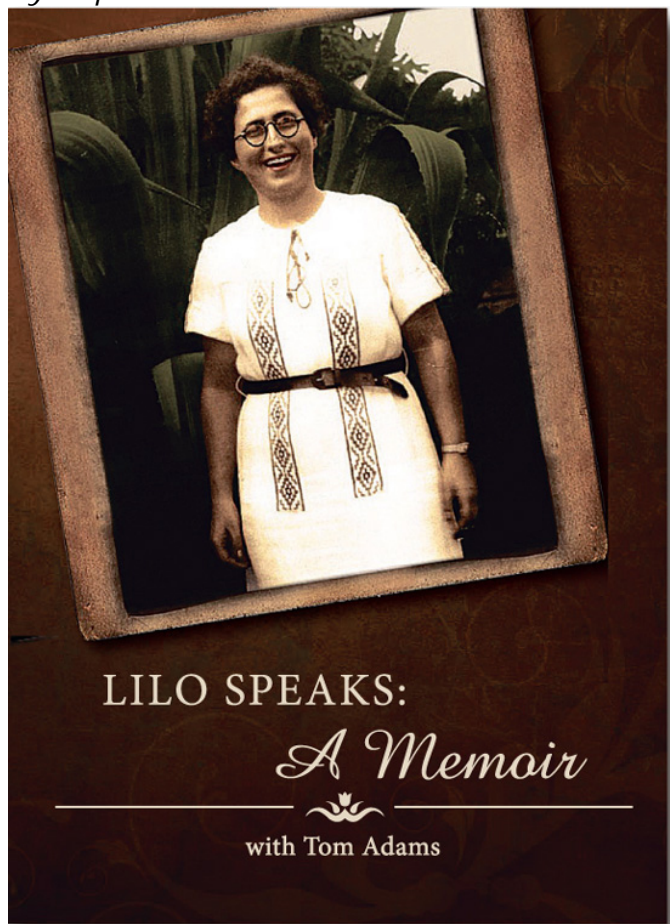


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## Lilo Speaks: A Memoir, with Tom Adams

By Sophie Braccini



Lafayette resident Mike Heller called our attention to this book - it started us thinking about the importance of capturing oral histories before the stories are gone forever. *Lilo Speaks: A Memoir, with Tom Adams* is his mother's story; one she was reluctant to tell until recently.

Once you open this short, 70-page book, you won't be able to shut it. It's not the style, which is simple and reads like the spoken word, it is the life and turmoil detailed in every paragraph that grabs the reader and makes one continue to turn the pages until the end. *Lilo Speaks: A Memoir* tells of the first 25 years in the life of Liselotte Basch, a Jewish girl born in Germany in 1921, who was thrown into the turmoil of the Nazi regime, escaped to Indonesia only to be held by the Japanese in a series of World War II prison camps, and finally reached San Francisco in July of 1946.

For years Lilo (Basch) Heller could not talk about her early life with her American family, "It's too painful and no one cares anymore. Why dredge up the past? No!" she said. But she is the only survivor of her German family. The cousins who didn't want to leave Germany or Holland were swept away by the Nazi extermination machine; her parents, who fled to Ecuador, died a long time ago- she had to tell the story of the Basch family and of lives lost.

Lilo Heller continues to fight for peace and social justice from her Mill Valley home. The biographic that she recorded were transcribed by Lafayette author Tom Adams and published by Big Hat Press (also in Lafayette). It is available at local bookstores and online.

Lilo Speaks: A Memoir

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