GEORGIA COMMISSION ON THE HOLOCAUST

SURVIVOR PROFILE: MARY BOS

Mary Bos was born in Amsterdam and became a classmate of Anne Frank when her family moved from Frankfurt, Germany, in 1934. The Nazi Party had come to power in the German elections a year prior. Anne attended a Montessori school while her sister, Margot, attended a public school. On Anne's thirteenth birthday, June 12, 1942, she received a red and white checkered autograph book which she began using as a diary. In an entry made while in hiding Anne wrote that she had had a dream in which she was looking at pictures her friend Mary had drawn. Mary's daughter, Karen, reflects, "the funny thing is that my mom can't draw at all!"

Mary Bos poses by a photograph in *Anne Frank in the World* while visiting the exhibit with her family on January 21, 2012. (Georgia Commission on the Holocaust)

Mary's father, Arie Bos, was "quite famous" in Holland as a world champion billiard player. He refused matches against any opponent connected with Hitler and even made statements against the Nazi leader's military aggression. "This, of course, got him in trouble and he was put on a 'hit list' and received many threats," Karen explains. It also turned out that the family's maid was a Nazi spy.

Since Mary's mother, Katharine, and uncle were American, the family, through contact with the American Embassy, was able to secure visas allowing them to leave Holland just one month before it was invaded by the Nazis in May of 1940. Of this period Mary remembers being told to keep her knowledge of her family's departure in utmost secrecy. She watched soldiers preparing for the invasion by rehearsing their march and using broomsticks as practice weapons. Her grandmother died in a hospital after the staff refused treatment because of her relation to Arie. Mary's aunt died at one of the Nazi's many notorious concentration camps.

Mary did not realize Anne's fate until she read her diary after it was first published in 1947. She also visited Anne's father, Otto Frank, after the war. Mary has "vague memories of Anne," including Anne's tenth birthday party of which she had been a guest. The Bos family donated some items to the Anne Frank Huis in Amsterdam including a picture taken at that party and an autograph book in which Anne had signed "with love" after her message: "Think of your school friends in the past. When you think of that, and these last years, then think Mary also of me."

"Of course, when [my mother] knew Anne, she was just an ordinary girl," Karen states. Mary and her husband, Bob Schneider, visited the Anne Frank Huis in Amsterdam as honored guests for the museum's 50th anniversary. The trip included a visit to the Montessori school and dinner with Otto Frank's step-daughter, Eva Schloss.

Mary lives with her husband in Hendersonville, N.C. The couple frequently visits Atlanta. The picture of Mary and Anne at her tenth birthday can be seen on panel 41 of the *Anne Frank in the World* exhibit.

Mary lit a candle in honor of the victims of the Holocaust at the 2012 Georgia State Official Days of Remembrance ceremony.