

Lili Stefania Bankier was born on 18 September 1921 in Lodz, Poland and was the only child of Adolf and Sophie Bankier. Her father was a lampshade maker and managed a shop in Piotrkowska Street.

Lili and her mother emigrated to Palestine in 1935 with Sophie managing a small hotel in the Jerusalem suburb of Ein Karem. Her father Adolf remained in Poland and eventually died in the Lodz ghetto in August 1942.

Lili enlisted in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) at RAF Ramleh on 27 September 1944 and after a month of basic training she was posted to RAF Heliopolis, on the outskirts of Cairo, for meteorological training. Her next move, to Alexandria, in early January 1945, but her stay was brief, and before long she had returned to Palestine and the meteorological office at RAF Aqir.

On 28 July 1945 she boarded Anson NX592 of 76 OTU bound for RAF Heliopolis. The aircraft lost power and the pilot prepared to make an emergency landing advising everyone to don parachutes. Through a misunderstanding the wireless operator thought the pilot had advised the aircraft to be abandoned. Lili was the first to be pushed out of the aircraft exit. Although her hand had been placed on the ripcord, she never pulled it and was killed when she crashed through the roof of the station guard room.

Lili's body was flown to Palestine the following day, and on 30 July was laid to rest in a southeast-facing terrace near the summit of the Mount of Olives Cemetery in Jerusalem. Despite the Mount of Olives Cemetery being severely damaged and desecrated during the Jordanian occupation of East Jerusalem, Lili's grave somehow survived.