

Famous Amsterdam tree must come down

A 160-year-old chestnut tree made famous by a Jewish girl on the run from the Nazis during World War II has to be cut down for safety reasons, according to the city authorities here.

Officials for Amsterdam-Centrum have applied for permission to cut down the tree that stands in the garden of 188 Keizersgracht. They pledged to grow a new tree from a cutting of the old.

A recent inspection revealed the chestnut to be 42-per-cent rotten. A spokesman said the tree weighed 60 tons and stood 20 metres tall. It would cause a 'catastrophe' if it toppled.

Anne Frank, the Jewish girl whose diary of life in hiding from the Nazis has become a classic, mentions the tree three times during her entries from 1944.

In August 1944 Frank was discovered by the Nazis and sent to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in northern Germany. She died there in March 1945, a little more than a month before the end of the war.

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