



**Lili KELLER-ROSENBERG**  
**UNE VIE, UNE VOIX ( A LIFE, A VOICE )**  
**52' - 2024**



@ Les productions Cercle Bleu

<https://vimeo.com/1013078747>

[mot de passe : Lili](#)

**Trailer :** <https://vimeo.com/1020134227>

First broadcaster : WEO

Partnership : PICTANOVO & La Fondation de la mémoire de la SHOAH

Duration : 52'

Delivery : 2024

Lili Keller - Rosenberg is one of the last survivors of the concentration camps. To raise awareness among the younger generation, whom she calls "her little messengers", she tirelessly visits schools to tell her story. In the film, we follow her at the Lycée professionnel Savary-Ferry in Arras, northern France.

At the same time, she goes back to her childhood. All her memories before the Second World War are contained in a very few photos, her parents' house having been looted. Coming from Hungary, they arrived in Roubaix, northern France, in the 1920s after leaving Budapest, where anti-Semitism was already rife. Born in 1932, she was deported to Bergen Belsen with her two brothers and her mother. They survived and were able to return to France after the end of the war.

Her father was deported to the Buchenwald concentration camp after his arrest on October 27, 1943, by Feldgendarmarie soldiers. He was shot by the Nazis a few days before the camp was liberated by the Americans.

## Portrait of Lili Keller Rosenberg



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### Two years of deportation

The eldest of three children, Lili Rosenberg was born in Roubaix. When the Second World War broke out, she and her brothers Robert and André were not yet teenagers. At first, they went into hiding with the family of the parish priest.

But after a brief return home, the Rosenbergs were arrested on October 27, 1943, by soldiers of the Feldgendarmerie (German military police). "I remember, it was the day before Mum's birthday", Lili points out in her soft, confident voice.

The father was separated from his family, and Lili and her brothers learned on their return that he had been sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp - where he was shot by the Nazis a few days before the place was liberated.

For the four remaining members, a journey through part of Europe begins. First Loos prison, then Saint-Gilles (Brussels), Mechelen assembly camp, before arriving at Ravensbrück women's concentration camp in December 1943.

District de Roubaix  
Renseignements Généraux

DÉPARTEMENT DU NORD

Arrondissement de Lille  
Canton de  
Ville de Roubaix

FICHE DE RENSEIGNEMENTS  
concernant les personnes arrêtées  
par l'Autorité Allemande.

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Prénoms (avec le nom de  
naissance pour les femmes) ..... R O S E N B E R G

(souligner le prénom usuel) ..Lili

Date de naissance .....15 Septembre 1932

Lieu de naissance .....Croix


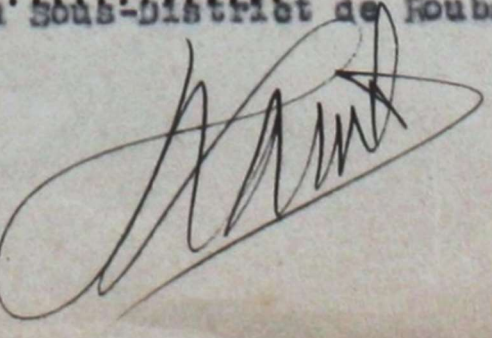
Nationalité .....Française

Situation de famille : célibataire - ~~MARIÉ~~ - ~~VEUF~~ - ~~DIVORCÉ~~ (1) -  
Néant

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Roubaix, 30 Octobre 1943  
A ..... le .....  
Commissaire Central de Police  
Chef du Sous-District de Roubaix,

Information inutile.  
Si possible, l'Autorité  
Gendarmerie - Police -

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"We were nobody. At 91 years of age, the Roubaix native bears witness to daily life in these horrifying places. Getting up at 3:30 a.m., "we got up half an hour earlier so we could wash. It was important to Mum, she used to say that the Germans had taken everything from us except our dignity. And that they wouldn't take it from us," she explains. That's why she insists on testifying upright and dressed to the nines.

The roll call, which could last for hours, during which the inmates had to stand in line until the soldiers found the right number of prisoners. Waiting for their mothers, who left during the day for "arbeit". "We didn't play anymore, we were afraid of everything. Our only occupation was to kill the lice that had invaded my brothers and me. The days were never-ending, and we didn't start to live and breathe again until Mum came home." Hunger, cold and fear.

"For two years we lived like shadows, not daring to show our faces." In this place of horror, soldiers' dogs were trained to attack female prisoners and their children. Lili has been scared to death of them ever since.



February 1945, Lili, her mother and brothers are transported to the Bergen-Belsen camp in a cattle car, as they are every time. A typhus epidemic is raging in this "slow death camp", as Lili calls it. She describes the many corpses littering the ground and the blocks. The smell of burning bodies in mass graves. Lili's mother fell ill, a victim of the epidemic. On April 15, 1945, British soldiers liberated Bergen-Belsen. Lili, Robert and André were repatriated to France in an extremely weakened state. Their mother, on the other hand, was taken care of as soon as the camp was liberated by the British.

### **Back to France**

Arriving in France, the three children - Lili was 13 at the time - still without news of their parents, were taken in by a dental surgeon, brother of a social worker. They were then reunited with their aunt and uncle in Deux-Sèvres. They were then taken in by the Red Cross for a stay in a preventorium in Hendaye, where their mother found them. Four of them return to Roubaix, where the family discovers that their house has been looted. Solidarity kicks in, with neighbors providing them with furniture. It was also at this point that the Rosenbergs learned that their father and husband would not be returning. It then took about ten years for the Roubaix native and her brothers to resume "a normal life". "When we came home, I was angry with everyone. Then, as I got older, I realized that I couldn't hold a grudge against the Germans. Most of them didn't want war. But I could never forgive the Nazis!"

### **Young people, Lili's messengers**

It was the rise of Holocaust denial that prompted the northerner to testify, and to pass on her message to the younger generations. "You have a role to play after us, the deportees. You are my little messengers. You must be vigilant to avoid war, don't let anyone say anything." Fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, tolerance of the Other and his differences. "We're all made the same, we have to put up with each other with our differences." And above all, stop hatred and war. "It's hatred that leads to war. You are capable of stopping it," she says to the schoolchildren, who asked many questions at the end of the story. About what kept her going, what became of her brothers, the psychological and physical consequences of such horror, the traumas...



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