

Publishers` Preface

In February, 2003 we initially made public our project for a commemorative book at the annual meeting of the Historical Society. On this occasion a guest asked us to consider whether it was the appropriate time for such a book and whether it would not rather open up old wounds instead of aiding reconciliation. We did not share these apprehensions and argued that time was pressing and that it was in fact already too late. "The extinction of the generation which experienced the NS period", as Silvester Lechner, from the Documentary Centre, Oberer Kuhberg in Ulm, had shortly before expressed it, makes this project, in our eyes, all the more necessary and especially so at this time. Right from the start our aim was not to point out guilt and name perpetrators, but to prevent the victims from being forgotten.

***"For every human being there is a name,
every human being shall be commemorated."***

Yad Vashem

The concept of our commemorative book is to relate, in biographical outlines, the fates of the members of the Jewish community of Laupheim in the year 1933, and thus to be understood as a contribution to the documentation of the history of the Jews in the Holocaust in order to preserve the memory of those human beings.

On account of their advanced age, only a few contemporary witnesses from Laupheim, but also from countries of emigration and host countries all over the world, above all the USA, were able to be interviewed. To cite them all by name would go beyond the bounds of possibility. Nevertheless it is thanks to their willingness to answer our questions and to place numerous documents and photographs from family archives at our disposal, that hundreds of these pieces of jigsaw puzzles have enriched the biographical outlines. We would like firstly to express our thanks to them!

The energy with which the first generation actively tackled the problem of coming to terms with those twelve horrendous years and preserving the Jewish heritage in Laupheim, reached its bounds: Ernst Schäll, Honorary Citizen of the town and awarded repeatedly for his life-long work, promised his active assistance in this project at the beginning of the year 2002. However age and progressive illnesses were to prevent this. His

archives, though, which were always open to us, served as an important source of information for this book. Our thanks go out to him!

It was clear to us that, without further contributors, a project of this dimension – on a voluntary basis and alongside employment – would never be achieved. From among the members of the Historical Society (GGG) and from others, a cooperative team quickly assembled and over the years has remained remarkably consistent. The mutual interest in the theme has kept them together, regular exchanges of information and distribution of work have also played a role. Except for two, the members are all pictured overleaf and briefly presented. We offer our next thanks to them!



Dr. Antje Köhlerschmidt and Karl Neidlinger

Two people are missing in the photograph of the group. Yitzhak Heinrich Steiner, born in Ulm in 1931, lives in Re'ut in Israel and wrote there the paper dealing with his family and his father's and grandfather's business, "The Tanner Steiners" ("Gerber-Steiners"). He is the only direct descendant who has written about his roots in Laupheim for this book himself.

The person responsible for the order and editing of the photographs, the complete type-setting, and jacket design, thus the attractive outward appearance of the book, is also missing in the photograph. For without the year-long work carried out by Bruno Magg from Hüttisheim, the richly illustrated book would not have been materialized. For his cooperation we would like to thank him greatly!

Professor Saul Friedländer, born in 1932 in Prague of German-speaking Jewish parents and winner of the German Book Trade Peace Prize in 2007, has occupied himself with the persecution and extermination of the European Jews for the whole of his scientific life. He understated somewhat, but certainly expressed the truth when he said, before being awarded the prize last year, that the happenings were still not translucent for him. The crime against humanity, the genocide involving the European Jews cannot be explained or understood, it can only be described from the perspective of the victims and related in the fates of individuals. If this has been successfully done in the individual outlines, then this book has achieved its aims. Its purpose is to lend an identity to the victims of the Shoah and to tell their stories. It seeks to describe exactly the destinies of the Jews of Laupheim, in which the incomprehensible happenings between 1933 and 1945 can be tangibly experienced. One cannot comprehend it all, but perhaps one or the other of the stories can touch us.

Munich, Hüttisheim, September 2008

Dr. Antje Köhlerschmidt

Karl Neidlinger

The Contributors to this Book



Rolf Emmerich, Annemarie Sommerfeld, Karl Neidlinger, Elisabeth Röhrich, Christoph Schmid, Dr. Antje Köhlerschmidt, Bruno Magg, Brigitte Schmitt, Hans-Georg Edelmann, Dr. Detlef von Kalckreuth, Robert Ess, Dr. Udo Bayer

(From left in the photograph)

ROLF EMMERICH, born 1938, town councillor, active in the museum, the Jewish cemetery and in the "Shalomtage". Publications, among others, on the choral music of the Laupheim synagogue, the Jewish school and various Jewish citizens of Laupheim. Year-long contact with former Laupheim families; among others, Steiner, Henle, Einstein, Sternschein, Adler and Bergmann. Co-founder of the GGG.

DR. DETLEV v. KALCKREUTH, born 1934, founder member of the GGG, museum guide for many years.

CHRISTOPH SCHMID, born 1950 in Biberach, teacher, since 1980 in the Laupheim area. Active in the museum and member of the GGG.

ELISABETH RÖHRICH, born 1951, since 1994 in Laupheim, teacher at the Friedrich Adler Secondary School in Laupheim.

ROBERT ESS, born 1939, member of the GGG committee, museum guide. Publisher of "The Protestant Parish of Laupheim 1847 – 1997".

HANS-GEORG EDELMANN, born 1938, former teacher at the college of Further Education, from 1989 to 2004 town councillor and member of the GGG committee.

ANNEMARIE SOMMERFELD, born 1958, secretary, museum guide, member of the GGG since 2002, organised meetings, assured that nothing was forgotten: the "guiding spirit" of the team.

DR. UDO BAYER, former vice principal, year-long occupation with the history of the Jewish community. Publications on important persons, among others, on Carl Laemmle. Active in the museum. Diverse personal contacts with former Laupheim citizens.

BRIGITTE SCHMIDT, born 1944 in Ulm, since 1975 in Laupheim. SPD town-councillor. Founder member of the GGG and museum guide for many years.