

The last time she saw her mother...



SABINA VAN DER LINDEN

The last time she saw her mother, Sabina was 12 years old. In her home town of Borislav in Poland, she was taken by the Nazis, with 9 other young girls for special work. When she was allowed home a few days later, only her father and brother Joseph were there. Joseph, himself only 15, arranged for her to go into hiding as a gentile.

For the next year, Joseph contacted her via smuggled letters, arranging for her to move from one family to another and then to a bunker in the forest. When it was raided by the Ukrainian militia, miraculously, Sabina evaded being caught! Soon after, she learned that Joseph and her father had been shot in the labour camp. Now, just 14 years old, she was completely alone.

Joseph would often say to her: "You must survive!"

Remembering this, she found the will to live. She went to a hiding place she knew about and here, within a few weeks, she was liberated by the Russians in August 1944.

Many families had the courage to care for Sabina, ensuring that one young girl survived. She often didn't know their names, in case she was captured and, if tortured, revealed them. Yet all have a place in her heart.

Courage to care