

Hannover Contact-Mail

Newsletter des Fördervereins der Gedenkstätte Hannover-Ahlem

31.Dezember 2011, No 5

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Friends:

It's a new year, and we are now present with an actual Newsletter. We would like to report to you what has been achieved in Hanover and the Region during the past year, to ensure that the memories of the crimes during the Nazi regime will not be forgotten and will be passed on to the responsibility of the younger the generation.

Modernisation of the Memorial Centre Ahlem can be seen in the architects plans

The Renovation and Modernisation of the Memorial Centre Ahlem is progressing. As a result of an international Architecture competition a model was picked which adds a glass entrance on to the former Directors House, but does not alter the outside of the historical building.

On the three floors there will be an entirely new Exhibition, a lecture Hall, a Memorial room and work rooms. Outside a school garden will be constructed according to historical scales, and a round walk will be built over the territory of the former Israelite Horticultural School.

The costs have now been calculated at over five Mio Euro. The political panels have already given their approval to the concept. However, about half of the amount will have to be collected from generous donors.

The new construction will start at the beginning of the new year, and we share the satisfaction of the Regional President Hauke Jagau over the "giant step" that the renovation of the Memorial Centre has taken recently.

If everything goes according to plan, the new Memorial Centre will be reopened in two years. In the meantime it will be closed because of building works.

However, even during this period there will still be conducted tours of the grounds, as well as Info events in the rooms of the former Girl's House, which has been renovated by the Christian organisation "Neues Land".

They are very supportive of our memorial work, and they have offered us the rooms, such as their "Cafe Jerusalem" in this transition period for events.

A scientific team has been installed and for the past year has been working on preparing a better exhibition concept for the new Memorial Centre.

Historians, teachers an exhibition developers are working together to prepare the contents, collecting documents and photos, interviewing survivors and recording this on video, where possible.

And here we again make an appeal: If you have any Documents and Photos in your files, that could be useful for the new Exhibition, or if you know of anyone anywhere where such Documents could be found, please contact us. The Exhibition-makers are very thankful.

Great Interest in Memorial Events

The organised events at the Memorial Centre are very well accepted. The lectures and discussions with survivors on subjects of the holocaust and faschism are attended by more than 100 people, every time.

There were events on the subjects : "Liberation – The end of the war in Hanover", "the Persecution of Jewish Doctors", "Victims of NS-Psychiatry", "Murder, as seen by the perpetrators", "The part played by the Finance Direction plundering Jewish property", and also "The Deportation of Jewish Citizens of Hanover in the Ghetto Riga". And so this series will be definitely be continued.

Successful participation of the “Network”

Also, the more than 40 Initiatives which work together in our Network “Remembrance + Future” have been very active with their programs, in the last twelve month, to point out the Crimes of the Nazi regime in the Region and the city of Hanover.

For example: In April there was a Memorial March to the former Concentration Camp Bergen Belsen, which commemorated the death march of the forced labourers shortly before the liberation 1945; also at the Seelhorst Cemetery and the Cenotaph at the Maschsee Northside wreaths were laid for the murdered Russian war prisoners and forced labourers.

There was also an international Youth meeting, attended by students from France, Russia, Poland and Germany. Their subject was “Dignity and Respect in Daily Life” and they presented their ideas during a Memorial event commemorating the Liberation Day.

Also an organised series of events in Hanover’s Old city concerned itself with the “Rules of Respect”. A temporary Memorial was erected in memory of the Hanover Sinto and German Boxing Champion Rukeli Trollmann. The Nazis refused him the title and later he was murdered in KZ Neuengamme.

Readings, theatre performances, Survivors discussions, conducted tours of city areas and concerts pointed to the persecution and murder of the Gypsies and the discrimination that they still endure.

As well, many citizens demonstrated against Nazi-demos, remembered the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and on September 1, with the slogan “Nie wieder Krieg” Germanys invasion of Poland.

Growing interest is also shown in the guided tours conducted by the Historian Peter Schulze in Hanover’s Jewish Cemeteries and the memorial event to the Crystal Night on November 9.

Special attention was paid to the 70th anniversary of the deportation of Jewish citizen in the Riga Ghetto on December 15., with an exhibition in the Town Hall, with Lectures, with a memorial service at the Jewish memorial at the Opernplatz, in the Jewish community, in the Cultural Center Pavilion at Raschplatz and in Café Jerusalem in Ahlem.

To these events there were Guests-of-Honor: four former Hanover citizens, now residents in the US. They survived the Holocaust in Riga, and their eye-witness accounts keep the memories of the crimes ever present.

From the 1001 Jewish Children, Women and Men who were deported to Riga only 60 survived. Among them: Lore Oppenheimer, Lona Hess, Henny Simon and Gerda Wassermann. They all were on a visit to Hanover for a week, to remember and to warn: “....that it never happens again – never again!”

The Exhibition titled: “Deported to Die” can be seen until January 27, the Holocaust Memorial Day, and special guided visits have been offered to teachers and pupils. Accompanying the exhibition is a symposium with well known scientists, who are looking into the question of how remembrance could be intensified in the future.

An extensive Catalogue has been published to accompany the exhibition; also the various “Network”- events program is published every half-year. Therein the public is informed of the increasing activities of the “Network Remembrance and Future”. On request these publications can be sent to you.

Stolpersteine (Tripstones) also for Emigrants

For the sixth time Stolpersteine (Tripstones) for victims of the Nazi regime were laid in October. in 15 areas of the city - 36 stones. For the first time also for emigrants; so the Children’s Doctor Walter Sochaczewski and his wife Ilse in the Rühmkorfstrasse. They fled to Brazil before they could be arrested.

The broadening of the “Victims Catalogue” was preceded by a public discussion. The city council was of the opinion that only the murdered Jews of Hanover were entitled to a stone in front of their former homes.

Also for the renowned Hanover scientist Prof. Theodor Lessing and his wife Ada there are two Trip stones before their former home in the Tiergartenstraße. Lessing was murdered by the Nazis already August 1933 in Marienbad in Tschechoslowakia.

The laying of the "Stolpersteine" lies in the hands of the German Israeli Association in cooperation with the "Project Remembrance Culture" of the City Hall. If you wish a memorial in this form for your relatives, please contact Gabriele Lehmborg at her address. The cost of the „Stolpersteine“ are paid by the citizen of Hanover, and not by the relatives.

Info-stand at mass meetings

Also in the last year we were present with our Info-stand when cultural events took place (the May Day celebrations on the Klagesmarkt, the Cultural Fest at the Town Hall, and the Music Festival of the Sinti in the Old City).

Here we meet many young people who are surprised to learn of the Nazi crimes in their home areas. At that time the citizens of Hanover had not stopped the beginnings. We hope thereby, in conversations and with our information papers to be able to oppose the racist propaganda of the new Nazis today.

Information Board at the Memorial of the KZ Ahlem

Chaim Liss is one of the few prisoners who survived the KZ Hanover-Ahlem. Mid September he came from Israel to Hanover to unveil an Information Board at the Memorial of the KZ, with information about the disgraceful conditions under which the prisoners existed.

The committee "Citizens build a Memorial" was responsible for the board, and pupils of the Heisterberg-school were there for support with music and narrations.

Before that Chaim Liss told pupils of the Heisterberg-school his memories of the crimes in KZ Ahlem and thanked them for taking over the responsibility for the Memorial.

Seeking clues in the Israelite Horticultural-school

We were very happy that Helmut Levy from the US came to visit. He showed his relatives where he was taught in the Horticultural-school.

Daniel Barok from Israel also came to visit. He wanted to be present at the unveiling of a Memorial for Lina and Rudolf Kiefer in Langenhagen.

The couple had hidden his father Alexander Barok after he was forced on a death march from KZ Ahlem to the Concentration Camp Bergen Belsen.

And Michael Brown from London made us happy with his visit once again.

Memoriam

We are very sad to have lost dear friends last year. In March Gerd Landsberg died, 84 years old. He was one of the survivors of the Riga Ghetto who returned to his home-town Hanover after being liberated. He was untiring in telling young people of his experiences. **We miss him very much.**

We also grieve for Benjamin Sieradski. As a youngster in KZ Ahlem he underwent unimaginable abuse. In Berkley, CA, he later sought and found his liberator Vernon Tott, and also contact to other survivors of the KZ Ahlem, and also to us. We remember gratefully the hearty relationship with him.

The Future

As part of the Documentation of the Holocaust in the Memorial-Center Ahlem a scientific book series is planned. Suggested subjects from survivors would be very welcome and we look forward to your participation.

A committee in our "Netzwerk" is at present working on the creation of a Documentation Centre in Hanover where forced labour will be comprehensibly presented.

As well as the seven outer camps of the KZ Neuengamme, which were attached to the munitions industry such as Hanomag, Continental, Akkumulatoren-factory and Deurag, there was in the city of Hanover thousands of forced labour camps. This has been confirmed through new research results.

This initiative is therefore now concerned with the consequences and importance of this neglected capital of the history of the 2. World War. This group would also be pleased to receive your suggestions.

Visit us in Internet!

www.erinnernundzukunft.de is our Internet address. There we report on our activities. And also actually information can be found. Some of it has been translated into English. We would be happy if you paid us a virtual visit and send us your comments and suggestions.

If YOU can be reached over an e-mail address please let us know this connection. It is now the fastest and simplest way of communicating.

If you don't have an e-mail address then please write us. We would be happy to hear from you either way.

Best wishes for the New Year

We send best wishes for a pleasant year, good health, and we hope to keep in touch with you.

With hearty greetings from Hanover

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Pictures that tell stories



The new Gedenkstätte Ahlem:



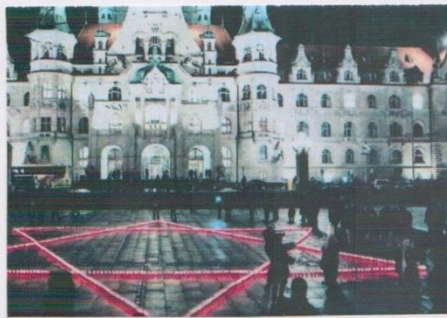
as it will look when finished



Tripstones for Theodor and Ada Lessing



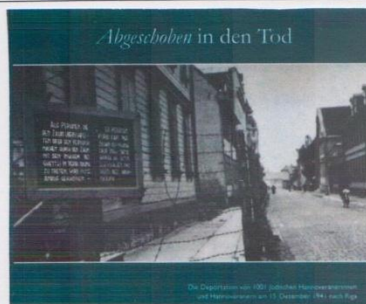
Remembering at the Jewish Memorial



1001 candles: Children commemorate Riga



Hanover Jews lay wreaths at the Memorial



Deported to die: The exhibition catalogue



Farewell pix with guests-of-honor