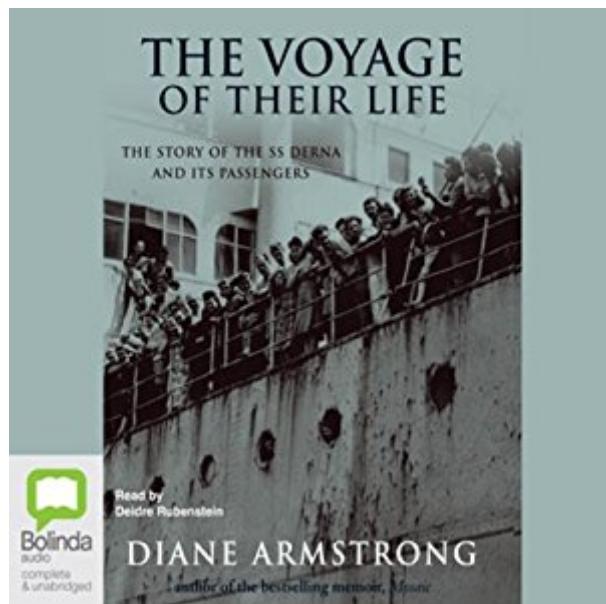


The book was found

The Voyage Of Their Life



Synopsis

In August 1948, 545 passengers boarded an overcrowded, clapped-out vessel in Marseilles to face an uncertain future in Australia and New Zealand. They came from displaced persons camps in Germany, death camps in Poland, labour camps in Hungary, gulags in Siberia and stony Aegean islands. There were those who had been hunted by the Nazis and those who had welcomed them; those who had followed the Communists and those who had fled them. Diane Armstrong set sail on the Derna with her parents when she was nine years old. Like a detective searching for clues, she has located over a hundred of the passengers. Through their recollections and memorabilia, as well as archival documents, she has recreated the voyage and traced what became of their hopes and dreams. The result is the unique portrayal of a migrant ship and its passengers.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Customer Reviews

Complete and unabridged, *The Voyage Of Their Life* is an uplifting work of nonfiction superbly narrated by Deidre Rubenstein. In August of 1948, 545 passengers who had survived displaced person camps in Germany, death camps in Poland, labor camps in Hungary, and gulags in Siberia or the Aegean islands sailed upon an overcrowded vessel toward an unknown future in Australia and New Zealand. *The Voyage Of Their Life* draws upon recollections, memorabilia, archival documents, and much more to recreate these brave individuals' lives and dreams. Author Diane Armstrong, winner of the George Munster Award for independent journalism, was herself a child who sailed upon the "Derna" with her parents. A heart-wrenching yet ultimately optimistic true story of finding the strength to survive and rebuild in the wake of devastation.

Very highly recommended firstly for Australians of European origin, who, or whose parents, migrated to Australia after the second world war, and secondly for all interested in the background to post-war European migration, in the difficulties faced and largely overcome by migrants in that era, or in the recent history of our country and of the people who helped to make it what it is today. This reviewer is in the first category, having arrived as a child from Europe in the 1950s, later than the subjects of Diane Armstrong's well-researched narrative. For me, apart from the rare opportunity to learn more of the experiences of migrants before me, the book provided memories of places, customs and events I and my parents, or my in-laws actually experienced. My in-laws actually departed for Australia on a similar unseaworthy boat from Marseilles a few months before the Derna sailed, and the privations and difficulties described in "The Voyage of Their Life" are very similar in many ways to their experiences. The rating of 4 stars, or even 4 1/2 if it were available, is given for the amount of research undertaken by the author and for the social and historical significance of the data, which would otherwise have been lost, had Diane Armstrong not recorded it.

I first saw this book in the residence of people exhibiting their garden to the public. It looked well used and a quick thumb through aroused my interest. Having now read about half I find I can't put it down easily but the demands for my time dictate. I would suggest to all those interested in the plight of civilians caught up in world war two should read it.

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