yes, yes, and I was always told that it was very painful for my father to talk about it. I mean, he married quite late, he was late thirties, and he was married only for two years.

But you didn't live with your father post-War?

No. He lived in the same town as me and at one time he used to come to us – he used to come and have all his meals with us, but eventually when I left, he didn't. But I never, never lived with my father. You know, you have to remember that especially in France it was not really done for men to look after – in those days I'm talking. Now things are different, but in those days, men didn't do that type of thing. **[00:18:00]** And what you may not know, is that the lady who brought me up had lost a baby in – I think it was in the May of 1943. And remember I was born at the end of '43, so then she took me for her – you never are a substitute for a lost child, but for her it was, you know, quite – she was extremely attached to me. So, was I to her actually.

And she had other children?

She had two other.

Older?

She had my – the one I call my sister now, Claudie, was almost eleven years older than me, and her son who passed away now, Gilles – we called him Gitou – was eight years older than me. And I was especially fond, very fond of him. I always wanted to marry him when I was young, you know, [laughs]. A little girl. I was very, very fond – they were very sweet, especially he was very sweet with me.

So Annick, so when you grew up did you feel different at all? Did you feel –?

I was told always I was different, but I always [inaudible] wonder why. I was always told, 'You, you're different. You do things differently, you're different.' I don't know what they meant. I was very forward I think which, I don't know, maybe didn't, you know, always go down – but I was not shy. If I wanted something I would always go ahead and, you know, do it. It was actually quite a very – very strange because if I wanted something I would ask Mimi, the lady who brought me up. I would say, you know, 'Can I do this, or that,' and she would say, 'Ask you father.' So, whenever I saw my father I would ask, and my father would say, 'Ask Mimi,' [laughs], so at the end I used to take the decision myself. And that happened so often [laughs]. It's quite interesting actually. **[00:20:02]** But, you know, I mean, my father never took responsibility really, never. He was – he took me out. I think I remember two or three times, but I adored my father, you know, really I was very fond of him. Very, very fond of him. And never – you know, a French man of those days, he felt it was not for him to bring up a child, so he was happy somebody else was able to do it for him.

So what are your first memories of growing up?

[Sighs] Already something I'm thinking it's not – well, one memory which is not a very nice one actually. Mimi's marriage broke up and I was quite young when that happened. Her husband – I called him Uncle. In those days I called Mimi mother, although my mother had asked I would never call anybody else mother. But one day she was dressing me, I was standing on the table, very young, and I could hear her children say Mimi all the – mother or *maman* in French. And I said to her – 'cos she was my godmother, you know, in the [inaudible] – and so I used to call her *marraine* which is the French word for godmother. And I said to her, 'You're not my *marraine*, you're my *maman.'* And from that day I refused to call her – you know, said she was my godmother. And then I heard that she asked my father, 'What should we do?' My father said, 'What will it change now? It doesn't make any difference,' because by that time he was about – **[00:22:02]** when that happened it must have been about three years after the War, maybe a bit before, and, you know, my mother had not come back. They didn't know what had happened to my mother because her name did not appear in Auschwitz. We knew she had been taken there, but there was the name of the

grandparents, and my aunt, but not my mother, and for a long time we had really no idea. But they had a lot of family in Paris still, and one day – I was only told that not so long ago, about ten years ago, so – one day somebody came to look for the family and it was a lady who had travelled in the same transport and survived Auschwitz. And she obviously [inaudible] with them and she was looking for someone to tell them, you know, that she was with them, and that one of the sisters had been killed on the way. And that we assume was my mother who was killed on the train. She was shot on the train. Is it why her name was not there? But now her name is on the list in Auschwitz. I don't know how that happened, but earlier it was not there, but now it is definitely. Because once I was speaking to a school in France and they were going to Auschwitz, they were being taken there, and I asked them to look for me and they did find her name. They sent me photos of the register. But I suppose the reasons of all that is because she was shot on the train. She was ill when she left. **[00:24:01]** She was breastfeeding me and she had a lot of milk, and she obviously had not been able to feed for, you know, almost – well, it was about two weeks then because we were arrested on the 31st and then two days later they went off to Drancy which was the main centre in Paris, transit – and then on the 10th they went off to Auschwitz.

The 10th of...?

February.

February 19...?

Forty-four.

Forty-four.

So she had milk – what they call milk fever, and they say milk fever can go to your head as well, so did she become mad? Did she do something that – how was she shot? We don't know because they never stopped the trains when they went. The trains were never open from their departure until they arrive in Auschwitz. So was she shot – we don't know anyway. This lady did say – she didn't – if she gave details, they were never told to me. The cousin we

knew had told his daughter who was my – it was a cousin of my mother, so he had a daughter who was about my age, and she was told never to tell me because we are great friends, but eventually she did tell me about ten years ago, because I did ask her. I said, you know, 'I can't understand that nobody knows,' so she told me the story that her father had said we shouldn't tell me about it.

So they hoped of course that your mother would come back, Mimi and your father.

And I could hear that all the time. That, you know, in the story when I pretended, I was not hearing and I always thought that maybe my mother comes back one day, and if she did come back, how would I do it? **[00:26:04]** Because I loved Mimi, what would I do? Often as a child I thought of that. It bothered me. How would I react? And one day there was a knock, the bell rung at the door, and I went to answer, and the lady took me and said, 'Oh, my little Annie,' and cuddled me, and instinctively I didn't really like that lady. Well, I didn't feel anything for her, and I thought, you know, is it my mother? I just didn't know. I was so confused. It happened to be a sister of my father who I didn't know anything about who had suddenly turned up. And it was such a strange feeling. But I remember you were asking me before I went the other way [laughs], you were asking me about memories. One memory I have when I was about six is, you know, as I said, Mimi's marriage was not very good, and her husband started drinking. And one day he came home with a rifle, hanging, and he wanted to kill her. And I went between the two of them and I said to him, 'You're not killing my mummy,' and he pushed me, and he said, 'She's not your mother anyway.' And that was the first time I heard that, and I was very shocked. In fact, he – of course he didn't kill her, and we managed to go away. We went to stay with one of Mimi's brother, and I was very ill after. I had jaundice from fear. I was ill for quite a while because of the shock of the rifle first of all, and of course I suppose what he said. I don't know. You don't know as a child of six what effect that had on me. **[00:28:03]** I have no idea. I wish so often I would know what all that did really to me, but I'm not the only one. There's so many sadly enough.

But it sounds that you had some knowledge. So, you knew always something but not [both talking at once] –

I knew there was something and I wonder if I didn't want to know, because my love for Mimi was so strong I didn't want things to be disturbed, you know? And I wonder if it's why I never asked any questions. I was frightened of what I would hear. And in some ways maybe I was frightened that I would have to go and live with my father because I didn't want to leave Mimi. She was everything to me. You know, I was two months, and she really was wonderful.

Annick, so tell us a little bit about the situation which led to the arrest and, you know – which of course you can't remember, but you know now.

No, I was too – what I know first of all is I think it was the beginning of January 1944. The Nazi decided, the German were there, that none of the – there shouldn't be any Jewish population living by the sea. Maybe they were afraid they would escape by boat, I don't know. So that's when the whole family had to leave the place, they were at in Royan which was by the seaside, it's a sea resort. And then my father who was from the region had an uncle who live in a little village about – it's about thirty kilometres I think from Royan, thirty or forty, and it was decided that the whole family would move to that little village. **[00:30:05]** And my parents went to stay with the uncle, and the grandparents had a rented accommodation, and my aunt as well with her daughter who was then just a baby – no, she was a year old actually – went into another – my aunt had another room on her own. Her husband didn't come with her. He had a business in Royan, and he didn't come with her. But then of course – the thing is, which is strange, my grandfather who was born in Belgium take French nationality in – I can't remember the year. I think it's '36 or something like that. Was very proud of it, and he always thought that would help. So when they came down from Paris, down to the south-west to Royan, he went straightaway to declare the family there. So, he went to the town hall to give all the names, and then he had to go back so many times because they had to go back to declare whatever he still possess. And then he had to go back and give – you know, in France we've got identity cards, so he had to take all the identity cards there to have them stamped with 'Jew' across. And, you know, we think that had he not done that, who knows, because my father belonged to the underground and maybe he would – you know, they would have been able to do something, but everybody knew where they were. When they moved then from Royan to the little village in Thénac, they again had to go

to the town hall to say they were there, so people knew where they were all the time which I think now on reflection, but little did they know. **[00:32:09]** So being French – you know, in those days they did not arrest the French Jews. It was only, you know, the Jews from other nationalities. So that's why he thought maybe he would be safe. I don't know. And they never believed things would happen. I don't know. They knew – well, they didn't know really exactly what was going on. They were very worried for the family in Holland. They were desperately worried for them. You know, in Amsterdam they saw things were a lot worse. Then being in France in a little village, you know, somewhere in France – and at the time it was not Vichy-France yet so, you know, they thought they would be all right, but little did they know. You know, what was this name? This big one who was dealing with all the Jewish people in Bordeaux – I can't remember his name. It doesn't matter for the moment. It'll come back to me, but he was – you know, he was really the one who was directing –

Barbie?

Not – he was not Barbie. It was not Klaus Barbie there in –

In Bordeaux? No.

Maybe. I can't remember.

I don't know.

No. It doesn't matter. So of course when they're in Thénac, when he was there – something I should really tell, something very odd happened after the War. You know, there was a police station in La Rochelle, the place we were then, you know, taken to [inaudible]. There were some young policemen who were asked to go and clear the loft of that police station because they wanted to do some work. **[00:34:06]** And they were told, 'Just take everything and burn everything. We need the space.' And those two young men went there and one of them discovered some papers which he started to read, and so then, you know, maybe I shouldn't burn that. And that was all the papers from the – you know, where the *Kommandantur* in La Rochelle, during that time when they occupied that region. Everything about the Jewish

population. There was a letter from my grandfather in there. There was another letter from a doctor referring to my aunt. One referring to my mother, that if she agreed to go into hospital when she was arrested and take me with her, you know, she'd be okay, but of course they didn't trust that and believe that. It's absolutely amazing the details. Also, there is in it – I don't know if you – a paper saying when we were supposed to be arrested. When the telegram was delivered, and it was high secret of course, nobody was supposed to tell. So I've got photocopy of all those papers, and I think –

Where are they now, the papers?

Those paper are in a museum in La Rochelle, you know, the originals, but I was able to get all the photocopies. So, a lot of details like that, with dates. They are so accurate.

Were there any other Jewish families at the time?

Oh yes, oh yes. There were. I understand that we were collected by a bus which went round in the area and, you know, came to take us as well. **[00:36:03]** They were not allowed to take much with them, only a little suitcase, and I've always heard that my aunt and my mother – I suppose my grandmother did the same, I don't know – put a lot of clothes on them, you know, one dress on top of the other because they couldn't carry very much. And they had the two babies as well. My cousin was a year, and I was two months and three weeks, so they couldn't take much.

And do you know, did they try – they didn't try to go underground or –?

Well, there was – it's a little story. You know, my father – first of all, the fact my father was able to go back there with his friends to the prison because it was a school, a school which had all the comforts – a primary school which in those days and we're talking in the '40s, had central heating and showers. And somebody told me that they did that almost purposely that they would not complain too much that they were – you know, the ones they arrested would be more docile if they found they had a bit more comfort. It's the same when they were taken from La Rochelle by train to Paris, they also were – it was a normal train that, you know, they

said, – that's what I was told. That the idea was behind that, if they made them travel in comfort they would be less complain if you like. They would not rebel or anything.

So where were you all arrested? In which location.

We were arrested in Thénac.

In Thénac.

In the little village where I was born. Because when they were all moved, my mother was not yet pregnant. She got preg – because they were moved at the beginning of '43, in January according to the papers, and that's when they had to go. **[00:38:07]** And then, you know, my mother was not yet pregnant as I was born at the end of '43. So they all had to move then to that little village where everybody found accommodation to themselves. You know, they did what they could. I mean, it was lucky that in a way that my father had contact there.

And was there any warning of the arrest or was there –?

No, nothing.

No, no.

Had there been warning I'm sure my father would have done something, because he was very active in – but there was no warning this Sunday. What happened was actually – but they couldn't do anything there – again, my father had friends. First of all, the one who then looked after me later, and other friends who lived in Saintes which is the biggest town near that little village. And on the – I think it was the 31st of January 1944, we were all invited to spend the day at this friend's house, and there were other friends there, and I think it's on that day that my mother asked Mimi that if – you know, she had a premonition something was going to happen. They didn't know, it's just she felt something, and she say if something was to happen would she look after me until she comes back. Because they didn't know what was ahead of them. And the friend said, you know, she shouldn't speak like that, but of course,

you know, she would. And that's how, you know, Mimi came to look after me. So, when we were arrested, my father – I believe that they looked into my father's family because for four generation there was no Jewish blood, so he was not arrested. **[00:40:08]** And then as soon as they were taken, he went off to Saujon to tell the friends my mother had asked, and they all drove straight back to La Rochelle. They were able to get into the prison. I think my father in those days was quite wealthy. I don't if it's the word but he was able – you know, he had money. And I think he paid quite a lot of people around to be able to get in. In fact, what I was told is that he did pay somebody at the prison to leave a door open, a side door, which they did. And my mother and my aunt went out. They left the place, but once they were out in the street, they felt guilty to leave their parents, so they came back. My grandmother was highly strung, I think was starting to – she couldn't accept what was going on and she was starting to be quite difficult, and the two daughters – they were a very close family. Very, very close, and the two daughters went on the street, they had false ID cards made, you know, through – in fact, through the friend where they went the day before, where we were invited in Saintes, through the underground. And they came back. You know, my cousin was still alive. She can't understand it. She say, 'How can they choose their parents over their children?' She can't understand.

So was it already when you were already taken away from the prison? So after –?
[00:42:05]

No, we were not there any more.

You were not there, yeah, so tell us what happened to you.

The day we were – when we are arrested, I believe it must have been the same. My father, I know that went back to – and then they all came back, were able to get into the prison and convince my aunt and my mother that it was wiser to let, you know, both children go. And as they were doing that actually, another lady came to them, another prisoner, and said to the friend, 'I know what's going on. You must take my children as well.' And she had a little boy, I think he was about nine, and her little girl was five. And the friend she said, 'I can't.' I mean, those two babies have got their fathers there but, you know, I can't. And the friend

said, 'If you had a heart of a mother, you would not refuse.' What she didn't know is that Mimi had lost a baby, you know, only a few months earlier. So they couldn't refuse, and they left the prison with four children.

So was Mimi involved on the first day, she came to the prison?

Yeah, with her husband and my father.

And they took four children out.

And they took four children out.

So, what happened? So you stayed with them.

Yeah.

Your cousin –

My cousin then went to her father. Her father lived with three of his sisters. He had three sisters who were not married, who actually brought up my cousin, and so my cousin went to Royan with her father, and those two other children, that was another story. The same evening there was a knock at the door at Mimi's house, and she went to open, and it was the police. **[00:44:01]** And the police said, 'We know you have children who don't belong to you.' [Inaudible] she said, 'I don't know what you're talking about. I'm just looking after some little cousins.' And they say, 'We know it's not true. Unless you bring them all back,' – when I say all back, it was the other two children – 'we have to arrest you and all your family. You –' you know, and her husband and her two children. And of course, I mean, they left, they told her, and they left, and as you can imagine there was a great dilemma. I think they stayed up most of the night. The little boy was begging them not to take them back. They just didn't know what to do. It was very difficult. And I don't want to judge because we have not been put in that situation. We don't know. Anyway, the next morning they did take the two children back. My father and the uncle, but I must tell you straightaway that they are

– well, they're not alive any more – but they all survived. We knew them after the War, we were friends, and they were very grateful to Mimi to have tried actually. They never, you know, never were – begrudged the fact that she took the children, they took the children –

But not you, not the babies.

No, but for me it was different. My cousin herself was already baptised, and for me the commandant had asked that I should be baptised and send the paper to them. So they had to find a priest and try to have me baptised, and I don't know exactly, there was something ceremony, I was not fully baptised there.

So they knew that you were there.

Of course, they knew. **[00:46:01]** When we left the prison they took the numbers of the car, and that's how they were able to trace everybody. You know, they were able to go off, but somebody took the number of the car.

So she had permission to keep you.

Well, we think because of the time, you know, it was – well, it was a year before the War stopped really. They had to do – I mean, they didn't have the papers straightaway, I mean, everybody was taken before the papers arrived, but for some reason I was lucky. I was able to stay there. Exactly what happened, I don't know. I just don't know. As you know, I don't know.

Of course, of course.

I do ask my sister – sister, when I say – at the time as I say, she was almost eleven, but she says she can't remember. She just remembers when I was brought home, but she can't really remember the details at all.

What was she told?

Well, she knew me already. They knew, but I don't know. You know, sometimes children like me, they have the sense of not saying anything, so I just don't know what she was told. I must ask her actually. I never asked that question, 'What were you –,' but she knew. I mean, she knew my father, she knew my mother, you know, she knew everybody, so I don't know what she was told what happened to them at the time. I just don't know.

So you were taken out and then how long did your mother and her sister stay there before they went on to Drancy?

I think they were taken to Drancy – well, it must have been forty-eight hours. I'm not sure, because I know that my father yet again was able to spend the last night in the prison with them. **[00:48:08]** Paying, he was able to stay there. So, I think either one day or two days, I'm not entirely sure. No, I don't think the papers say when they went off. It must have been the next day because I was always told that the train was waiting for the two children to come back, so I don't know if it was the next day or the day after. They waited, and then those two children – it's quite a story as well. On the way to Paris the mother pretended to be very ill, and they stopped the train in Poitiers. They took the mother and the two children off, took her to hospital, and then a priest was able to make the little boy escape. The little girl was too small because they had to jump over a wall or something, and they knew the child could not do that, but the little boy could. So, a priest saved him there, and then her and her mother, they ended up in a camp, but they called them in French, camp [inaudible]. I don't know exactly – it was not – they did not exterminate them there, they just kept them because her husband was a prisoner of war at the time. He was already fighting and was a prisoner of war- I think- in Germany. I don't know, they may not have known he was Jewish, I don't know. But after the War they all came back to the apartment and found each other. It's quite a miracle.

So they never went to Drancy.

No.

No. They survived.

Yes, absolutely. **[00:50:00]** And then after the War they came and tried to find Mimi to, you know, thank her. They used to come every year actually. And they were tailors, so when I got engaged they made my outfit, so it just show you how we stayed friends really.

What were their names, the children?

Craviez. The children were – he was Claude, and she was Simone. Claude and Simone Craviez. They both passed away. He passed away about four years ago, but I think his sister who was the youngest passed away [both talking at once].

Did they stay in France?

Yes, yes, they lived in Paris. They were always in Paris. I lived in Paris for a while and I used to go to the mother, and she always wanted me to come and, you know – they were lovely people. And in fact, when I worked in Paris I was in a room- under the loft which belonged – which belonged to the daughter, to Simone. I was in one – you know, she had rented – well, I didn't pay because I used to do babysitting for her.

Chambre de bonne?

That's right, yeah, you know exactly – I got it false- yes [both laugh]. But it was good for me. Absolutely. It's quite interesting that.

And when was the last time you think there was contact? Did your mother have any other contact with your father from the time she –?

No.

No.

After there was no contact. I could always hear, you know, they were saying, you know, 'We wonder this, that –,' because they knew nothing about my mother. In fact, with my mother, all the official papers always says, 'assumed dead,' you know, 'presumed dead,' but there was nothing official to say she had died. Which was really a strange feeling. Stop me if I say too much – **[00:52:01]**

No, please.

But my sister – I always say my sister but it's not my – married somebody who was in the – it was not quite the army, it was a *garde, garde de gendarme*. In fact, he guarded Hess at the time in Berlin. He was sent to Germany and of course, he was married at the time to my sister, and they all went there, and we went to visit. And Mimi always looked around in case she would see a child who looks like me because, you know, we didn't know what had happened to my mother. And she was also quite – there was a next-door-neighbour – I have the feeling the next-door-neighbour must have found out about my story. In Germany my sister was in an apartment, and this next-door-neighbour throws me biscuits. She didn't know what to do for me. And Mimi would not let me eat the biscuits [laughs]. She was afraid the woman would have poisoned them [laughs]. But that was not her intention because this lady was very, very nice. On the contrary I think she wanted to, you know, sort of not apologise, but, you know, felt sorry for whatever happened. It was quite interesting. Mimi was so, you know – Germany I'm sure – I don't know, but Germany was almost a dirty word. Nothing German. Nothing – when I went to Germany as an *au pair* everybody was shocked actually [laughs], you know.

For obvious reasons.

Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

So they didn't know what had happened to your mother.

No.

No.

They did not know. Nobody knew.

And how did her sister survive?

No. My grandparents, my aunt, and my mother all died.

Sorry, who was then the sister in Amsterdam? **[00:54:00]**

Ah, yes, she survived, the one who was hiding yes, she survived.

Okay, so there was another sister.

There were three sisters.

Okay.

The one who lived – you know, I say they came down, they were two sisters.

Right.

The one who had the other daughter who was born at the beginning of '43, and that was – you know, they were three all together. And one was already married in Holland, and the other two came down with the parents, were still with the parents.

So in Holland she survived.

In Holland everybody survived. It's quite a – in fact, I mean, I've got a cousin – the boy, has quite a story himself because – I must tell you that because I think it's so incredible. The uncle also belonged to the underground, was very active in the underground, but one day there was a knock at the door of their apartment and there were two young SS there who

came to arrest them. Actually, there were three, and one of them was the officer. And they came to take them, you know, my aunt, uncle, and the two children. And my uncle said to him, 'Please come with me first,' and he took him to my cousin, to the little girl who was at the time – I think she was only three at the time. And she was blonde with long, curly hair, and she was fast asleep in her bedroom, sucking her thumb. And when the officer saw her, he said, 'I've got one just like that at home. We come back tomorrow.' I mean, you know, she said to that day – because she's still alive – that she saved the family. So of course, they left, and my uncle understood, and as soon as they left, my uncle got in touch with the underground and the little girl then was taken by a professor in Amsterdam who also had a little girl like her, so she was supposed to be her twin. **[00:56:12]** They were very similar in age and everything. And the boy who at that time was I think about eight or nine, was taken to the north of Holland. He was dark hair and blue eyes, so they had to change the colour of his hair. He became red hair because, you know, dark hair, it meant a lot, unfortunately stupidly enough. And he was taken to a farm there to be looked after, and one day all the SS arrived and the soldiers, and he escape in the forest on his own. He lived in the forest for about three or four days on his own. As I say, he was eight or nine. As I say, the story's in the book. And eventually somebody found him and took him to another village where he was looked after by a family who had – I think they had four boys themselves. They were bakers, and they were wonderful to him. He was able to stay there until the end of the War. But, you know, living in the wood, he hurt himself quite badly in the wood, you know, they had to look after his leg. In a way he was lucky. And his story is reported in the book there.

And you said the parents survived hiding in Amsterdam. [Both talking at once].

And the uncle and aunt were hidden by somebody who worked with my uncle who built a false wall, you know, under the staircase, and the whole day they sat there, and at night they were able to walk a little bit in the garden. They couldn't go out. That was the only – for two years. **[00:58:01]** I mean, it must have been – if you think about it, two years to be, you know, sitting there all day. But at least it's your life, which is really the – you know, the most important. And after the War they were all back together. But then found out that the rest of the family had disappeared of course.

Yeah. What about Annick, your schooling and your friends? Tell us a little bit about – you said you were raised Catholic, but what about – what other things?

Well, you know, I had quite a normal – in that respect, normal upbringing. I went to school in Saujon the town where I was brought up where the people must have known my story there. I have another cousin, a niece from Mimi, who – she was at school with me at one time, and she says she used to sort of protect me and defend me against the other – but I can't remember that. She used to say – I can't remember really. You know, it was – I had quite a normal upbringing there. The only normality was, you know, it was only Mimi at home, and we were always afraid that her husband would come and- you know, that was not so good in a way. But otherwise, you know, I had a lot of love and care for Mimi, and all her family took me as being, you know, their niece almost. I mean, I could hear sometimes, it was strange, I was the little girl that Mimi brought up, you know, often I was referred to as the little girl.

Because you had a different surname.

Yes, of course.

Yeah, so –

I never- that that, you know, for me was normal. **[01:00:00]** The only thing I do remember that Mimi had a very good friend, and sometimes I used to go to her, and she used to say – I was a child, I suppose like all children I was not an angel [laughs]. And she used to say, 'Oh, if you're so naughty, you know, Mimi will send you to stay with your father.' And I was afraid. I didn't want to go and live with my father. I don't know why but I didn't want to. I wanted always to see my father, but I didn't want to go and live with him. I suppose that meant not security, I don't know. It was a strange feeling actually. Mimi was everything for me, really everything. In fact, when she passed away it was very difficult

And you stayed in close contact all your life?

All the time. I used to make her come to England every year. All the time. She was here for the birth of my second child. Oh yes, she was every – you know, she really was everything to me. Absolutely. It's only in later years since I now speak to young people, you know, I go to schools and synagogue, and even companies, you know, we speak a bit everywhere, that I – it's odd, but I feel – I actually – I'm a bit upset that Mimi never said anything and talked to me about my mother. I say, why not? I think she felt insecure maybe herself. But that I really – I feel she should have. I know when I left for Holland she cried and cried because I think she thought I would not come back maybe. I don't know. And also, the uncle and aunt – it was a different type of life. I mean, I was brought up in a very ordinary type of household. **[01:02:03]** I never lacked anything. There was always food on the table and, you know, everything. And my father [inaudible] – I was always well dressed and all that, but it was not – we never went on holiday. I remember going on holiday once, and one to Germany to stay with my sister, but the family in Holland, it was a different – you know, they used to go skiing, it was quite different. And I think Mimi was frightened that I would be taken by that maybe and I wouldn't want to come back. So I can understand it very well now. In those days I didn't see it like that. But it's quite interesting actually.

So, Mimi- did you ever suggest for Righteousness, to get recognition?

We did. They didn't want to because they said I was too young to testify. We even have a recording of – at the time Mimi had somebody helping at home, you know, a little – a young woman who was helping her staying there, doing – I wouldn't say – I don't want to say maid, but – and she, this lady, knew. She was there when I arrived. I mean, she was a young woman and we've got a recording when she testified that, you know, [inaudible] but they didn't want to know. I found that very cross actually.

When was that?

A few years ago now. Because another part of the story – the school where we were taken to, transformed into a prison, quite a few years ago now – it must be, I don't know, seven years ago, eight years, not so long – I've got a picture of it. They put a plaque on the school, on the wall outside to say what had happened. **[01:04:05]** So many people were arrested, how many

came back, and so on, and it was odd. I was in France at the time, in my hometown. My sister, Claudie is her name, tried to phone to say what was happening, that maybe we should go and have a look. We were at that time – I had somebody staying with us and we were in a restaurant, and we finished quickly, and we went off to La Rochelle, it was quite a distance, and when we arrived it was finished. But we were able to get in. It was a big ceremony actually, a very big ceremony with the *préfet*, you know, and the mayor, a very big thing, and it was all filmed. And we were able to get into the school and speak to the director who was very, very nice and said, 'Oh, please, you must wait there,' and phoned somebody else, a professor in – there was a secondary school, a very big secondary school in La Rochelle, was in contact, 'and somebody will want to see you.' About, I don't know, a little while later, we waited, this gentleman arrived, was one of the – we say professor, teacher I should say in English, sorry – arrived and when he saw me, it was quite something, he was crying. And he hugged me. He said, 'I think I know you.' He didn't, but he had done all the research on the family, and he with a friend who was a historian, they had all those papers I was talking about. And he was so pleased to meet me, and we're still in contact actually, and it was quite an emotional moment. **[01:06:04]** He said, 'You must come with us now.' He took us to the other – to what we call the *collège* in French, the secondary school, and we met other teachers there. Everybody was – I was the only survivor there. You know, the others either had disappeared or had died since, and they didn't know – my cousin – because, you know, the cousin, my real cousin, lives in the area. In fact, the name of the parents and our mothers are on the cenotaph on the little village where I was born. And this historian I'm referring to was writing a book on all the cenotaphs in the department. And when he arrived there and he saw – because they put – and I've got pictures of it – they put a photo of the – you know – sorry, he saw the name on the cenotaph and realised it's [inaudible]. It's next to the soldier, fallen, died- were deported. So he researched to find somebody, and he found my cousin. So, he went to my cousin and that's how – but he knew she was there. I don't know why she was not invited, and then we would have known. But anyway, that's –

So Annick, what is the name of that school?

I don't know. I don't know if Alan knows. The primary school I don't think has a name. The other school I think is Ècole Richilieu but I'm not so sure. It's very busy, about 2,000 students. Very big one.

The primary school.

The primary school, we've got a picture. I can't remember.

Okay. We'll look at it later.

We can look at it later, yes. But it's quite – you know, they wanted to remember. **[01:08:04]**

Yeah.

They wanted the pupils in the town to know what happened, which is very nice really. It's like the little village who put their name on the cenotaph. I think that is – you know, everybody tells me always how the French are so racist, but it's not all true [laughs], I have to say.

But they didn't want to give the recognition for Mimi.

No.

No.

No, because that is this – sorry –

But maybe you should try again.

It is this teacher who came from – who said, 'You must do that. I want –,' and put us in touch with somebody in France who is responsible. So we did the necessary, but they didn't want to know. And apparently when they send you that letter there's nothing you can do. It was from

Yad Vashem, you know, in Israel. But I think it's not right really. They risked their life in taking us out.

They did.

They really did. But if they don't want to – I mean, I never thought of doing that, but that teacher said, 'Oh, you must do it.'

Yeah, yeah. Well, I'm happy to talk to somebody about it.

You never know because she – I mean, she's not alive any more, but –

But the children.

Her granddaughter wanted me to do it as well.

Okay.

Saying she needs to be recognised. Here you are [laughs].

And your cousin is still in the area?

My cousin?

Yeah.

Oh, yes. Oh, yes, she's [both talking at once].

Did she stay Catholic?

Her father – yes, she married a Protestant. She doesn't really want to know much about religion nowadays [laughs] but, you know, she – yes, she was also, you know, brought up as

a Catholic, the way I was. I have to tell you that day, we belong to a shul, and we do, you know, everything. But religion, I feel has hurt my life. **[01:10:02]** Had it not been for religion. I don't know. And it still does in the world, unfortunately. I tell all those children, you know, 'Religion should not – you should not see somebody –,' I always say, 'never mind the religion you belong to, never mind the colour of your skins. We're all – you know, we're human beings, and never forget it.' I always end up telling them that because it's so true. You know, why make a difference? So what? You're black, you're yellow, you're white. You're all human beings. Look what's happening now. And so many things. I don't think – the world has not learned about – all those genocide. You know, it's not only the Holocaust. There's been so many genocides. They haven't learnt. Not at all.

But Annick, just to come back now to the time when you got the letter from your aunt.

Yeah.

At that point were you happy to leave France? Were you curious about –?

I was curious.

Yeah.

At that point as far as I was concerned I was not leaving France. I was just going to see them. You know, and I had a wonderful welcome there. I was very excited but in my mind I was not – you know, I was going to come back which I did really. Well, I did and then I went to work, you know, in that hospital and then I left to come here.

But when you met the family, did you feel any familiarity?

Yes, yes. How can one explain that? The moment I was with them, I felt at home. It was so odd. **[01:12:01]** You know, I felt it straightaway, I was at home. Because all my youth I was told, 'You're different. You do things different. You, you're different.' Why was I different? What did they mean?

Did you look different?

No. Of course I did look like the rest of the family [laughs] but, you know, I don't look different. I don't think – in fact, I tell you to what point is when I was working in England, people never realised I was Jewish. I don't look it. We should never say that.

No.

Because it's not – as you know, it is wrong to talk like that, but people have a tendency of, you know –

Well, I meant did you look different from your sister, you know, from the –?

Well, they were dark, I was a bit blonde, that's all.

That's what I meant, yeah.

I understood that. You know, why they always thought I was different, I have no idea. Maybe because, yeah, my sister – well, Claudie was always – she was very reserved, more reserved and shy. I was very much – you know, took the initiative. I didn't play with her because she married extremely young and in fact, her children were more like my brothers because, you know, the difference. I had less difference with her eldest son than I had with her [laughs], so she was always like the other little mother really. I always saw her like that. Now I see her as my sister, my sister if you like, but she always behaved like, always told me what to do and told me off [laughs]. And for me she was more like another mother, but not a sister really.

And when you arrived, when you came to your aunt, did they tell you about the family and –?

No.

Or was it again not much talked about? **[01:14:01]**

Nobody talked about it. Nobody. My aunt would be the one who we could ask her a few questions because I would have liked to know how my mother was, you know. As I say, I can't remember what she smell like, what she – you know. That I must say, I miss and I don't look like her, I look like my grandmother apparently, but my other cousin in Holland I'm told look – well, she always say, I was told, 'I look like your mother.' I would have liked to know her character. Who do I come after? I don't know. And, you know, I think that must be from all the children who lose a parent. You do not know really where you belong. You do not know what you are like. And I miss that. Even to that day I miss that. Not knowing if I – like my mother, if I speak like her. I don't think I'm like my father somehow, I don't think so, but I know I look like my grandmother. When it was the centenary of the university she went to, a book was issued and there was a chapter being the first woman, first girl, a chapter written about her. And there was a picture of her then. I remember my uncle and aunt brought – when I got married here, they brought that book, and I really did look like her [laughs].

Like your mother's mother.

My grandmother. My maternal grandmother. Only look like her. I wish I had her brains, but that's no [laughs]...

What was her field?

Pardon?

What was her field?

I think business because her languages and – at the time it was not yet called a university. It was *école commerciale*, which then was to the name – it's in Rotterdam, University of Rotterdam. **[01:16:05]** I know they speak a lot of languages in Holland, but I think it was a woman and we're talking at the end of the 19th century, that's when she really – she spoke seven languages. It was already quite something. And I don't know if she had brothers or sisters. I don't know anything. I just have a picture of my mother and my aunt, and I don't

know if it's the [inaudible] or the chauffeur on the car of the grandparent, that's all. I don't know anything about that family at all. Not at all.

And when you left did you start looking for more information or was there a point when – you said you started now talking about your story, what –?

Well, I thought I knew. You know, I never thought any further. I thought I knew, which I realise now so many things I did not know. I still could not speak about it with my father or with Mimi. It was still very, very difficult. And never with Mimi ask anything about how my mother was. Never. But, you know, when I came to this country, when I got married and we mixed mainly – I have to – we've got non-Jewish friends of course, but our friends were mainly through my husband and it was mainly young people, young Jewish crowds, and whenever we went out somewhere they always wanted to hear my story. To me at the time – let me tell you that for a long time I did not appreciate I was a survivor. **[01:18:00]** For me, I didn't know what – almost what – well, I know what the word means, but I did not, you know, refer to it – what's the word I'm looking for?

You didn't see yourself as a survivor.

No. Not at all. It's only – now I've been doing it for at least eight years – and I started in the synagogues, that somebody said, 'Yes, you should, you are.' And I say, 'No, I'm not.' Because for me, the survivors were the people who were refugees here. That's the people I saw as survivors. For me, I was not a refugee, so I was not a survivor. But people saw me different. I don't know how you see me. If you see me as a survivor or not, I don't know [laughs].

You know, everyone can choose a category and sometimes people are called something and it's an interesting thing. Also, with, you know, the refugees for many years didn't see themselves as survivors either.

Yeah, yeah. Well, the same thing.

It's interesting.

Yes, it's true, it's just an expression one uses but, you know, as you say you can interpret it as you wish. And for a long time when people – I say, 'I'm not a survivor,' because for me I was not a refugee, therefore not a survivor. And then slowly, hearing other people's stories and here, you know, realising people were interested to hear what happened, then I realised, ah, maybe they're right actually, it's true, I am a survivor. I'm lucky I survived. Had it not been for Mimi maybe at the time, and maybe also my father in all fairness, I wouldn't be here telling the story because I would have gone on the train as well. So, in that respect I am a survivor.

And that's when you started talking of it.

And that's when I started talking. I was asked – I started – they're very good here. **[01:20:03]** I know it's not all over London, but I think it started more in the south of the river. There's a lady – I'm very friendly with her now – called Judy Thwaites who started to organise for the schools to come to the synagogues. Every January. You know, the last week in January?

Hmm-mm.

And she started that, and it really – she started it in a synagogue in Kingston. There are two. There is the orthodox and the – I think it's reform, and I think it's liberal, I can't remember. Yes, liberal. And they started – you know, the two synagogues worked together, and they started inviting [inaudible] there was a teacher there – went round to schools to see if they would be interested, and that's how they started all that. And then they got – no, they don't even get – now, they're starting to get a bit of money from each – I think each town's hall or something to help a little bit.

So that's how you started.

And that's how I started. And then afterwards, I was invited – I think – so AJR, there was a ceremony in London in Queen Elizabeth Hall, and then somebody – it was not Julian. Well, the wife of this gentleman I'm telling you that you haven't done, he is Marcel, say, 'You should speak to somebody here.' Because her husband does that, Marcel. You know, 'They would be very interested.' So, I did, and that's how it all started really. So now I know why I'm a survivor, and I'm very grateful to all those organisation to give me the opportunity. Not because it's my story, but I believe so strongly that those young people have to know about it. **[01:22:05]** Because, you know, how many of us are left? How many are left who are able to speak? So if we don't say it – I mean, I'm still able to go round and speak. If I don't do it, you know, those young people will never know. I mean, I spoke to an organisation here a few years ago, just – yes, through – it was during the pandemic because we couldn't – you know, it was on Zoom, I do quite a lot of Zooms. And afterwards people ask – it had nothing to do with a Jewish organisation – they asked me question which I was so amazed, showing me that they knew nothing about what had happened. Nothing about the Holocaust. I mean, all those people, you know, maybe were born quite a few years after the War and don't realise what happened.

And since talking to schools, do you feel it has changed you, talking about your story?

Well, it definitely changed me in the fact that I think so much more about my mother, and that, you know, I want to make the difference between Mimi and my mother. Changed me, I don't know. That you should ask my husband [laughs]. I don't know if it's changed me.

Brought you closer to your mother?

Yes, definitely. I am so avid of knowing anything which happens now regarding all the anti-Semitism. I follow everything much more than I did before. Much, much more. I'm always – I have to say, always frightened that something is going to happen because I've got two children, I've got two boys and five granddaughters, and although -technically they are not Jewish- because my boys married out, you know, I'm worried. I am deeply worried. **[01:24:10]** So I feel that it is my duty. I have to go on, you know –

To talk.

To talk. We've got to tell those young people. You'll be surprised how a lot of them – I'm talking the fourteen years old, fifteen years old, have no idea because often they're not often even told by the schools when we speak to them. It is the year – you know, they're learning that particular time, part of the War, but then they're not really told about the Holocaust, which is quite amazing actually.

Annick, did you talk to your own children? When you had children did you talk about your family?

Not really, but now both my sons have heard the story. But they never asked anything. Like me, they never asked. Like, I told you before, both my in-laws were refugees. My father-in-law was in a concentration camp right at the beginning, but in those days if you had money to buy a visa you were able to get out. So that was his story. My husband live – I mean, my mother-in-law lost her entire family. It's only her still there, and thanks to her husband because he came to England first, and she took, believe it or not, the last train going through from Germany to Holland. The day the War was declared, the trains stopped. And she used to say she didn't know which way it would go. [Inaudible] my father-in-law was already here. So, my husband was brought up with that, and never, never asked anything. **[01:26:04]** My mother-in-law could never talk really about it. So, my children heard the story of their grandparents, but they never really knew at that time about me. But now they do, to the extent that the youngest son, I was telling him that nowadays a lot of children of survivors who have now passed away, are telling the stories. But I say, 'I wonder if any of you would want to do it.' He say, 'I will do it.' So, they've taken it in.

How do you feel about that?

Very proud. Very, very proud, because of course, there was a thing that they married out which was a bit – I had no right to say anything. Not with my background. You know, I tried to say – you know, made them a bit understand, but it was very difficult. So no, now they're really – both of them when I got the award they were so taken by it all. So, I don't know if

the other son will do it. I wouldn't be surprised. I haven't asked him, but this one say, 'I will do it,' so it worked somewhere I suppose.

Tell us a little bit, how did you meet your husband?

[Laughs] That's another funny story. As you know, I came then to England. I was welcomed by this lovely family. Their name was Geller. Geller, yes. Hilda and George Geller. They had two daughters, and they lived in Bristol, and I came as their *au pair*. Arrive in August, at the end of August, and at the beginning – September was Rosh Hashanah, and they knew of course, all about my background, and they knew that my family wanted me to learn, you know, about that. They were not strictly religious, they were traditional. **[01:28:06]** The grandmother was a bit more – so she used to come and cook on Friday to show me what to do [laughs], but they took me to the synagogue for Rosh Hashanah, and it was a synagogue in Bristol which is a very old synagogue. Beautiful, old synagogue. And it was orthodox, so the men sat downstairs and the women upstairs. And of course, I went up there. It was my very first time in a synagogue. And somebody said to me, 'Look down there. There's some men.' Actually, I should tell it was the daughter, the eldest daughter had a friend who came and say, 'Look down, there's my boyfriend.' And I looked up, and this boyfriend looked at the same time. You know, that was it. And then a few – well, in October was this young man's birthday and he invited me for his birthday. I mean, he knew he was somebody's, you know, boyfriend but he was very interested. And fifty-four years later, we are still together [laughs]. I didn't try to take that boyfriend away because it was not at all my style. No way, but he was the one, you know, interested. And he went travelling, came to see me when I was in Munich, and then we both ended up in Paris and then, you know, the end of the story [laughs].

So you were here then, you took another au pair position in Munich.

Then I was here for eleven months, then I had a cousin who was already *au pair* in Munich. **[01:30:07]** And it was strange, the family in Holland thought maybe I should now go to Germany to learn another language, which I found that very strange from them, but anyway. Because the cousin was there, they thought I wouldn't be on my own. So, I went to this

family in Munich. Quite interesting actually because when I were there I discovered that he had – what do you call – the cross, you know, the –

Iron cross.

Yes. He was a pilot during the War, and she was also involved in the War, but they were so – they were charming to me. I must say, I never told them I was Jewish first. And then the cousin of mine, the husband – my cousin from Holland – came to visit. He was on business and of course he was also German-born but lived in Holland. When they saw him, they guessed. They didn't say but they guessed. And then a little while later Alan came to visit me [laughs], so they definitely guess. But the strange thing was that when Alan went, the lady from the family – Wittmann was their name. He was Herr Doktor Wittmann, and she always wanted me to call her Frau Doktor –

Frau Doctor.

But I say, 'You're not Frau Doktor Wittman.' I never did [laughs], never. Maybe it was a bit silly of me, but anyway. She said to me when Alan left, she said she had somebody else she wanted me to go out with there. **[01:32:01]** She say, 'You know, history has a very odd way of repeating itself.' Can you imagine? Coming from a German woman who had been involved in the War. I was a bit shocked actually. I didn't stay with them that long, but he was – I didn't want to stay *au pair* any more, but he was very nice. He actually found me a job in his offices and, you know, I stayed there for quite a while. Yes, I stayed there with them for almost a year working in there. You know, I never was in touch with them afterwards actually. I mean, they were – the grandmother who was also very nice there, used to tell me that her husband used to help Jewish people pass through to Switzerland. I am not sure it was true, but I didn't really want to know. I was always careful. There was something. I was always a bit – in fact, after saying that I had a very good, very, very good German girlfriend I met through those people. She knew nothing about what had happened. She told me that at school they were not – now they do I think, but they didn't. And at the time, we met two Israeli boys, and we took her to Dachau because as you know it's not very far from Munich, and it was the first time she was seeing anything at all. But I was quite pleased. I

stayed friendly with her. But then I had – you know, I was young at the time – I had a boyfriend, a German boyfriend and I told him straightaway that I was – and he shared a room with another chap. **[01:34:03]** And he said to me, 'Never mention it in front of the other chap.' The other chap belonged to a secret organisation. I was quite horrified actually [laughs], quite horrified. Here you are.

And from Germany you went back to France?

From Germany I went yet again *au pair.* In Paris because I did a school in Paris, and it was a way of finding lodging. And then from there I worked in Paris. I work actually for BMW because it was English and German of course, and from then I was seeing – Alan was also in Paris at that time, but then he left and went back to England, but we knew that something, you know, there was something then. And then I left to go – got engaged, went back to – I got engaged in England, then came back, and then eventually went back to get married, and I've been here fifty-four years [laughs].

And where did you get married?

In Bristol – well, first of all we had a civil wedding in France. We got married in my town hall there, and then we –

And Mimi attended? Your father?

And my father, absolutely. My in-laws came, and all Mimi's family really, because her family was like my family. And then we had the religious wedding in England at the synagogue where we met. It was quite funny. I always say first time in a synagogue and then I meet my husband. It was fate, isn't it [laughs]?

That was your first time there.

It was my very first time I went into a synagogue or shul, very first time. It was quite strange [laughs], yeah.

And then where did you settle down, Alan and you?

When we got married we lived in London. We used to live in Kingsbury. **[01:36:02]** I don't know if you know the area.

Yeah.

It was very Jewish in those days. We lived in Kingsbury and Alan used to work for IBM, and IBM, I don't know if you know, it means I've Been Moved [laughs]. So, we [inaudible] I wouldn't tell you, we were moved then south of the river where everybody told me, 'You must take your passport with you,' [laughs]. And we moved to Cheam. Cheam is next-door to Sutton, Sutton and Cheam.

Yes.

And we were in Cheam for quite a while, and from Cheam we went back to live in Bristol, and from Bristol we went to live in Paris. So, that's – you know, and then from Paris we came back. We lived in Surrey near Woking, in Pyrford – I don't think you would know – and then moved here.

And did you work at all or did you –?

Yes, well, when I was married, Alan used to travel a lot so, you know, I stayed to look after the boys. But then once the boys left for university, I went to work for British Airways.

In what capacity?

Just ground staff. I did want to fly, but I felt – I did apply, and I had to go for the interview, but I felt I was too old. It's quite – I was in my fifties then, and I thought I was too old to do that. And, you know, it's very special. You have to really – you mustn't be married I think to travel like that [laughs]. It's not a life for married people. Still, it was great actually, it was a

great time for me, but- I encountered quite a bit of anti-Semitism there, working for British Airways actually. **[01:38:01]** Quite interesting. I mean, my very – I don't know if I'm supposed to say or –

Yeah.

My very first – when I was training – because, you know, you have to train first, and at one time we were shown different films, different videos of different countries. We had to learn about how people – you know, from different countries, their habits, how they react, and so on. And there was one which was made by the staff in Tel-Aviv, and at the end of that video we had one of the managers there, there was two of them taking the course, and she say, 'I wish Hitler had finished his job.' And I'm there, you know, I don't know what to do. I don't know what to say. When I joined them, I think I was fifty-two when I went to work, fifty-one/fifty-two, very pleased to have that job at my age. What do I do? I befriended a little Indian girl who was training with me. When we had a break, we went out, she said to me, 'Are you feeling all right?' She say, 'You look green.' So, I told her, and she was quite shocked as well. I say, 'You know, they talk like that about me today. Tomorrow it'll be about you,' because she was Indian. And really, I was in a position where I didn't know what to do, but I felt I can't leave it like that. Anyway, we finished the training and then I went into the terminal and a few days after actually I happened to be in the terminal and crossed this woman. And I stopped her, and I told her. When I started talking, I think she [inaudible]. She was not purple, and she couldn't stop apologising. **[01:40:05]** I could have gone straight to management and had her sacked, but then I would have lost my job as well maybe because she was extremely popular, and it would have been difficult for me. You know, having her sacked, my life would have been impossible there, so I told her directly and she was so apologetic. I can understand why she said it, but she had no right to say it. I mean, we did have a lot of problem with, you know, all the very *frum* men.

Yeah.

The take-off gate, you can't board the aircraft because you can't move them because they're praying. It was very difficult I know. And the other thing you may not know which I was

very ashamed of, now they can't do that, but in the days where people were dropped at the door of the terminal, I'm talking really men, I must admit the *frum*, really *frummers*, used to come with huge cases, very light. Used to check-in, the cases they weigh nothing, not even, you know, five kilos, not even two or three kilo. And we had to label the cases, give them the boarding card, and then they had to take their cases through a special security in those days because there had been an incident. But before they took the cases back to the security, the cars were waiting outside, and they would go back and pack. You know, fill the cases to the brim, and that gave us a bad name. I was very upset about it because as far as I'm concerned, it gave us a very bad name. That, you know, everybody talked about it. And they don't distinguish. **[01:42:02]** You know, as far as they're concerned, it's Jewish people acting like that, and for me that was not on at all. So, I never excused that manager, but in a way, I could see what she was saying because they had a lot of problem with all those flights. Anyway.

But did you say to people you were Jewish?

After –

In general, or –?

Do you know something, I never came and said hello, I never say it like that, but when the opportunity came I never hide it. But it was very interesting for me not to say. They thought I was French. For them I was French and that was it. They opened up a lot, and I always say, 'You will never know how Jewish people would have been,' – not Jewish people, 'how British people would have reacted had Britain been invaded during the War.' Because that's the time when I discovered how people were reacted already. You know, reacting to it.

Yeah.

So it's difficult, very difficult really.

Annick, you raised two children. So, what identity did you want to give to them?

As far as we know they were Jewish, absolutely. They were bar mitzvah. They had big bar mitzvahs in Paris. It was like weddings. We didn't do their weddings [laughs]. We did the bar mitzvahs. So, far as we were concerned, they were brought – and then they went to university. I mean, most of our friends were Jewish. We met, you know, our friend [inaudible] when we were in Paris. Our boys became very, very friendly. We were all great friends there. And they went to university and, you know, things changed.

And what about Annick, your own identity? **[01:44:01]** *How would you describe yourself today?*

Oh, Jewish. As far as I am concerned, I am Jewish. You know, I'm not very observant and I don't hide it, and I feel somehow it would be hypocritical of me because the way I lived until I was, you know, twenty-three. But I am Jewish, full stop. Absolutely.

Do you feel British at all?

[Both laugh] Yeah, it's very strange that. When I go to France and I hear people criticise, I react. I defend this country. And when I'm here and I hear people criticise France, I also react. So, when there is a match, you know, France/England for example, I'm always asked, 'Who do you support?' I always say, 'The best team,' [laughs] because it's very difficult. You know, I see my loyalty are both ways. Very difficult to determine. How do you feel yourself? What do you – what are you [both laugh]?

I've got the same problem [both laugh]. Not quite actually, not quite.

Not quite.

I'll tell you later. Not quite [both laugh]. Yeah. Where would you say is your home today? Where do you feel at home?

Now today I think it's here. Until Mimi was alive, I felt very much in France. I always thought, always said I wanted to be buried, you know, in France. But now, no. With my

children being all here, now I feel my home is here. Definitely. I mean, we've got a house in France, I've got my father's house there, but my home really is here with my husband and my children, and grandchildren.

And Annick, how do you think – we talked a little bit about it. How do you think your experience affected your life? It's a big question. **[01:46:05]**

I know. [Pause] [Laughs] Do you know something? I feel more a fighter, but at the same time I feel very aware of everybody. If I'm with non-Jewish people here, I'm always a little bit aware of what I say or wonder how they're going to react. You know, that's really for me, it's still very difficult. I always tell my husband, 'Oddly enough I feel myself much more at home when I'm in a crowd of Jewish people.' In this country especially. I can't speak in France because I didn't mix with Jewish people.

Safer, safer.

But here in this country I feel I am – you know, with Jewish people I am really – that's my home. Yeah, absolutely.

And you said you didn't see yourself as a survivor. Now, do you see yourself as a survivor?

I think I can understand –

A child survivor?

Yes, yes, now I'm a baby survivor [laughs].

Baby survivor [laughs].

Two months and three weeks, I'm a baby survivor [laughs].

You are.

Now I can see. I really now understand the meaning, and it's true. You know, I managed to survive. It was not because of me, because what I was doing, but because thanks to other people. You know, people who were not afraid to help out. That's why I survive and that we must never forget. Absolutely.

You have found out a lot about your mother and the grandparents. Are there things you still feel you want to know you don't yet know, or –? **[01:48:04]**

Well, the thing I will never know now is about the great-grandparents. I know the grandfather – I know the family because there were a lot of brothers and I think there were some sisters as well. It was a big family, and my grandfather was the eldest one. And the father who did [inaudible] in textile, and in those days, he used to go to South America, you know, to sell his product, and he died there actually. And my grandfather who was the eldest had to take responsibility for the rest of the family. So, I have the feeling he may have been starting – he had to really work and make sure he was looking after everybody. And I met some of his siblings. In fact, when I came back from Holland, they all went into somebody's flat, one of them, and I was then with my other cousin, you know, the one who also survive, and we had to be inspected by all the family there. So, that I know, but the grandmother, I know nothing. All I know is that they were quite a well-to-do family, but I don't know any more.

And you want to know more. You would like –

It would be nice to know exactly, although some time you have to be careful because you are told certain things and suddenly you discover it was not quite what you imagine. But I think it would be nice to know a little bit more really. **[01:50:01]** What really I would have liked to know is what my mother was like. How she reacted, was she quick-temper or was she very docile? I would have liked to know all that. I don't know. I will never know. And that I miss very much. More and more as I grow older.

And how differently was your cousin affected? Because he was sort of similar age, let's say.

She's a girl as well, yeah.

Exactly.

She was also –

Do you see what I mean?

Yeah, I understand. I mean, we should really ask her. She was quite affected. She also herself was desperate to know more about her mother, but she had those three aunts, spinsters, who – they talked to her about her mother. I know that both our mothers were very talented in, you know, dancing. I know that. They won prizes all over France, and that I know, but I would have – you know –

So she had slightly more knowledge about her mother.

Yes, and also she had – she's shown me, she received a letter from somebody who – well after the War. I don't know when she got that letter, maybe twenty years ago – somebody who was a refugee – I don't think they were Jewish actually, I don't know – and they were refugee in Royan. And they had a daughter, and they wanted their daughter to learn dancing and ballet and so on, and they were recommended to her mother who at the time was not married. And this lady wrote my cousin a letter saying – talk about – and she saw my aunt, and after my mother, those two beautiful women. **[01:52:08]** Everybody used to say they were beautiful women, but – you know, only saw a few photos. Don't know any more really.

We're going to look at the photos.

I don't know [laughs] –

The other thing actually. When you grew up were you in touch with your cousin?

Yes, but not – you know what – Mimi used to take me because they had an ice-cream parlour. They had a very big reputation for their ice-cream in the area, and I used to be taken then [laughs]. The one thing I remember, and I tell her, she says she doesn't remember. I remember the one time being taken there and was sent to her bedroom. She had quite a lot of – they had quite a little bit of money compared to – although my father had at the time but didn't see it so much at home. And she went off to play with her friend [laughs], so she left me in the room. And whenever I was taken there, all I did was the aunts used to give me ice-cream. I used to come back sometime, and I was not feeling too well because I had eaten so many ice-creams. But we didn't feel that close when everybody wanted us to be close because I apparently our two mothers were extremely close. To the point, you know, I was told, no I heard – although my aunts said that actually, that when one went to the bathroom, lavatory, the other one would sit outside and wait. They were always together. They were very, very close. So they thought that maybe the two daughters would be, but it wasn't, not really. I mean, I'm very much in touch with her, in fact, her daughter came to – before the pandemic, stayed with us, lived with us for a few months, and I spoke to her this morning as it happens, but – **[01:54:12]**

Not when you were growing up.

No. Mimi tried. Mimi always tried to take me there but was not – I don't know. There was not that – we didn't attract each other. The only time we really came together is when I went to Holland, then she came as well later. I stayed there a lot longer, but she came, and that time we shared a bedroom, and that was the only time we were really close. But we're very different in looks. She looks more like her father. We were different in personality as well, very, very different, so, you know...

Yeah, and Annick you said before that possibly your aunt in Holland, there was a thought of taking you earlier after the War.

Yes, a little one. She wanted to bring me up.

And how do you see it now, for you?

I don't know.

A difficult question.

Yeah, I know. You know, I would not change my life now. I'm quite happy with what I did. My life I'm sure would have been different, but I may not be here now, I may not have my children so, you know. I certainly would have had a different upbringing, that's for sure, but I don't regret anything at all. Not at all. I'm quite happy as I am.

Okay Annick, is there anything I haven't asked you which you want to add, or we haven't discussed?

Not really. Not that I can – no, the only thing which I'm supposed to tell you that I just received the – I'm supposed to tell you that – **[01:56:05]**

Tell me.

We're instructed [laughs]. BEM, British Empire Medal.

Congratulations.

Thank you. And it's not even out anywhere [laughs]. We are told we must put the certificates, but I haven't done anything. I was somewhat surprised, but then I realised I think most of the survivors are getting one, year after year, so I think everybody – I don't know if it's everybody. I think people who actually, you know, talk, I have the feeling that's how it happens.

And you're happy about it [laughs]?

Do you know why I'm happy in a way, my husband is so happy, and my children are so pleased, so at least I've done something for them [laughs]. And the grandchildren as well [laughs], they're very proud of it.

So you received it for your contribution to Holocaust education.

Correct, exactly. Awareness of Holocaust as well, yeah, awareness and education of the Holocaust.

Okay. Annick, you speak to the children so that leads me to my last question. What message do you give to the children when you speak, or to anyone, and what message would you like for us, for anyone who watches this interview?

I think and said earlier that I always end up telling the children that whatever your religion, whatever colour of skin, we are all human beings, and we should all respect each other. Respect everybody for their belief, and for who they are. **[01:58:00]** I often say to them, 'If you cut yourself, whoever you are, your blood will be red. Whether you're black, you know, yellow or white, we all have red blood and don't forget we are – you know, that is so very important.' I actually tell the children that the story I tell them, they must take it home and one day there won't be any more survivors to tell the story. They are the last generation to meet survivors, that they owe to actually tell the stories to their children as well. I always end up telling them that. That they should never forget to go home, you go home tonight, and you talk about it. Do you know, the very first time – it was not the first time – I don't know, it was maybe the second time I did it, it was very interesting for me. It was in the synagogue in Kingston, and we had a little break, and when I was at the break I was talking to the person who organises it actually and there were four young girls waiting just there. And they were all – well, two of them were veiled and it was obvious that all those young ladies were Muslims. And the person I was speaking to said to them, 'Did you want something?' So, they say, yes, they wanted to give me a hug. And I thought coming from four young ladies like that, for me, I had achieved something. I like to think that they got the message a little bit, especially that we were – whatever, you know, belief we had, that we were just all human

beings. And for me, that was very special. **[02:00:02]** Very, very special, and I think it encouraged me to carry on.

And you plan to carry on.

Oh, definitely, as much – if I'm asked. I'm already booked for next year, so [laughs] – but, you know, if I'm asked, definitely, as long as I can do it, I want to do it. Absolutely. I always say, 'It's my duty to do it.' I do it for my mother, for my family. I must never forget that. You know, that's the only thing I can do for her. I've never been able to do anything else.

Have you ever been to Auschwitz?

No. I haven't. I've been asked that question many times as well. I was supposed to go one year and then it was cancelled, and we are wondering now with my husband whether to go or not. I don't know. And I must tell you something else there, you know when we speak to the children in the shul especially – yes, they do it now also when we go to the schools, they write you a card. I don't know if you ever came across those. You know, and they tell you thank you. And one year, I was asked like that after, because they ask questions, you know, 'Have you ever been to Auschwitz?' Now often what I do, I send it back, I say, 'What do you think? Should I go?' And quite a few say, 'Yes, you ought to go.' And one of them, I think the one who asked the question wrote on her card, 'You must go, and I will love to go with you and hold your hand.' And she even say, 'If you are frightened, I'd love to go with you and hold your hand.' I thought that was – when I touch children like that, I feel I'm achieving something, and I hope they remember one day. **[02:02:04]** That's why you do it really. You want to touch those children. You want those children to realise that it has been so horrible, and don't forget, we don't only mention the Holocaust, we also tell them about all those genocides. They have to know because, you know, it's still happening.

Yeah.

It's still happening.

And do you think you will go to Auschwitz? Is that something...?

I don't know. Maybe I should go with some of my children. The son who is coming back now from Singapore, maybe he would come with us. My husband is also nervous to go. It's very difficult. Have you been?

Yeah, I've been.

It's hard, isn't it?

Yeah, but maybe, you know, you can go with The March of the Living, you know, there's always – there were eight survivors this year- only. So I'm sure in the next years they will be looking for survivors.

I've never heard of that.

Oh, I'll tell you about it later.

Never heard of it. Here you are [laughs].

Yeah. Okay Annick, well thank you so much for your interview.

Thank you, thank you.

And we're going to look – we're taking a little break and then we'll look at your photographs and at the diary of your mother.

I thought I had lost it and I thought I had found it again. I must look again quickly.

Okay.

But listen – have you stopped?

One second, let's just – let's stop in one second. So just to say thank you.

[Break in recording] [pause]

[02:04:55] *Annick, please tell us what you're holding in your hand.*

The last diaries my mother wrote. And I'm open at a page. It is written in French, Saturday 22nd of January. The year is not marked but I know it was 1944.

Read it first in French maybe and then translate.

Okay.
Samedi 22 janvier. [Reads in French] – and remember that we were arrested on the 31st of January, so it's really nine days before we were arrested. [Reads in French]
'Ce matin ma poulet a prise son bain toute seule.' No, can't be. '*Elle pèse 9kg 450 grammes. [amour] encore aujourd'hui une heureuse'- je voudrais bien lire mais je n'arrive pas à comprendre.* I don't understand all the writing.
I don't understand all the writing. **[02:06:07]**

It's okay. Tell us what you read so far. Annick, what did she say in English?

Yeah, she said that she's calling me her little chicken [laughs], and that I've just taken my bath on my own. Can't have been on my own though. I don't know what she meant there. And the 22nd of January 1944, I weigh nine kilos, 450 grams. I'm a darling. [Pause] I always have good humour. I can't read it.

Annick, how did you get this diary?

Those were given to me by my aunt, by the only surviving sister. I've got another three which I would love to show you, but I cannot find at the moment. But that is I think even more precious because it's the very last one, and I realise – and what is quite interesting is at the

beginning, here, she's writing the address from before she was married, when we were in Paris. Quite –

What address was it?

Liliane Foks [Faubourg, dans VIeme [arrondissement] 60 rue Rochechouart [address in Paris]. I remember that's where they lived. But unfortunately, it's written very, very small and I find it's very difficult to understand. **[02:08:05]**

Okay.

I can't understand any more. It's so small. One thing, Annick [reads in French]. One thing I should say to you, you know, the reason of all those names, my mother wanted to call me Annick, that's what she wanted. My father wanted a name with Marie because his mother was called Marie. So that's why I was called Ann-Marie, but my mother always called me Annick, and the family in Holland always knew me as Annick. And afterwards, nobody wanted to call me Annick when she disappeared and I was very small, because I was always told I was such a sweet baby, Annick was too hard. So, that's why they ended up calling me Annich and Marie at school, and Annie in the family. But when I discovered the family in Holland, they say, especially my cousin, they say, 'We know your mother wanted to call you Annick, and for us you will always be Annick.' And they introduce me in England, at the family they introduced me under the name of Annick. That's why I'm called – and she always put – apparently, I was very smiling baby, a very good baby, so I was always told, very gentle. It changed [laughs], and docile. And that's what she talks about.

And now you're Annick.

Now, here, I am Annick, absolutely. It's officially sometimes Ann-Marie, but my name – everybody knows me as Annick, "ck" [laughs].

Thank you Annick, thank you.

Thank you.

[Break in recording]

This is a photo of Amsterdam with my uncle and my aunt and my mother. **[02:10:11]**

And the names please.

My aunt who is called – I can't remember her name [laughs] – oh dear. I should – their names, my mother there on the right of my uncle, my mother was called Cécile, and my aunt was called Marcelle. You don't want my uncle's names, do you?

If you have it.

And Karl von Damme. This is a photograph taken I believe maybe in Rotterdam with my aunt, Marcelle, and my mother Cécile – Liliane, sorry. I believe the gentleman must be my great-grandfather. I couldn't remember the name of my –

Yes please.

This is a photograph of my mother, Liliane, when she was a lot younger, but I'm afraid I do not know where it was taken.

This is a photograph of my aunt who is the one lying down, and my mother. My aunt, Marcelle, and my mother, Liliane. And that was taken on the beach in Royan. I would guess it was maybe done in 1940 or '41.

Okay.

My grandparents, Jacques Foks, and Ellen Foks, and my aunt and my mother. My aunt, Marcelle, and my mother, Liliane. **[02:12:04]** I do not know the name of the dog.

Where was it taken?

In Royan.

And when?

In 1940. This is a photograph of my father Pierre Xavier, and my mother. I think they may have been married at the time. So, my mother is Liliane, then Xavier, and I believe it was taken in Thénac where I was born.

This is a picture of my grandmother, Ellen Foks, and my father, Pierre Xavier, taken in Thénac. This is my mother, Liliane Xavier then, and my cousin, Marie-Claire Judici. This is my parents. I am not sure, but it could be on the day of their wedding. And if it is, it would be taken in Royan.

This is a photo of my mother on the left, and my aunt, Marcelle, on the right. I believe they were taken to create the false identity cards.

This is little me, and I believe I was about seven months. You must see the earrings, lovely cherries.

And you were already with your foster mother?

That was taken when I was living with Mimi. This is a picture of Mimi with her daughter Claudie, and myself, and that was taken in [inaudible] when we were on holidays, [whispers] but I don't know the year. **[02:14:09]**

This picture was taken fifty-four years ago on the 5th of November. My husband Alan and myself on our wedding day.

When?

In Bristol shul, synagogue.

1967?

Yes. On the 5th of November 1967.

Thank you.

My sons, Antoine on the left and Pierre on the right. This picture was taken for – I believe it was Antoine's wedding. I cannot remember the year.

Don't worry.

My beautiful granddaughters. Eleanor on the left, then comes Sophie, Alice, Amy, and Kitty. This is the textile car – sorry, can you – I can't remember – yes.

This is the ration card my mother to be able to buy textile.

My mother's last three diaries of her life.

How did you get those diaries?

They were given to me by my aunt, surviving sister, who lived in Holland. And she gave them to me, I believe about thirty years ago, thirty-five years ago. I don't know exactly. **[02:16:03]**

This is a picture of the cenotaph in Thénac.They were very kind in putting the name of the family on it. So, you can see on the right-hand side is the name of my grandfather, my grandmother, and my aunt, and my mother.

Annick, thank you so much again for sharing your story and your photographs with us. Thank you.

Thank you for doing it.

[End of transcript]