

## BOOK REVIEW:

### *Anah's War*

by Johanna van Rooy

*Book Pal: Cooper's Plains, Queensland; 2010; 287 pp.; ISBN 9781921791499 (paperback); RRP \$19.77; Ursula Davidson Library call number 437 ROOY 2010*



The Ursula Davidson Library contains several books written for the younger reader. One of them is *Anah's War* by Johanna Van Rooy, which displays the hardships that people had to face in occupied Europe during World War II. Similar to *The Diary of Anne Frank*, it shows the development of a girl to a young woman in Nazi Netherlands.

The novel, written like a diary by "Anah", starts before the Second World War breaks out. Anah is still a young girl at this point and she fills her diary with fun with her friends and her adventures with her siblings. The context of the diary abruptly transforms as Anah's beloved home, the town of Nijmegen, gets invaded by the German Army and the country becomes controlled by the Nazis. Being a known Jew, her life changes significantly, as she tries each day to survive the war.

This book shows another perspective of what so many civilians had to do, in order to stay alive – that was to hide. For years, Anah had to stay in the homes of trusted friends. With little access to necessities, such

as food and clean clothes, Anah had only her diary to resort to. These entries are well detailed and show how Anah is transformed by her experiences.

Although a novel, Johanna van Rooy has crafted it from her parents' experiences in the war while living in Nijmegen. Throughout the book, the readers can see how the war impacted Anah's adolescence and how she becomes so grateful for what she has. This novel has a feeling of truthfulness, giving a human side to what we know from historical facts, something which I like most about the book. It shows the reality of those times and does not "air-brush" the truth.

This novel is well suited for teen to adult modern history lovers; however, it has content that could be confronting to some people. I would love for more people to read the book and find the same love for the novel as I have.

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