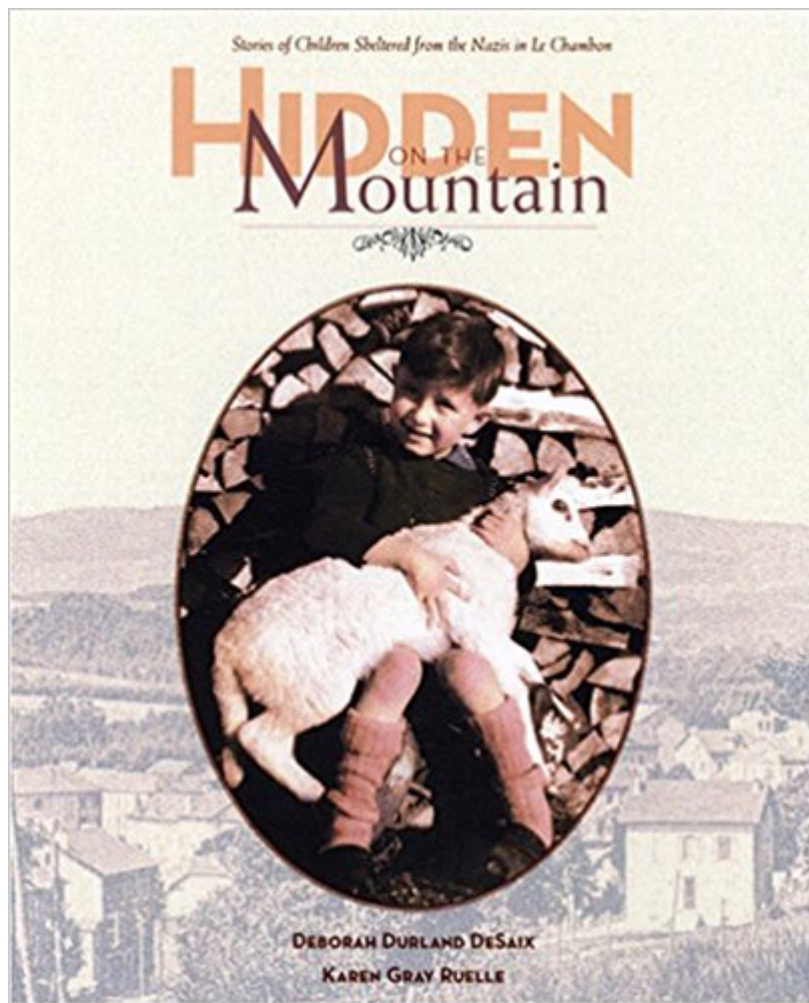




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Hidden On The Mountain: Stories Of Children Sheltered From The Nazis In Le Chambon



Synopsis

As the Nazi Army closed in on Europe at the onset of World War II, desperate Jewish families were forced to flee their homes. In danger and with no safe place to go, the little village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon and the area of Auvergne, in Southern France, became a refuge for them. A Protestant stronghold where people had once been persecuted for their religious beliefs, the community sheltered several thousand Jews, many of whom were children. In this book the authors tell the poignant stories of some of these children, collected in interviews both of survivors and the families who helped them. Time line, glossary, bibliography, and index.

Book Information

Hardcover: 275 pages

Publisher: Holiday House; First Edition edition (February 1, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0823419282

ISBN-13: 978-0823419289

Product Dimensions: 9.5 x 7.8 x 1.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 10 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #893,867 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #81 in [Books > Teens >](#)

[Education & Reference > History > Holocaust](#) #84 in [Books > Teens > Education & Reference > History > Europe](#) #190 in [Books > Teens > Education & Reference > History > Military](#)

Customer Reviews

Grade 6-10
Through extensive research and visits to New York, Florida, Virginia, Switzerland, and France, DeSaix and Ruelle uncovered the amazing story of the thousands of children who were sheltered in the tiny mountainous French village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon during the Holocaust. The first chapters provide readers with an introduction to World War II, the Vichy government, and the region in southern France of La Montagne Protestante. Subsequent chapters contain first-person accounts by individuals who, as children, were hidden on the mountain, along with black-and-white photographs and an epilogue detailing their lives after the war. Profiles of local residents who were instrumental in rescuing, sheltering, hiding, and helping refugees escape to Switzerland are included as third-person accounts. The authors interweave useful information about the French Resistance and the various aid organizations that were committed to helping Jewish refugee children. While they explain their rationale for switching

between the first- and third-person narrations, the fluidness of the text is ruined in the process, making it seem choppy and uneven. Regardless, the book is an invaluable resource for Holocaust educators, and many of the children's narratives would read beautifully out loud. It would also be a wonderful companion to the movie *Weapons of the Spirit*. Readers of novels such as Carol Matas's *Greater Than Angels* (S & S, 1998) and Connie Colker Steiner's *Shoes for Amelie* (Lobster, 2005) who are interested in learning more about the courageous and heroic deeds of these villagers will find *Hidden on the Mountain* fascinating and inspiring.

—â œ Rachel Kamin, Temple Israel Libraries & Media Center, West Bloomfield, MI Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

In this inspiring photo-essay, the authors tell an amazing rescue story about a Nazi occupied Protestant community in south-central France that pulled together to save several thousand Jewish children from the Holocaust. Kathy Kacer's *Hiding Edith* (2006) tells a similar story from the viewpoint of one child. More detailed, this account is based on extensive research and interviews with 30 survivors and rescuers, who recall in diary-style entries how it was. Many readers will focus on the dramatic overviews and commentaries, but the personal details, accompanied by black-and-white photos, are unforgettable, too: living with fear; waiting for a letter ("Why haven't Mama and Pap sent for me?"); escaping to Switzerland. The research is a big part of the book, and the authors have provided extensive documentation as well as time lines, maps, bibliographies, and source notes that can help researchers find out more. Readers slightly younger and older than the target audience will find this compelling, too. Pair it with Carol Matas' novelization of the story, *Greater than Angels* (1998). Hazel Rochman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

Moving story of a French village which 'bonded' as it sheltered Jewish children during WWII. Certain of the children's stories are told in detail, without idealization, showing the diversity of character and background of what one would normally only think of in terms of a group of refugees. Am glad I didn't miss this.

This was an excellent book about a beautiful, true story. We gave it to our 14-year-old grandson, who is interested in world history. The whole family learned from the heroic deeds that are unveiled in this book. A good read, too.

This is a very well written story for adults as well as teens. The many stories of children now adults telling their stories of life during WW II.

this is a wonderful book. i have read several books on le chambon, but this one is by far the best. it really tells the story of what life was like for those who where in hiding from the nazis. what makes this book stand out from others is is because the stories are told from the refuges point of view. this makes it much more interesting.

Years ago I saw the film "Weapons of the Spirit" on PBS. When I was ordering books later, I wanted a copy of the DVD & further information about the events in-and-around LeChambon sur Lignon during the Vichy Government days of WWII. This and other books enhanced my enlightenment on the subject. What a CRIME it is that Americans don't know what simple Huguenot citizens of France were able to do under VERY trying circumstances - opening their homes to those fleeing the Nazis (because they knew it was " the right thing to do"), then sharing the very little that they had available for them & their families with an almost equal number of Jewish refugees and also helping hide them from the Nazis. ...And at the same time OUR government was TURNING AWAY Jewish refugees fleeing for their lives from the Nazis!!!Maybe next time it will be our turn to choose to do the right thing.

This non-fiction book is a unique collection of real-life accounts from individuals who as children were sheltered during the Nazi era in the mountains of Southern France in a town called Le Chambon. This work is quite admirable, as individuals interviewed recall their experiences in journal form. The stories attest to the heartbreak and the realistic dangers of the times, but provide an added sense of hope and an appreciation for those who rose up against evil. Each entry is followed with an epilogue that gives the reader the satisfaction of knowing what has become of each child. The stories are not without pain and great loss, but what shines through is the righteousness of the citizens of La Chambon. The Jewish children who were sent to La Chambon, a Protestant community, were separated from their parents. In the face of trauma, the children were warmly welcomed into their new community. The children attended school, worked on farms, and participated in activities with other children. The uniqueness of La Chambon was in the sense of duty the entire community had in protecting the Jewish children. Many of the individuals discuss their Judaism, including the struggle to make sense of their religious identity. The "Note to Readers" in the beginning of the book, clearly details the research process and the care taken by the authors

to share these stories with authenticity. The authors' passion for the project is felt throughout the book. For ages 11- 16.

I just chanced upon this remarkable book: *Hidden on the Mountain* by Deborah Durland DeSaix and Karen Gray Ruelle: *Stories of Children Sheltered from the Nazis in Le Chambon*. The authors spent four years finding and interviewing people, who as children and youth were protected during WWII by this community. They have then masterfully proceeded to tell their stories. Le Chambon is a mountainous region of France inhabited by Huguenot Christians. These people, many poor farmers, opened their homes and supported three children's homes for children needing safe haven during WWII. Many of these children were Jews. They are credited with saving at least 3,500 Jews as well as about 1,500 other refugees. In addition to the memories of the children and youth, the book includes a detailed time line of events of the war; numerous pictures of the children, people, and places mentioned in the book; a glossary; index; maps; and informative chapters about the war, the region, and its people. This book was written for children and is exactly what I am looking for to share with my children, ages 10 and 13, as we study WWII.

What a superb book! It was written for young people. Its historical introduction is perfect so the readers can understand why there were so many refugees during WW II. The testimonies are true and the photographs authentic. The chapter epilogues add a great dimension to the stories : they tell us what those refugee children became as adults. As someone who grew up during WW II in France, this is the book I recommend without reservations to all parents and young people .Thank you, Deborah and Karen!

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