

Anna was born in Frankfurt, Germany. She spent her early childhood travelling with her parents and five siblings as part of a Gypsy theatre group.

In 1938 Anna and her family were forced to settle in Leipzig, Germany. They were stopped from travelling and attending school.

Four years later they were told that they would be resettled in Poland and were taken to a concentration camp called Auschwitz. They had never heard of Auschwitz before – Anna was excited about the train journey.

At Auschwitz there was space for 500 people. 1000 people were taken there. Anna and her family had their clothes taken away from them and they were showered and shaved. The conditions at Auschwitz were horrendous.

At Auschwitz Anna was sterilised when she turned sixteen. This means that Anna can never have children.

After two years at Auschwitz Anna was taken to work at an ammunition factory. She was alone. All of her relatives, including her mother, father and five siblings, had died at Auschwitz.

At the factory there were very harsh punishments for not doing enough work – people were often sent back to Auschwitz and straight into the gas chamber.

Anna was told that she hadn't worked hard enough at the factory and would be sent back to Auschwitz. At the last minute she swapped places with another girl, who wanted to be with her relatives at Auschwitz. Anna was sent to another concentration camp, Bergen Belsen, instead.



Bergen Belsen was worse than Auschwitz.  
Anna got sick with pleurisy and pneumonia.  
She was not taken to hospital.

At the end of the war, when the British came and liberated the camp, she was taken to hospital where she stayed for eight months.

After this Anna returned to Bergen Belsen and lived in the liberated camp for two more years because she didn't have anywhere else to go or any family members left.