



Published by
THE O'BRIEN PRESS DUBLIN
In association with
IBBY IRELAND AND USBBY



160 pages bound hardback
ISBN 0-86278-760-8 / \$19.95
Illustrated
Published September 2002

With great trepidation and courage, Jella Lepman returned to war-torn Germany following the Nazi defeat. This is her story in her own words. "My heart was pounding . . . yet it was constantly being replenished with fresh hope that the idea of international understanding through children's books which I had tried to pass on to the world would prevail."

Battling with bureaucracy and cajoling international figures, including Eleanor Roosevelt, she founded the International Youth Library, now located in beautiful Blutenberg Castle in Munich, home of more than 500,000 children's books in 130 languages.

She soldiered on . . . "I had the advantage of knowing that behind me marched invisible throngs of children urging me on" . . . and established IBBY, the International Board on Books for Young People, now a worldwide movement with more than sixty national sections.

Jella Lepman's tireless courage and conviction has huge relevance for all of us today. As Taylo Shima, president of IBBY, says, "Today the survival of millions of children all over the world is in the balance, just as it was fifty years ago."

The book includes photographs from the 1940s and 1950s, illustrating Jella Lepman's work and achievements.

Jella Lepman, born in Stuttgart in 1891, was the second of three daughters of a Jewish factory owner. She organized an international reading room for children when she was only seventeen.

Her husband, a German American, died when her two children were tiny, leaving her a widow at thirty-one. She became a journalist, and in 1928 published her first children's book.

When Hitler came to power, she lost her position in the German Democratic Party and on the advice of friends sought safety in London. This autobiography begins nine years later when she was persuaded to return to postwar Germany.

Book Discussion in a Box

Fifteen copies of the book *A Bridge of Children's Books* are available for a free loan of six weeks from the USBBY Secretariat. You will be asked to pay the postage to and from your location.

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