



TRACES OF JEWISH LIVE

IN WEST-CENTRAL FRANCONIA



Cover photographs:

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“Why are you in such a hurry?” asked the rabbi,
“I’m chasing my vitality”, answered the man.

“And how do you know that you have to
hurry to catch up with your vitality?” said the rabbi.
Maybe it's behind you, and all you have to do is pause for a moment.”

“The rabbi”

An aphorism by Meir ben Baruch of
Rothenburg. He is thought to have lived in
Rothenburg from 1245 to 1286.





FOREWORD

The year 2021 marks 1,700 years of Jewish life in Germany – there is a reference to a Jewish man in Cologne which dates back this far. From the Middle Ages through to the 19th century, Germany's Jewish population mainly lived in the country, however. How did this come about? In the medieval and Early Modern period, Jews were frequently the target of Christian hostility and were driven out of most German towns and cities. In some cases the landed gentry of Franconia provided protection, allowing Jewish people to settle in many of the villages and towns in our region. They established Jewish communities, built synagogues and buried their dead in Jewish cemeteries. The history of Jewish people who lived in many of the municipalities in our four regions has left traces that are fascinating to explore.

As part of a LEADER project in collaboration with the local action groups *Aischgrund e.V.*, *Landkreis Fürth e.V.*, *Region Hesselberg* and *Region an der Romantischen Straße e.V.*, we undertook a number of joint excursions to seek out and visit the traces of Jewish life in our home region, the findings of which are documented in this brochure.

“Every answer throws up a new question” goes a Jewish saying. In this documentation, we hope to provide answers to some of your questions!

Klaus Meier
Mayor of Neustadt a.d. Aisch
and Chairperson LAG Aischgrund e.V.

Matthias Dießl
District Administrator and Chairperson
LEADER Region Landkreis Fürth e.V.

Thomas Kleeberger
Chairperson
LAG Region Hesselberg e.V.

Herbert Lindörfer
District Councillor and Chairperson
LAG Region an der Romantischen Straße e.V.

RURAL JEWRY IN WEST-CENTRAL FRANCONIA

RURAL JEWRY

Text by Anna Valeska Strugalla

From the late Middle Ages through to the 19th century, life in small to very small villages and settlements was the predominant form of Jewish existence in what is today West-Central Franconia and indeed in the entire region of southern Germany. Research into their way of living often uses the term “rural Jewry”. Richard Mehler describes the “rural Jewry” (German: *Landjudentum*) as “persons of Jewish faith [...] who lived in towns and villages with less than 2,000 inhabitants.”¹ Over the course of the last three decades, the rural Jewry has become established as a key term and object of research. Local case studies already exist and continue to emerge that explore the economic, cultural, and social aspects of the rural Jewry in different geographical and historical contexts. In addition, a number of compendia have been published since the 1960s, primarily in the form of descriptive and documentary “commemorative books” dedicated to those Jewish communities that were persecuted and exterminated.

Current research debate

Up until now, no full-scale attempt has been made to collate or compare local phenomena that might refine our understanding of specific details. One difficulty is that sources are diverse and in a varying state, as well as being distributed among so many different locations. Recent research debate indicates that the term “rural Jewry” should be defined more broadly as a working concept for analytical purposes.² Drawing a sharp distinction between urban and rural Jews³ tends to overlook the situation in small towns and suburban communities, and the question remains of how the Jewish residents regarded themselves. Furthermore, there is still a lack of any differentiation between the various forms of Jewish life in the rural setting.

1 Mehler: *Auf dem Weg in die Moderne*, p. 68.

2 Cf. *Tagungsbericht zur 20. Arbeitstagung des Interdisziplinären Forums “Jüdische Geschichte und Kultur in der Frühen Neuzeit und im Übergang zur Moderne”*, 8.-10.02.2019, p. 1 ff.



TELLING REGIONAL HISTORY: JEWISH LIFE IN THE MODERN REGION OF WEST-CENTRAL FRANCONIA

According to Michaela Schmölz-Häberlein, “territorial boundaries do not of themselves [...] sufficiently demarcate and define Jewish regions.”⁴As such, the history of the rural Jewry in this region is embedded in broader geographical and historical developments. West-Central Franconia was established as one of 18 planning regions in the state of Bavaria in 1972. The region forms part of the administrative district of Central Franconia, which has existed in its present form since 1837 after it became part of the Kingdom of Bavaria in 1806. The margraviate of Ansbach was Prussian from 1791 onwards. During the late medieval period, the region was made up of numerous ecclesiastical and secular territories, including the principality of Ansbach and the Free Imperial Towns of Rothenburg ob der Tauber and Dinkelsbühl, as well as countless smaller districts. This brochure traces the main political, economic and social intersections between these historical developments.

Persecution of the Jews and rural settlements from the late medieval period

The emergence of rural Jewish settlements in West-Central Franconia can be seen as part of a broader development that took place throughout the entire region of south-western Germany: from 1450 to the 16th century, there was recurring persecution of Jews in the Free Imperial Cities, monasteries and margraviates. As had happened previously –

St. Blasius Catholic parish church, Arberg



the so-called *Rintfleisch* massacres of 1298 are one example – Jews were held responsible for economic and social hardships, deprived of their rights and expelled from the cities. One regional example was such an expulsion in Rothenburg in 1520. But the persecutions varied in impact: in his examination of Jewish history in Bavaria, Rolf Kießling cites both financial and ecclesiastical-religious motives. The Emperor imposed a veto in Ansbach in 1488, for example, with the result that his subjects were granted a debt remission, but the expulsion of the Jews failed to materialize. Another example was the county of Pappenheim, where Jews were placed under the protection of the *Reichserbmarschälle* (hereditary imperial marshals). There had been Jewish settlements in rural

⁴ Schmölz-Häberlein: *Jüdisches Leben in der Region*, p. 18.

areas prior to this, but this huge upheaval resulted in a much more marked Jewish presence in rural settlements from the 16th century onwards – the beginning of the phenomenon known in German as *Landjudentum* (“rural Jewry” – see critical discussion of the term in the introductory section). To label this period a “forced interim [...] that lasted more than three hundred years”⁵ is too one-sided. It is true that existing communities were torn apart by the expulsion, Torah study in village communities was less cultivated and the culture of writing did not continue to develop as before. But Jewish societies established new structures and living environments. The Jewish settlers “brought their urbanity with them, at least mentally”⁶. In addition to migration from the towns and cities, there were also new settlements in West-Central Franconia, such as those in Wassertrüdingen and Feuchtwangen, for example. Essentially, Jewish residents benefited from the fragmented power structures that prevailed in the regions of Franconia: one example is here is that for the territories around Dittenheim and Treuchtlingen – which were ruled by knights at the time – it was an advantage to attract Jews to settle, require

them to pay taxes and cut them off from further-reaching legal bonds. Political, religious and economic conditions played an important role in the formation of new structures.

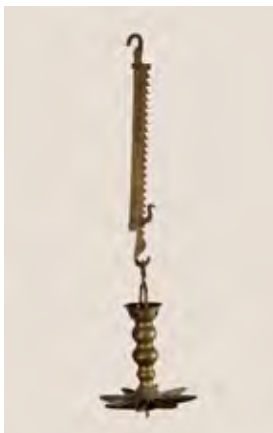
Much depended on the extent to which living conditions were influenced by the Holy Roman Empire, territorial statutes and local rulers

– such as imperial knights.

In 1644 under the Counts of Schwarzenberg, for instance, Jews were granted permission to establish a synagogue and engage extensively in free trade. It was only gradually that rural Jewries and rabbinates were established: court Jews provided the link between the rulers and the religious community, and the Jews were treated increasingly as subjects.

Parallel to this development, Rolf Kießling describes the formation of community structures as a “pragmatic path towards emancipation”⁷.

Land Altmühl in the area of the rabbinic seat of Pappenheim, to which most of the Jewish communities in Central Franconia were assigned, is one example of early organization or reorganization.



Shabbat candelabra, ritual object, brass, Nuremberg redsmith, 18th century. century:

5 Richarz: *Die Entdeckung der Landjuden*, p. 11.

6 Ries: *Landjudentum als kulturelles System?*, p. 165.

7 Kießling: *Jüdische Geschichte*, p. 360.



Emancipation endeavours in the 19th century

In 1791, the French National Assembly granted French Jews full civil rights – a key incentive for their legal status to be questioned in the Holy Roman Empire. At this point, calls for legal betterment of the Jews became more forceful. Within Jewish communities, the desire for emancipation and acculturation was probably most clearly expressed in the dispute between orthodox and liberal rabbis, as occurred in the municipality of Fürth, for example. Rural communities were less affected by this development: synagogues in the country remained traditionally oriented and practised their religion in an orthodox manner. By contrast, the assimilation policy of the new king had a direct impact on rural areas: in 1813, Max Joseph issued a Jewish Edict in Bavaria. In addition to abolishing taxes and levies, this granted the Jews fresh options for earning a living outside the realm of commerce. However, it also consolidated the state of settlement at the time and prescribed how many Jews were allowed to live in which municipalities and how many were allowed to start a family (the so-called

“Registry Paragraph”). As a result, there was a forced “clustering” of commerce as the main field of activity: in Diespeck, Pahres, Schornweisach and Uehlfeld, records show a total of 68 hop buyers in 1845. The wave of emigration of Franconian Jews from the 1830s onwards to northern Germany and the USA did not affect Central Franconia as much as other areas: the population share of Central Franconian Jews dropped by 7.5 % between 1840 and 1867 (by 30% in Upper Franconia) ⁸.



Par force integration?

The Bavarian Edict of 1813 abolished civil jurisdiction within the Jewish community. As a result, Jewish citizens were integrated into the general political community *par force*: from now on, the Jewry was to function purely as a religious community. The Bavarian Emancipation Edict of 1861 abolished the Registry Paragraph, and from 1868 onwards it was enshrined in law that people of Jewish faith were allowed to settle anywhere. Legally speaking, the founding of the German Reich in 1871 introduced confessional equality – this is the background to the rapid influx of Jewish citizens into the towns and cities. In 1910, three quarters of the 14,219 Jews in Central Franconia were living in Nuremberg

⁸ The immigration of Eastern European Jews must also be taken into consideration here. Concerning the figures: cf. Lowenstein: *Alltag und Tradition*, p. 15. On the difficulties of statistical analyses of this period, cf. Mehler: *Auf dem Weg in die Moderne*, p. 73.

Judengasse 15 and 17 in Rothenburg o.d.T.



or Fürth. There was also a shift in acquisition structures. The widespread transformation from an agricultural society to an industrial and service-based economy improved employment conditions for traders, while stationary stores were established at permanent places of residence. Social integration therefore advanced, though haltingly and with tenuous ties: in rural areas, clubs, associations and festive occasions were important vehicles in this connection. These slender, fledgling social ties were not able to withstand the crises and wars of the 20th century, however.

Racial anti-Semitism as an argument

Explanations were sought for the economic, social and political upheavals – such as the Panic of 1873 (*Gründerkrach*). In political terms, the endeavours to achieve emancipation described above had also engendered growing opposition. This was partially what gave rise to the anti-Semitism that emerged during the period of the German Empire. From the late 19th century onwards, anti-Semites pointed not just to “false” religious beliefs but also pseudo-scientifically founded “racial” differences. As important opinion leaders in rural areas, the Christian churches were the mouthpiece for religiously motivated anti-Semitic patterns of explanation, and racist ideologies became established in this context, too. Such ideas continued to grow as a result of war-related suffering, poverty, economic crises and the political upheavals of the First World War and Weimar Republic. Despite the unifying democratic ideas of the Weimar period, it is clear in retrospect that the trauma of losing not just the war but so much else was channelled into an increasingly aggressive anti-Semitism. The reaction of the Jewish communities was to hold firm and return to protective isolation: this response was particularly visible in towns and cities, but in rural areas the development was the same.



Rural Jewish communities under National Socialism

The aim here is certainly not to attempt an abridged account of the fate of rural Jewish communities in West-Central Franconia under National Socialism, let alone indulge in generalizations. Systematic research is needed here, too. The statistics provide some documentation of National Socialist crimes in this region: rural Jewish communities in West-Central Franconia came to end as early as 1938, since virtually the entire Jewish population was expelled from the villages and towns of Central Franconia in the course of the November pogroms. By 1939, only 42 Jews remained in the region, the Jewish population in Central Franconia having decreased by 69%. In other parts of Franconia and in Swabia, these communities endured exploitation, exclusion and persecution for even longer before the cumulative violence of National Socialism finally wiped out these societies as well.⁹

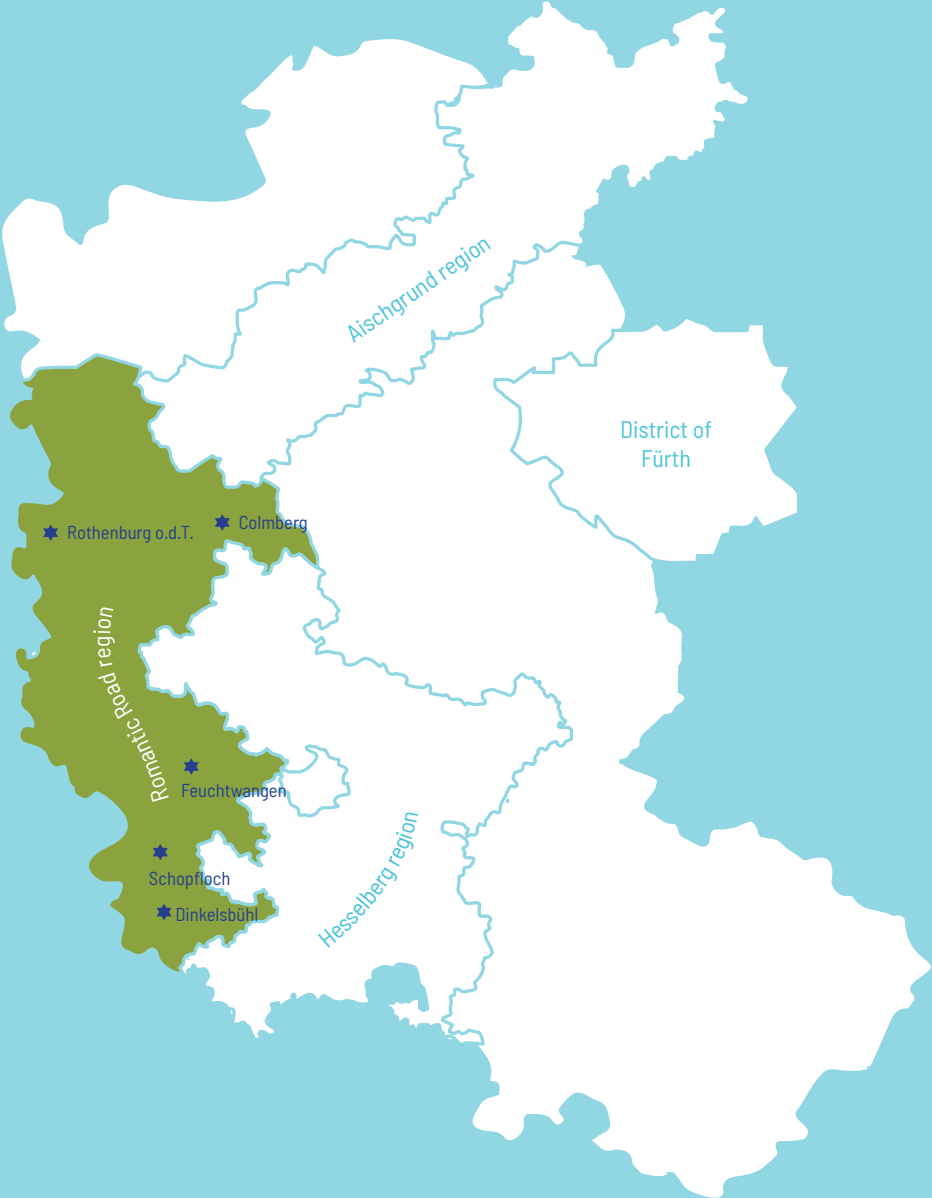
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research into the rural Jewry has developed in various directions in recent years, but there are still many aspects of Jewish life in the rural context that we know little about. Given the complex mesh of Jewish life in the Franconian countryside, it makes sense to focus on local specifics such as Jewish-Christian relations and socio-cultural similarities. The history of interconnections and transfer in terms of culture and mentality between urban and rural structures – a two-way process – is also an area that invites further research. In recent years, several projects have been launched to pursue further investigation of the rural Jewry of Franconia in all its diversity. In addition to the specific publications issued as part of the conference and publication series *Franconia Judaica* by the District of Central Franconia since 2006, *Netzwerk Jüdisches Franken* was also established – a network that aims to achieve more effective coordination between local research protagonists, including non-experts. The research centre *Forschungsstelle Landjudentum Bamberg* publishes a series on the history and folk culture of rural Jews. The *Johanna-Stahl-Zentrum* in Würzburg raised awareness of the topic in the region with its touring exhibition *Mitten unter uns. Landjuden in Unterfranken vom Mittelalter bis ins 20. Jahrhundert* from (“In our midst. Rural Jews in Lower Franconia from the Middle Ages to the 20th century”) from 2013 to 2015.

This brochure seeks to make local case studies accessible as sources for further research while at the same time documenting and communicating the public perception and memory of Jewish culture in West-Central Franconia.

⁹ According to Lowenstein, as of 1939 there were still more than 1,700 Jews living in the small towns and villages (population of less than 10,000) in Lower Franconia and 316 in Upper Franconia, cf: *Alltag und Tradition*, p. 21 ff. Cf. Kießling: *Jüdische Geschichte*, p. 559.

WEST-CENTRAL FRANCONIA



TRACES OF JEWISH LIFE IN THE ROMANTIC ROAD REGION

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of Germany, Jews have left distinctive traces. Jewish communities existed nationwide in numerous villages and towns, often with a long history dating back to medieval times, and these traces are often to be found in the immediate vicinity and neighbourhood. The first Jew mentioned by name who settled in the region along the Romantic Road was Samuel Biscopph. He lived in Rothenburg ob der Tauber at the beginning of the 12th century. Many Jews resided in the Free Imperial Town, including the world-famous Rabbi Meir ben Baruch, who was once considered the spiritual leader of Judaism in Germany. Jewish citizens were actively involved in community life throughout the region, often working as merchants, trading in animals, fabric and haberdashery, for example. Jewish facilities such as synagogues, schools, cemeteries, mikvahs and community centres were also to be found in many towns and villages – as in Schopfloch, for instance. A Jewish community was established there from the 14th century onwards: a modern-day reminder is its Jewish cemetery, which is still one of the biggest in Franconia. For a long time, Jewish citizens played an important role in the life of the village. In 1830, Jews accounted for as much of 25 per cent of



Jewish cemetery in Rothenburg o.d.T.

Schopfloch's population. The long, peaceful coexistence between Jews and Christians came to a sad end when the National Socialists seized power in 1933. As this power increased, reprisals spread and the Jewish population shrank. Jewish residents were systematically persecuted, expelled or murdered. Numerous Jews from the region along the Romantic Road lost their lives during this period of violence. There are commemorative plaques, *Stolpersteine*, museums and much more that remind us of the Jews who once lived among us. Traces of Jewish life are to be found everywhere – though they are frequently hidden or not immediately recognizable. It is simply a matter of looking carefully.



ROTHENBURG OB DER TAUBER

Text by Dr. Oliver Gußmann

RINTFLEISCH PERSECUTION

In Rothenburg there was a Jewish community from the 12th century onwards with all its facilities such as a cemetery, synagogue, mikvah and community hall. The first mention of a Jew in Rothenburg dates back to 1180. His name was Samuel Biscoph. 500 to 600 Jews lived in the town in the 13th century. The spiritual leader of Judaism in Germany at that time, Rabbi Meir ben Baruch (c. 1220 – 1293), was resident in Rothenburg for many years.

During the so-called *Rintfleisch* persecution in 1298, more than 450 of the Jews living in the town were cruelly murdered. According to the source of the memorial stone, they were burned and killed in the castle outside the town. Several years later there were Jews living in Rothenburg once again. But this newly established community was again destroyed in the pogroms during the plague period in 1349/50.

Up until the middle of the 14th century, the centre of the Jewish quarter was in the area of today's Kapellenplatz. There was a large synagogue, as well as the two-storey Talmud college/yeshiva with 21 rooms and a teaching hall, as well as other facilities. Not far from here was the Jewish Dance House, which also served as a hostel for Jews and housed the community's festive hall.

In the second half of the 14th century some Jews moved back into the town, but they were not permitted to move into the old residential area in the area of Kapellengasse. Instead, they were able to rent apartments from the town authorities in the area of a moat filling in front of the old town wall. In 1404 the community built a synagogue on the edge of the Jewish cemetery. Originally called *Judenkirchhof* ("Jewish churchyard"), it was renamed Schrankenplatz in 1958: today it is the site of a car park.



Gravestone in the wall of Rabbi-Meir-Gärtchen, Rothenburg o.d.T.

ROTHENBURG OB DER TAUBER TRACES ...

A mikvah was established in the house at Judengasse 10 in around 1409. The location of the Jewish cemetery is unknown.

The Jewish community in Rothenburg at that time was one of the most important in Germany: Rabbi Israel was appointed "Grand Master of all Jews in Germany" by the German king, raising him to a status that went far beyond the local region. The Jews were expelled from Rothenburg in around 1520. Incited by Catholic agitator and cleric Johannes Teuschlein, Jewish inhabitants were driven out by the mob. After the expulsion of the Rothenburg Jews, the synagogue was looted on 8 January 1520. The building then passed into the possession of a Rothenburg citizen, who converted it into the pilgrimage chapel Zur reinen Jungfrau. It was consecrated in April of the same year. The

Judenkirchhof was also turned into a Christian burial place. The chapel was destroyed in 1525 during the Peasant War and its walls were torn down in 1560.

The synagogue was also looted, its stones being used to build the new cemetery church in front of Rödertor.

No Jewish families were allowed to live in Rothenburg for more than 300 years. It was not until the second half of the 19th century that Jews from the village municipalities came to resettle in Rothenburg. The families of Isaak Heumann and David Strauß from Niederstetten were the first to settle here in 1870.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

Year

1295

450 Jewish residents



15 % of the population were Jews

1519

6 families



In 1519 there were only six remaining Jewish families; there were no more after this. Jewish life returned to the town in 1875, with eight families living there.

1900

100



1933

46



1938

20





JUDAICA SECTION, ROTHENBURGMUSEUM

In 1982/1983, the Judaica section was established on the ground floor of Rothenburg Museum – a former monastery store room. The permanent exhibition offers an impressive insight into Jewish life in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, which made a lasting impact on the town as early as the 13th century. Expelled from the Rhineland, Jews came to settle in Rothenburg and were instrumental in advancing the town's development.

The centrepiece of the Judaica collection – in Room 6 – are 30 of the 47 preserved medieval Jewish gravestones from the period 1266 to 1395. The gravestones were not discovered until 1912. The exhibition also includes *responsa* books that belonged to Rabbi Meir and various utensils of Jewish life from all over Franconia. The ritual artefacts are particularly valuable: a seal of the Jewish community of Rothenburg dating back to 1410, an oven peel and a Hanukkah candelabrum made of iron plate.

Another outstanding item is the "Pogrom Stone", which commemorates the so-called *Rintfleisch* ("beef") pogrom of 1298 in which many Jews in the region fell victim to an agitator's followers. The stone was created shortly afterwards and bears a heart-rending lament to the 500 or so murdered Jews engraved in Hebrew script. Almost the entire Jewish com-

munity of Rothenburg was wiped out on this occasion. The stone was rediscovered among the museum's holdings in 1980.

In Room 4, twelve panels are to be seen from



the Rothenburg Passion by Martinus Schwarz (1494). The painting *Ecce homo* in particular was often misused as a vehicle of Christian hostility towards Jews in the late Middle Ages. In it, Jews are depicted as mortal enemies of Jesus. The people demand the death of Christ with their fingers crossed. The words "Crucify him!" are inscribed in Latin on the archway.

The Judaica section is soon to be restructured, including integration of the recent history of Jews in Rothenburg.



Hanukkah candelabrum, faience, 18th century

Judaica section,
Rothenburg Museum
Klosterhof 5
91541 Rothenburg o.d.T.

ROTHENBURG OB DER TAUBER TRACES ...

JUDENGASSE 10

Judengasse in Rothenburg was built in the last third of the 14th century. Jews were not allowed to live in the centre of the town at that time. However, they were allowed to settle on the outskirts, near the former town wall. (The new town wall had already been built, so the Jews settled inside the town but not in the town centre). The street with its half-timbered style of construction has been called Judengasse ("Jews' Lane") since 1371. The name is somewhat misleading, however. In the Middle Ages not only Jews lived here, but Christians too. Judengasse in Rothenburg is the only almost completely preserved street of this name in the German-speaking world, so its significance extends well beyond the local region. The ensemble consists of 21 buildings, the core of which is still preserved in its original form. Since 1990, the association *Alt-Rothenburg* has taken it upon itself to save these historic buildings from decay and ensure their careful restoration.



According to chronological studies, the building that bears the number 10 today was built in around 1409, along with the adjacent house, number 12. The considerable importance of the house was not recognized until 1985, however, when it was found to contain one of the oldest cellar mikvahs of medieval Bavaria. The Jewish ritual bath is still filled with groundwater, the level of which is constantly renewed as the water flows in and out. Originally, the mikvah was accessible directly in front of the house via an anteroom. Today, it can be reached via a staircase from the rear of the building. Five steps lead to the basin. Although the mikvah is located in a residential building, we can assume it was not a purely private ritual bath but available to other members of the Jewish community, too. The mikvah was used until the expulsion of the Jews from Rothenburg in 1519/20. It has not yet been made freely accessible to the public, but there are plans to do so. RothenburgMuseum contains a replica of this ritual bath. Another distinctive feature of the building at Judengasse 10 is on the first floor: an original wooden parlour – a room with special thermal insulation.

The house at Judengasse 10 was still inhabited in the second half of the last century. Due to its historical significance, the building was the first property to be placed under protection by the initiative *Kulturerbe Bayern*. Once detailed architectural investigations have been completed, it is to be carefully renovated from 2020 onwards. The mikvah will then be opened to the public.

Judengasse 10



RABBI MEIR

If you walk up the Lammwirtsgässchen from Rothenburg's market square towards the east, you will reach Kapellenplatz just a few metres on. The Jewish population settled in this area at the beginning of the 12th century. In front of Seelbrunnen fountain there used to be a three-storey Romanesque synagogue which was later converted into a Chapel of the Virgin Mary (Marienkapelle). This is why the square is still called Kapellenplatz today.

The synagogue and Talmud school situated here were where the outstanding Jewish scholar Rabbi Meir ben Baruch of Rothenburg worked for a period of 40 years, from 1246 to 1286. A bronze plaque on the wall at Kapellenplatz 5 commemorates this famous teacher, who was born in Worms in 1215. Known as a Tosafist, legal scholar and writer of synagogal poetry, he studied in Würzburg, Mainz and Paris under the best teachers of his time. Records still exist of more than a thousand of his legal opinions, and he is known to have maintained correspondence internationally. If a Jewish court could not agree on a difficult case, Rabbi Meir was contacted in Rothenburg. A special messenger was sent to Rothenburg with the request. Rabbi Meir discussed the requests with his students and had them write down the arguments and decisions.



Rabbi Meir commemorative
plaque, Kapellenplatz

ROTHENBURG OB DER TAUBER TRACES ...

He would then send the messenger back with the report. Rabbi Meir's students recorded and sorted more than a thousand of his *responsa* by topic: this is a treasure trove for modern-day historians since they offer rich insights into the life of a 13th century medieval town. Some of these letters are on display in the Judaica section of Rothenburg Museum. Not far from Kapellenplatz is the so-called Rabbi-Meir-Gärtchen, where there are ten Jewish grave-stones dating back to the time of Rabbi Meir embedded in the wall. They originally stood on the Jewish cemetery (now Schran-nenplatz). The memorial plaque on the ground is a reminder of the expulsion of the last twenty or so Jewish citizens from Rothenburg (1938). Many of them were later murdered in concentration camps: only a few managed to escape.



Rabbi-Meir-Gärtchen
Rothenburg o.d.T.

The so-called Judentanzhaus ('Jewish Dance House') next to Rabbi-Meir-Gärtchen burned down during the bombing of Rothenburg on

31 March 1945 and was later reconstructed.

Rabbi Meir's life ended tragically. He was no longer able to pay his taxes and set off in the dead of night to flee with his entire family to the Promised Land in Israel. But he did not get far. In the summer of 1286, after an exhausting foot march across the Alps, the famous scholar was recognized in a mountain town in Lombardy and handed over to the authorities. King Rudolf I of Habsburg had him imprisoned

and claimed an immense ransom from the Jewish communities for the release of Rabbi Meir. Meir would not allow his followers to pay the ransom, however.

He died in 1293 after being imprisoned for seven years in the fortress of Ensisheim in Alsace. Rabbi Meir did not find his final resting place until 1307, when he was buried in the Heiliger Sand ('Holy Sand'), as the Jewish cemetery in Worms is called.



Rabbi-Meir-Gärtchen Rothenburg o.d.T.

Judentanzhaus 1899
Rothenburg o.d.T. – entirely
destroyed by fire in 1945





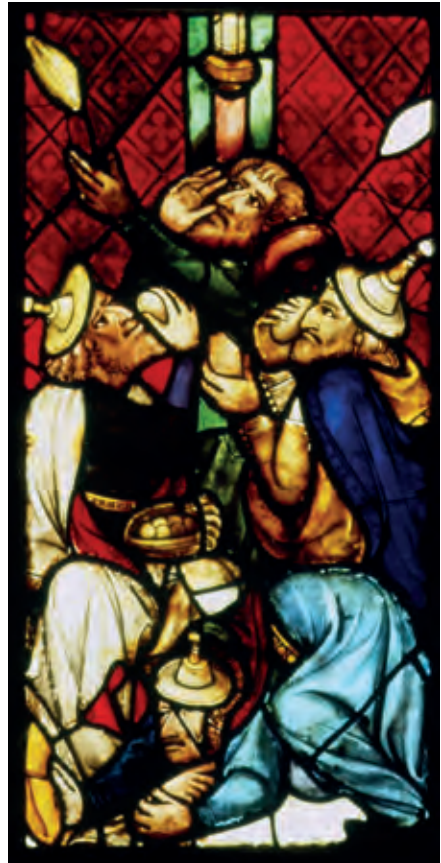


ST.-JAKOBS-KIRCHE (ST. JAMES' CHURCH)

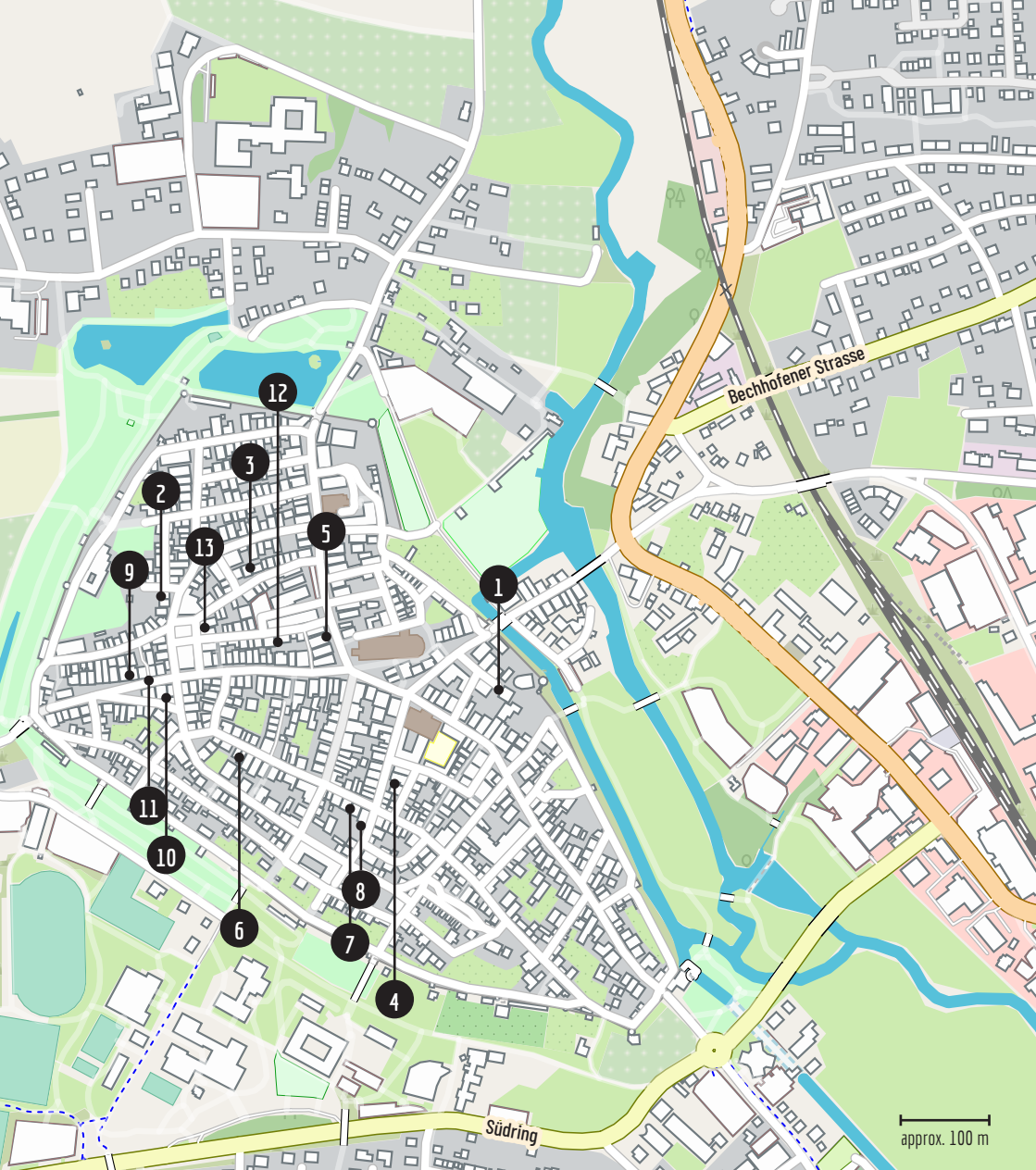
St.-Jakobs-Kirche (St. James' Church) is located on the church square in the heart of the historic centre of Rothenburg. It was completed in 1485 after 173 years of construction work. It is still Rothenburg's principal church today. Inside there are several Christian testimonies to contemporary Judaism:

- the stained glass windows in the eastern choir dating back to 1400 show a so-called manna harvest.
Exodus 2: 16: The people of Israel collect the manna bread from heaven, which is thrown down from above by angels in priestly garments.
The manna is shown as Franconian rolls (*Spitzweck*) and pretzels, while the Jews are depicted wearing "Jew's hats" and caricatured with hooked noses.
- Also in the eastern choir of the church, in the Altar of the Twelve Apostles by Friedrich Herlin dating from 1466, the fourth panel of the left altar wing features a very rare depiction of the circumcision and naming of Jesus (Luke 2:21). The person performing the circumcision (Mohel) is wearing spectacles. The seated man holding the Jesus child has a garment with Hebrew characters on its hem. Their meaning is uncertain.
- The Holy Blood Altar (c. 1500) by Tilman Riemenschneider on the west gallery of the church shows the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on the left wing of the altar. A man is spreading out his cloak before Jesus. On the hem of the robe are the names of God in Hebraic script, such as *Adonai* and *Shaddai*.

The stained glass windows and altarpieces have been preserved for centuries. The Holy Blood Altar has been moved several times, and was returned to its original location in 1965.



Manna glass window in the east choir, St. James' Church, Rothenburg o.d.T.



1 Altrathausplatz 11

2 Bauhofstrasse 15

3 Elsasser Gasse 18

4 Klostergasse 5

5 Weinmarkt 3

6 Lange Gasse 10

7 Lange Gasse 28

8 Lange Gasse 30

9 Segringer Strasse 38

10 Segringer Strasse 41

11 Segringer Strasse 44

12 Steingasse 7 and 9

13 Steingasse 12



DINKELSBÜHL

The earliest mentions of Jewish life in Dinkelsbühl are associated with sad events. Entries in the so-called *Memorbücher* – scripts in which the Jewish communities commemorate victims of past persecutions – indicate that Jews from Dinkelsbühl were killed in the pogroms of 1298 and 1348/49. In March 1372, Emperor Charles IV granted the town the privilege of *Juden-schutz* (“protection from the Jews”). The legal status of Jews working as money-lenders remained uncertain, however; time and again, decrees issued by the authorities resulted in debt cancellations, putting creditors in precarious situations. No Jewish families lived in the Free Imperial Town between the 15th century and the Thirty Years’ War. Three families were forced to leave the town again after the Peace of Westphalia, the other three remained until after 1710. Even though no Jews lived in Dinkelsbühl after that time, there were still Jews living in villages in the surrounding area (Mönchsroth, Schopfloch, Unterdeufstetten and Wittelshofen) who regularly visited the town as traders. From 1786 onwards, there were always *Wohnjuden* (“lodger Jews”) living in Dinkelsbühl, but they were not able to take



This painted montage hanging in the living room of Helene Vered, née Hamburger, in Israel, shows the expulsion of the Jews on 9/10 November 1938. On the right is Hamburger-Haus at Lange Gasse 28; the other buildings on the left are in Segringer Strasse, where the Schloßbergers lived. The Jewish families took their belongings to the railway station using handcarts of this kind.

up permanent residence. When Dinkelsbühl was incorporated into the Kingdom of Bavaria in 1806, there were no Jews living in the town. An edict issued in 1813 established a new legal status for Jews in Bavaria. They were granted civil rights, but their status was still not equal to that of the Christian population. One of the discriminatory provisions was a ban on being able to freely choose a place of residence, which was not lifted until 1861. From then on, Jewish families moved from the villages to the town, including the Seligmann brothers (1830-1904) and Robert Hamburger (1844-1921) of Schopfloch; the former settled at Klostersgasse 5, the latter at Lange Gasse 28. Just before the National Socialists seized power there were 64 Jews living

in Dinkelsbühl. The continuously growing Jewish population was initially assigned to the religious community in Schopfloch, where the cemetery was also located. But from 1882 onwards, separate services were held on the premises of Hamburger-Haus at Klostersgasse 5. In the 17th century, a mikvah was available to women in the property at Steingasse 9, and from 1862 onwards at Klostersgasse 5. Nine Jewish men fought in the First World War, three of whom never returned. The increasing

DINKELSBÜHL TRACES ...

self-confidence of the Jews of Dinkelsbühl led to the renaming of the Jewish community of Schopfloch as *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Schopfloch-Dinkelsbühl* in 1925. In 1931, when about 60 Jews were living in Dinkelsbühl, they were optimistic about the future and decided to establish an independent Jewish community. In May 1932, the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Dinkelsbühl* was recognized as a public body.

When the National Socialist era began, anti-Semitic reprisals increased, resulting in two thirds of the Jewish population leaving the town by 1938. They emigrated abroad or moved to the cities. In the summer of 1938, the mayor informed the remaining Jews that they would have to leave Dinkelsbühl within the next six months. On 9 and 10 November 1938 – before this deadline had passed – two SA raiding parties turned up at the houses where the Jewish families lived in the early hours of the morning. They smashed the furniture and

drove the residents out into the streets in their nightgowns, beating them and humiliating them. The synagogue rooms in Klostergasse were also vandalized. The National Socialists threw the Torah scrolls, prayer rolls and other ritual objects into the street and burned them. The remaining 19 Jews left the city for fear of further attacks. The Jewish people of Dinkelsbühl who were unable to emigrate were deported from the cities to concentration camps and extermination camps from 1941 onwards. A total of 30 Jews who had been born in Dinkelsbühl or had lived there lost their lives.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

Year

1865



1900



1933



Oct 1938



End 1938

0



HOUSES IN WHICH JEWISH PEOPLE LIVED

- Altrathausplatz 11: The family of general merchant Ludwig Ansbacher (1888-1950) lived here latterly. The childhood memories of siblings Manfred (1922-2012) and Sigrid Ansbacher (1928-?), who were born in the house, are an important source of information about Jewish life in the town. Manfred Ansbacher, who went by the name of Anson in the USA, was mentioned by name in a speech given by President Obama in 2013. His brother Heinz (1925-1942), commemorated by a *Stolperstein* at the entrance to the house, was murdered at the age of 16.
- Bauhofstrasse 15: From 1657 to 1712 this was the home of Mosche, Abraham and Moschi Frommele.
- Elsasser Gasse 18: The paint shop Weinberger & Birk latterly run by Jews was located here. During the November pogrom in 1938, the mayor personally gained access to the building to wreak destruction and maltreat the inhabitants. Three *Stolpersteine* were laid in front of the entrance in memory of three Jewish residents who died in the Shoah.



Stolpersteine in Dinkelsbühl



- Klostersgasse 5: This is the house purchased by the merchant Seligmann Hamburger in 1862. The rooms for the synagogue and mikvah were located here. There is still a commemorative plaque to this effect made by Angelika Brosig (d. 2013) which was mounted in 2007. Seligmann's son, the draper Adolf Hamburger (1876-1943), moved into the house: he was the first and last chairman of the independent religious community of Dinkelsbühl from 1932 to 1938. Adolf Hamburger died with his wife and daughter in the Shoah; there are three *Stolpersteine* dedicated to them in front of the entrance to the house.
- Lange Gasse 10: The Levite family originally came from Mönchsroth. The three brothers who lived here latterly worked in the animal fodder trade. Six *Stolpersteine* in front of the house commemorate the murdered family members.



DINKELSBÜHL TRACES ...



c. 1930. In the upper windows, on the left, Louise Hamburger; on the right, Emil Hamburger's wife Lina. Below in the shop doorway, Emil's brother Benno Hamburger (the name of Emil's father Robert Hamburger appears above the door); as a child with a doll's pram: Helene. The photograph was taken by Emil Hamburger.

- Lange Gasse 28: This is where Robert Hamburger lived, and most recently his son Emil (1880-1958), the cousin of Adolf and Moritz. Emil's daughter Helene, born in 1925, is the oldest and last living Jewish person to have been born in Dinkelsbühl. Today (2019) she lives in the Israeli town of Holon south of Tel Aviv. The *Stolperstein* is dedicated to the memory of Emil's unmarried sister, Luise Hamburger (1876-1942).
- Lange Gasse 30: Emil Hamburger's cousin Moritz Hamburger (1865-1940) lived in the house next door. After the death of his wife in 1925 he moved to his daughters in Pforzheim, from where he was deported and eventually killed. A *Stolperstein* on the corner of the street is dedicated to him and also to his former maid, Klara Gutmann (1866-1942).
- Segringer Strasse 38: *Zum Koppen* was run as a *Judenwirtschaft* (Jewish guest house) from 1651 to 1663.
- Segringer Strasse 41: Lazar Frommele lived here from 1684 to about 1700.
- Segringer Strasse 44: The Schloßberger family lived here and ran a general store, having moved here from Württemberg. Six family members, including three children, died in the Shoah. Six *Stolpersteine* on the pavement commemorate this.
- Steingasse 7 and 9: Itzig Jud was born at No. 9 in the second half of the 17th century.



There is also evidence that a mikvah existed in this property. In 1888, textile merchant Emanuel Waker from Schopfloch bought the house at No. 7 and established a department store here. In 1899 he bought the neighbouring building, Steingasse 9. After the death of his wife, Waker moved to Munich, selling his Dinkelsbühl properties in 1925. In front of Steingasse 7 there is a *Stolperstein* dedicated to Getrud Bär (1888-1942), who probably only lived for a short time with the Wakers as an employee.

- Steingasse 12: *Zum Weißen Ross* was a Jewish-run guest house from 1668 to 1681.
- Weinmarkt 3, Deutsches Haus: Although no Jews were officially allowed to live in Dinkelsbühl between 1813 and 1861, exceptions were made in the case of professions that were in demand. The physician Dr. Moises Moritz Mannheimer (1808-1861) lived here from 1853 until his death.

Lange Gasse 30 (left) and
Lange Gasse 28 (right) today.



Baderstrasse

Friedrichstrasse

- 1 Jewish cemetery
- 2 Synagogue burnt down in 1938
- 3 Jewish school house
- 4 former Judengasse

approx. 100 m



SCHOPFLOCH

The Jewish community in Schopfloch dates back to the 16th century, but Jewish inhabitants were first mentioned at the beginning of the 14th century. For a long time, Jewish residents played an important role in the life of the village; in the 1830s, Jewish people accounted for some 35 per cent of the village population.

Since the village of Schopfloch was split into two separate administrative areas, two Jewish communities were initially formed: one under the patronage of the Margraves of Ansbach, the other under the patronage of Oettingen-Spielberg. The religious facilities were shared by all Jewish villagers. It was not until the beginning of the 19th century that the two Jewish communities merged.

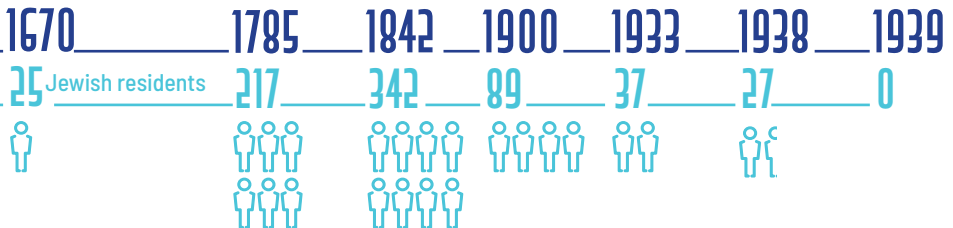
One of the reasons that Jewish families settled in Schopfloch was that that the centre of regional trade – the Free Imperial Town of Dinkelsbühl – did not allow Jews to settle within its walls. Many Jewish heads of household

were horse and cattle dealers, others worked as cloth and haberdashery dealers, peddlers, agents in the cattle trade and marriage brokers. From 1840 onwards, they started to take up craftsmen's professions, becoming bricklayers, coopers, master painters, rope makers, glaziers, farmers and stocking makers. The Rosenfeld stocking factory was founded at the end of the 19th century, employing as many as 100 workers.

The language of *Lachoudisch* developed over time among the travelling merchants as a kind of secret dialect. It consisted mainly of Hebrew and Western Yiddish words and is rooted in Franconian dialect as well as an underworld jargon known as *Rotwelsch*. The name *Lachoudisch* is derived from the Yiddish *Loschn* (language) and a corruption of the Hebrew for "the sacred" (*ha* = the; *kadasch* = holy).

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

Year



SCHOPFLOCH TRACES ...

JEWISH CEMETERY

The graves in the cemetery were laid out from east to west. The oldest, archaic-looking gravestones are located to the rear of the cemetery. In the newer section at the front there are decorative gravestones of great variety.

According to the Jewish religion, the grave-stone remains in possession of the deceased for all eternity. For this reason, Jewish graves are never opened and refilled. The cemetery was maintained by relatives. Individual gravestones that were weathered and illegible were renewed by relatives and in some cases by the grandchildren.

When the cemetery was still in use, great care was taken to avoid any proliferation of trees and shrubs. On old postcards and photos of the 1920s it can be clearly seen that there were only about four or five trees located in prominent places in the cemetery.

Gravestone of Isaias Rosenfeld,
Jewish cemetery Schopfloch



Schopfloch Jewish cemetery





SCHOPFLOCH JEWISH CEMETERY

The Jewish cemetery in Schopfloch was established in the 16th century. It was extended several times and today covers a surface area of 12,980 square metres. The dead of 13 Jewish rural communities in Central Franconia and neighbouring Württemberg are buried here – from Mönchsroth in the Riesrand region via Schopfloch to Feuchtwangen, and from Steinbach near Schwäbisch Hall to Wittelshofen am Hesselberg. Some 1,200 gravestones are still preserved, many of them severely weather-worn, but there were certainly many more burials than this. The cemetery was laid out from east to west, so the oldest gravestones are to be found in the eastern section to the rear. The owner of the cemetery is the Landesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden in Bayern (association of Jewish communities in Bavaria). The cemetery is a listed monument.

Project: Gravestone inventory and database

On the initiative of the association Bet Olam e.V., the gravestones are being comprehensively documented as part of a research project scheduled to run for two years. A data-base has been established and is supplemented on an ongoing basis with details of the Hebrew grave inscriptions and their translation, geological analysis of the stone types, the artistic form of the stones and their state of preservation and not least the biographical details of those buried.

Contact:

Bet Olam e.V. c/o Fränkisches Museum Feuchtwangen
Museumstr. 19, 91555 Feuchtwangen
www.juedischer-friedhof-schopfloch.de

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SCHOPFLOCH TRACES ...

The cemetery has no longer been used since the destruction of the Jewish communities during the National Socialist era. However, Jewish relatives from Europe and the USA still visit the cemetery to visit their ancestors' graves and pray there. People who are interested in German-Jewish history visit the *guter Ort* ('good place') – as German Jews called their cemeteries – to read the inscriptions on the gravestones. Now densely planted with trees, the cemetery is a very idyllic place and a fascinating sight in all seasons.

The cemetery can be visited free of charge at any time. The key can be collected at the building opposite from the Edenharther family, Baderstrasse 10.

Further information is available on the internet: www.juedischer-friedhof-schopfloch.de.

SYNAGOGUE

The first synagogue was built in Schopfloch in 1679 and was demolished nearly two centuries later. At the same site in what had been Judengasse – later Bahnhofstrasse – the Jewish community of Schopfloch inaugurated its new synagogue in 1877. This synagogue was burnt down in the pogrom night of 1938. The Jewish inhabitants lived peacefully with the Christian majority for a long period of time, and they had a key role to play in the social life of Schopfloch.

The last 27 Jewish inhabitants left Schopfloch

Historical photograph with a view of Schopfloch, showing the Jewish cemetery in the middle



before the pogrom night, most of their houses having been sold at considerably less than fair value. As of 20 October 1938 there was no longer a Jewish religious community in the village. Acquired by the local authorities at the end of November, the synagogue was destroyed in the spring of 1939 with all its remaining contents and then demolished. A commemorative plaque was mounted at the site of the former synagogue in 1988.

A Jewish school building constructed in 1831 is preserved to this day. Jewish children were taught all subjects here. Instruction in Hebrew and the study of the Hebrew scriptures was particularly important. An apartment was provided for the teacher at the *Judenschule*. When the Jewish community was dissolved and the Jewish residents expelled during the National Socialist era, its use as a school building also came to an end. The house underwent several conversions and was used as a residential building. Today it is privately owned.



Historical photograph of Schopfloch,
Bahnhofstrasse with synagogue

Old school house, Schopfloch



FEUCHTWANGEN

Text by Susanne Klemm

In the Middle Ages, Jews settled in many places in Central Franconia, but not in large numbers: the names of individuals have survived in the archives. A medieval legal document (*Achtbuch*) dating back to 1274 contains the first report regarding Michael, Judeus de Fuchtewanch (Michael, Jew of Feuchtwangen), who took legal action against the forcible expropriation of his house and farm.

Court records from the 14th century mention other Jews who lived in Feuchtwangen, too: Lewe, Wolflin von Babenberch, Selmlin von Eckelsheim, Besslen and Bern, as well as Josabel, Anselm Josep and Mosse. The severe pogroms of the plague years 1348/49 resulted in Jews being persecuted and killed in Feuchtwangen as well (*Martyrologium des Nürnberger Memorbuches*). When the Jews were driven out of the imperial towns and cities and the Duchy of Bavaria in the 15th century and finally in the 16th century, they settled in Feuchtwangen and in the market towns of West-Central Franconia. They were tolerated, but they were also exploited economically. In the 17th century a community became established which maintained a synagogue in Feuchtwangen. Led

by two rabbis, the Jewish community at that time was one of the wealthiest in the region. It had to repeatedly defend itself against defamation and attacks perpetrated by the Christian population and guilds.

SYNAGOGUE

Since the old synagogue in today's Museumstrasse fell into disrepair, the Israelite community had a new synagogue built which was inaugurated in 1833 – an event which attracted considerable interest among the population. Architect Georg Friedrich Ziebland from Munich planned it in the neo-Moorish style, with an imposing entrance gate bearing the inscription: *Dieses Tor dem Ewigen. Gerechte gehen durch dasselbe ein* ("This gateway leads to eternity. The righteous pass through it"). It contained not only a spacious prayer room with a women's gallery, but also a teacher's apartment and a classroom for teaching Jewish children Hebrew and the scriptures of the Hebrew Bible.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

Year

1707

23 Jewish residents



1833

170



1900

83



1933

39



1938

12-0



3 % of the population were Jews

6 % of the population were Jews

FEUCHTWANGEN TRACES ...

The Bavarian Edict of Tolerance of 1813 made the Jews Bavarian citizens – previously they had had virtually no rights at all. From this point onwards they were admitted to regular schools and had access to most professions. However, they were obliged to adopt surnames and register their place of residence with the police authorities. Each municipality was only allowed to assign a limited amount of registration numbers. In practice, this prohibited the influx of foreign Jews. Only Jewish factory owners, craftspeople and farmers were allowed to settle.

Anyone who wanted to set up their own household had to move to another municipality which still had vacancies. This was the reason why 24 Jewish people by the name of Feuchtwanger emigrated to America in 1859/60 in search of a better life.

From the 19th century onwards, Jews in Feuchtwangen were involved in money lending and cattle trading, but there were also Jewish traders in yarn, fancy goods, bedsprings, ironmongery, linen, furs, fruit, wine and spirits. By this time there was a greater proportion of Jews in the craft trades, too, including tobacco spinners, cooks, butchers, soap boilers, trimming makers, tanners and weavers. They also held highly respected positions in society as doctors, lawyers and teachers. Jewish citizens shaped the destiny of the town in various functions and networks. From 1868 onwards, Samuel Gutmann was chairman of the railway committee founded with the aim of connecting Feuchtwangen to the Nuremberg-Stuttgart railway line. In 1874, Meier and Sofia Holzinger and Selig-



mann Gutmann established a poor people's fund to support those in need, regardless of their denomination. The banker Simon Weihermann was a highly respected member of Feuchtwangen city council, while another banker, Isidor Stern, was an important member of the gymnastics and sports club in the 1920s.



Feuchtwangen synagogue
Picture credits: Stadtarchiv Nürnberg
E39/I No. 73/1

After the National Socialists seized power, rioting increased in Feuchtwangen as well. Jewish businesses were boycotted. On 20 December 1937, Jews were physically attacked by a large crowd. The last of them had left the town by May 1938, and the synagogue was burned down on 10 November 1938. At least 26 former Feuchtwangen residents were murdered because they were Jews.

In 1965, the *Verein für Volkskunst und Volksskunde* (Association for Folk Art and Folklore) erected a new building for the Fränkisches Museum on the site of the former synagogue. This is marked by a commemorative plaque.

In the centre of Feuchtwangen there are many historical houses that were inhabited by Jews and by Christians at different times. In Herrengasse in particular, which was still called Judengasse in the 19th century, numerous Jewish families lived in close proximity. Here you can see a commemorative plaque to writer Lion Feuchtwanger (1884-1958), who gained fame for his novel *Jud Süß*. His ancestors came from Feuchtwangen. The family left the city as early as the 16th century in the wake of a banishment ordered by Margrave Georg Friedrich and settled in other towns in southern Germany.

Today the houses no longer bear traces of their Jewish history: only a few remaining photos and documents allow reconstruction of the past.

FEUCHTWANGEN TRACES ...

MARKUS WACHSMANN



Feuchtwangen, view through Blumenstrasse (now Jahnstrasse) to the city wall, c.1890,

The photograph was taken between 1886 and 1896. The last house on the right, Blumenstrasse 14 (now Jahnstrasse), belonged to Jewish merchant Markus Wachsmann (1846-1921). He moved from Nowy Sącz (Galicia) to Feuchtwangen and married Lina Herschander (1847-1926) here. As the “poorest Jewess”, Lina Wachsmann was responsible for such things as the mikvah in Feuchtwangen (notice by L. Bleicher, archive of the Fränkisches Museum in Feuchtwangen). Markus Wachsmann purchased the house in

1886 and ran a shop for wool and haberdashery there, as can be seen from the shop sign. At that time the town wall was still intact at this point. The small house adjoining the inside of the town wall belonged to the builder Georg Lechner. Not until the Jahnturnhalle (sports hall) had been built was the city wall broken through in 1896 and the exit gate opened to public traffic. The Wachsmanns had three sons: Hermann

Wachsmann (born 1874), chief steward in Wesermünde, Adolf (Aron) Wachsmann (1877 – 1931), master tailor in Feuchtwangen, and Josef Wachsmann (1882 – 1979). The latter was a teacher in Berlin from 1919 onwards and emigrated to Lisbon, Portugal. Markus Wachsmann, his wife Lina and their son Adolf were buried in the Jewish cemetery in Schopfloch.



Gravestone of
Markus Wachsmann



JACOB GUNZENHÄUSER

Jacob Gunzenhäuser (1836-1929) came from a family of merchants resident in Feuchtwangen. He was a wine merchant, but he also traded in cattle and horses. Together with Max Ullmann, he latterly operated a wine and hop business in Feuchtwangen. From 1866 he lived with his wife Jette (1852 – 1936) at Museumstrasse 13. Diagonally opposite there was a draw well (today's Vogelweidebrunnen) which was used by the surrounding houses jointly as a domestic well to supply the families with water. These families joined together to form so-called "well communities".

In 1877, Jacob Gunzenhäuser was the "well master", responsible for ensuring the draw well functioned efficiently and organising bricklayers and carpenters as required, as well as paying and certifying invoices. He also collected the fees due for maintenance from the residents or well users – whole, half or quarter shares, depending on the size of the family.

The well master's job was by no means an easy one: again and again there was an insufficient

supply of water, or users would complain that the water was contaminated (by dog urine, for example). In winter, the well master had to chop up the ice around the well.

Jacob Gunzenhäuser lies buried in the Jewish cemetery in Schopfloch, along with his brothers Bernhard and Joseph. Descendants of the family living in the USA visited the graves in the summer of 2019.



Accounts book of the well communities bearing the signature of Jacob Gunzenhäuser, 1877
Fränkisches Museum Feuchtwangen,
Inv. No. 08445



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

- 1 Former Jewish house
- 2 Former Jewish house
- 3 Former Jewish house
- 4 Synagogue (no longer exists)
- 5 Ancestors of Billy Joel
- 6 Documentation centre (formerly No. 26)
- 7 Ancestors of Billy Joel (formerly No. 44)

approx. 50 m



COLMBERG

Text by Günther Fohrer

One of first references to Jewish life in Colmberg dates back to 1402, others to the end of the 16th century. A rather small Jewish community was established about 40 years after the Thirty Years' War. Three brothers from Oberzenn settled in Colmberg, later to be joined by a sister with her family. A documentation centre for the history of Colmberg's Jewish families is currently being established at the site of Jacob's house, below the church and rectory. Descendants of these families lived in the village until 1938, their Jewish community having existed for a period of some 250 years. At times the Jewish population accounted for some 10% of Colmberg's population. The Jewish people were mainly involved in commerce, benefiting from Colmberg's important status as the seat of the district authority. At the beginning of the 18th century, a synagogue was built at the centre of the village in a half-timbered building with paintings by Elizer Susmann, who



In the middle behind the war memorial stood the building that housed the synagogue. The building no longer exists (early 20th century postcard, Fohrer collection)

also decorated other synagogues in southern Germany. It was demolished in 1939: its contents had previously been taken to Munich and are considered lost. From the beginning of the 20th century onwards, the Jewish population decreased considerably due to migration from the countryside. In the 1930s, only two families lived in the village and they fell victim to the Holocaust.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

Year

1706

28 Jewish residents



1733

50



1796

62



1838

70



1912

18



1938

8



COLMBERG TRACES ...

DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

The documentation centre *Familiengeschichten – Jüdisches Leben in Colmberg* ("Family histories – Jewish life in Colmberg") provides an informative encounter with members of the village's former Jewish community. Numerous interactive and multimedia facilities enable visitors to find out about the Jewish families and trace individual life stories over a period of some three centuries. Why did Jewish families move to Colmberg in the first place? Which professions did they pursue? What were relations like with Christian neighbours? And why did so many Jews eventually leave the town again? Answers to these and many other questions are provided by an interesting, family-friendly and barrier-free exhibition. (To open in autumn 2020 – admission free).



No. 26 (Ansbacher Str. 6)

This was the site of the former No. 26 where Jacob lived, one of the founders of Colmberg's Jewish community. A documentation centre is being established in the bottom left of this building to present Colmberg's Jewish history.

ANCESTORS OF BILLY JOEL



No. 44 (Ansbacher Str. 3)

The house which was formerly No. 44 a/b was inhabited from 1730 onwards by Mosch and his descendants up until 1882. They were the ancestors of the famous pop singer Billy Joel. Billy Joel's grandfather Karl Joel was born in 1889 in the house opposite. His parents and their children left Colmberg in 1895 and moved to Ansbach, later settling in Nuremberg. There Karl Joel founded a linen mail-order business, which Josef Neckermann acquired cheaply during the National Socialist era.



Members of the Jewish Steinberger family from Colmberg, around 1930. Ernest Haas Collection



No. 69 (Burgstrasse 1)



THE STEINBERGER FAMILY

Family photograph of the Steinberger family before the start of the First World War

It shows Alexander Steinberger (1852-1930), who had lived all his life as a cattle dealer in Colmberg, and his family. His wife Regina, née Liebenstein (1850-1933), came from Hüttenheim, they married in 1876, and in 1926 a big party was organised in Colmberg to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary. The roots of the name Steinberger date back to the beginning of the 18th century in Colmberg; they were given the family name Steinberger in 1813. Members of this family were the last Jewish residents to remain in Colmberg in 1938.

Of their 10 adult children, six were murdered in the Holocaust, one daughter survived the concentration camp with her husband, one son emigrated to the USA and three had already died before 1938.

The parents' gravestones and those of one son and one daughter are to be found at the Jewish cemetery in Bechhofen. Today their descendants live in Germany, the USA and Israel.

The family lived at the house which was formerly No. 87 (No. 3 on the map); son Justin and daughter Ida née Wittelshöfer lived at No. 69 (No. 1 on the map). A plaque on the house commemorates the two families.

WEST-CENTRAL FRANCONIA



TRACES OF JEWISH LIFE IN THE HESSELBERG REGION

INTRODUCTION

Text by Gunther Reese, Mönchsroth

The region around the Hesselberg has a major part to play in the history of Swabian-Franconian rural Judaism. From the 16th century onwards, the border area between the county of Oettingen, the Free Imperial Town of Dinkelsbühl and the margraviate of Ansbach offered rural Judaism a diverse social, religious and economic space for development: combined with a high degree of high mobility, this led to the emergence of some prosperous Jewish communities which established their own synagogues and teaching traditions. Jewish people accounted for more than 20 per cent of the population in some cases. In terms of religious life, this meant that the Jewish faith was second to the prevailing denomination of either Protestant or Catholic, resulting in varied interactions between Jews and Christians in the village communities, especially in the 19th century. After final attainment of full civil rights in the newly founded German Reich

in 1871, emigration to the cities and overseas led to a sharp decline in community numbers. When *Gauleiter* and *Frankenführer* Julius Streicher appeared on the scene and rallies were held by the NSDAP (*Hesselbergtag* and *Frankentage*) on the Hesselberg from 1928 onwards, Jewish citizens in the region were confronted with a particularly aggressive, anti-Semitic environment. National Socialist terror and the pogrom night of 9 November 1938 put an end to the communities that still existed at that time.



Plate for milk products, pewter
Philipp Jacob Schott,
Frankfurt, after 1726
In private ownership

Jewish dietary rules (kashrut) stipulate that milk and meat are not to be eaten together or mixed. "Thou shalt not boil a young goat in its mother's milk", says the Hebrew Bible (Exodus 23:19). For this reason, separate plates are used for meat.



- 1 Synagogue site memorial
- 2 Jewish cemetery
- 3 Model of barn synagogue
- 4 Memorial to victims of the Shoah

approx. 100 m



BECHHOFEN

SYNAGOGUE SITE MEMORIAL

The site of the former synagogue, which was destroyed by arson during the November pogroms in 1938, is located on Alter Schulplatz in Bechhofen. A memorial stone was erected on the site in 1988 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of this event. The stone symbolises the burning thorn bush and contains an inscription from Psalm 42:5: "I will remember them, and I will pour out my heart for those who once went there in great numbers to the house of the Eternal." A few meters in front of the memorial stone there is a floor slab bearing the inscription: "In memory of the Jewish community of Bechhofen. Here stood their synagogue." The entire site is now a green area bordered by hedges, illustrating the size of the former synagogue.



Commemorative plaque and memorial at the synagogue site in Bechhofen, Alter Schulplatz

BECHHOFEN TRACES ...

JEWISH CEMETERY

The Jewish cemetery in Bechhofen is one of the most important cemeteries in southern Germany. On a surface area of almost two hectares, there were originally some 8,000 graves and gravestones here, of which some 2,300 are still preserved today. The oldest gravestone in the cemetery was dated at 1602. From 1706 onwards, a margraval decree determined that Jews from a total of 16 surrounding villages had to bury their dead in Bechhofen. As a result, the cemetery in Bechhofen became the largest Jewish cemetery in southern Germany.

Jewish cemetery
in Blütenstrasse





MODEL OF BARN SYNAGOGUE

The 1:10 scale model faithfully reproduces the barn synagogue of the market town of Bechhofen which was destroyed during the pogrom night of 1938. The model was built by vocational college students and further improved some years later by residents of a therapy centre. The interior of the model can be illuminated so that the finely elaborated details -- such as Torah scrolls, wall decorations and the "eternal light" -- can easily be seen by visitors. As well as being a reminder Bechhofen's almost four hundred years of Jewish history, the model provides an impression of the destroyed synagogue's artistically designed interior.

In 2007, the Nuremberg Institute for Holocaust Studies created a digital model of the synagogue which can be viewed online at www.nurinst.org.

Model of the former barn synagogue
Martin-Luther-Platz 1 (in the town hall)

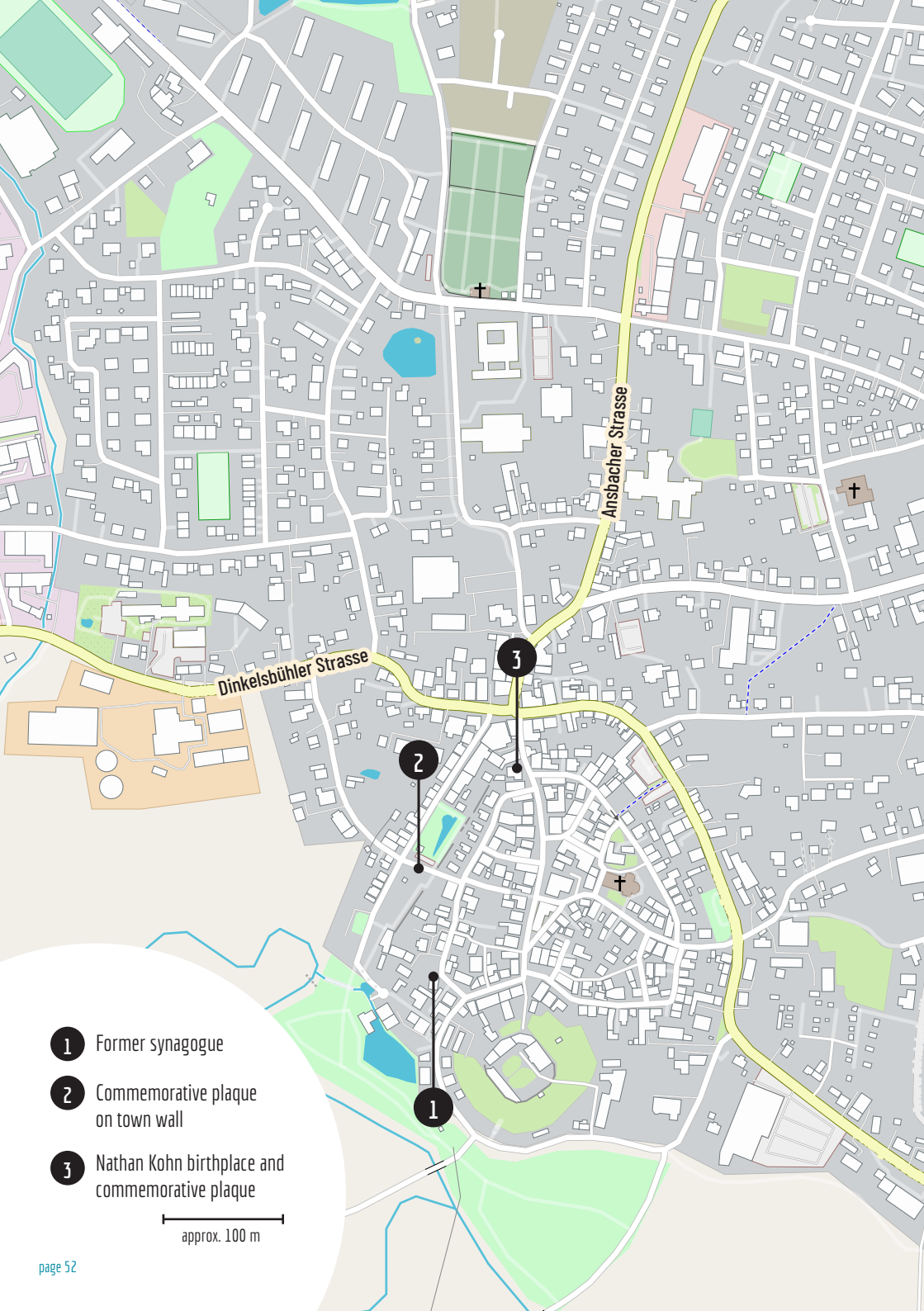


MEMORIAL TO VICTIMS OF THE SHOAH

A memorial to the victims of the Shoah was unveiled on 12 October 2013 to mark the 75th anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews from Bechhofen. It consists of a long wall in which individual stones are embedded. Each of the 32 stones bears the name, year of birth and place of death of a Jewish person expelled from Bechhofen. The middle of the wall is decorated with a Star of David and the inscription: "In memory of the people who are missing from our midst". Underneath there is another inscription which says: "Bechhofen commemorates the Jewish citizens who were torn from all walks of life in the community by expulsion or genocide".



Bechhofen memorial to victims of the Shoah
Marktplatz, near Katharinenkirche



- 1 Former synagogue
- 2 Commemorative plaque on town wall
- 3 Nathan Kohn birthplace and commemorative plaque

approx. 100 m



WASSERTRÜDINGEN

FORMER SYNAGOGUE

On the edge of the old town stands the former synagogue of the Wassertrüdingen Jewish community. The synagogue was built in 1860 according to plans drawn up by Hauser, a Gunzenhausen building inspector. The synagogue was closed down during the November pogroms in 1938, but for safety reasons it was not blown up or set on fire due to the adjacent housing. Today it is used as a residential building: all that remains is a sign indicating that it was formerly used as a Jewish place of worship.

Historical sources indicate that the synagogue was exceptionally large for the size of the Jewish community at that time. The community was only able to cover about two thirds of the cost of 8,000 guilders from its own funds: the rest was financed by loans from the local savings bank. The mayor of Wassertrüdingen at the time, master locksmith Geiger, helped arrange this loan.



Former synagogue
Kappelgasse 38

WASSERTRÜDINGEN TRACES ...

COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

At Hans Nathan Kohn's birthplace in the centre of Wassertrüdingen, there is a plaque commemorating this famous professor of medicine. Kohn was a specialist for lung and heart disease in Berlin and discovered the so-called alveolar pores in the lung (also called "pores of Kohn"). The plaque at his birthplace commemorates one of Wassertrüdingen's most famous progeny and a member of its Israelite religious community. Prof. Hans Nathan Kohn died in Berlin in 1935.



Nathan Kohn commemorative plaque
Marktstrasse 6



COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

On the front of the old town wall in Wassertrüdingen near the sundial park is the commemorative plaque dedicated to Jewish victims of persecution. The plaque was unveiled on 9 November 2013, the 75th anniversary of the “Night of Broken Glass”. The plaque is made of glass and is shaped like a large wedge pointing to the ground. On it are engraved the name, year of birth and the year and place of death of the 15 Jewish citizens who lived in Wassertrüdingen until their expulsion. The artist Reinhard Zimmermann who designed the commemorative plaque intended this wedge shape symbolize the idea that the expulsion of the Jewish residents drove a wedge into Wassertrüdingen society. This is also indicated by the inscription below the wedge: “Victims of Jewish persecution in Wassertrüdingen: they were born in Wassertrüdingen and murdered during the National Socialist tyranny.” Underneath, in large letters: “expelled – persecuted – murdered”.

Commemorative plaque on the town wall
Alte Schulgasse



FURTHER TRACES ...

MEMORIAL STONE IN WITTELSHOFEN

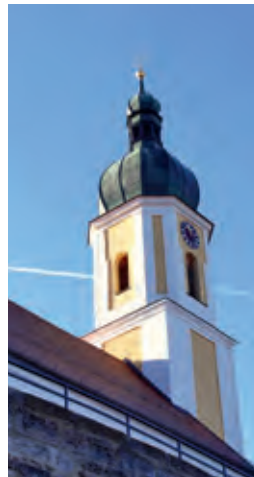
On the edge of Wittelshofen, in the courtyard of Heinrich Zoller's museum of local history and framed by two trees, there is a memorial stone commemorating the Jewish community in Wittelshofen. After the Wittelshofen synagogue was destroyed in 1938, the last remaining members of the Jewish community were deported. The memorial stone erected in 2008 commemorates the 24 Wittelshofen Jews who were murdered during the Shoah with the inscription: "For over 300 years they lived here in peace. A reminder to the living."



Memorial stone
Schlossstrasse 11

COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE ARBERG

In the vestibule of the Catholic parish church St. Blasius in Arberg hangs a large commemorative plaque in honour of Kreszentia Hummel and parish priest Josef Schreiber. During the Second World War, Kreszentia Hummel saved the life of the then ten-year-old Charlotte Knobloch by claiming that Charlotte was her illegitimate child. Charlotte Knobloch has been President of the Israelite Religious Community of Munich and Upper Bavaria since 1985 and unveiled the commemorative plaque in Arberg in 2016. Because of her courageous and selfless commitment in saving an innocent child, Kreszentia Hummel was honoured as "Righteous Among the Nations" – the highest award of the State of Israel. Pastor Josef Schreiber, who is also commemorated on the plaque, protected Kreszentia Hummel and Charlotte Knobloch by concealing the true origin of the child. He also hid ten Polish forced labourers at his vicarage at the end of the Second World War, saving them from certain death.



St. Blasius Catholic
parish church
(Commemorative plaque
for Kreszentia Hummel
and pastor Josef
Schreiber)
Schlossweg 14



JUDENWEG SIGNPOST

The so-called Judenweg ("Jews Path") connects Schopfloch to Sulzach, which is part of Dürrwangen. These paths were the former lifelines and connections between the various municipalities and were used as trading routes, for instance. The signpost shown here is located at the junction between Judenweg and the old postal route from Lehenbuch to Mögersbronn. The Judenweg is the last indication of a Jewish presence in Dürrwangen.



Signpost at Judenweg, Schopfloch - Dürrwangen

MÖNCHROTH BARN

After the 30-year war, an active Jewish community developed in Mönchsroth. In 1761 the Jews of Mönchsroth built their own synagogue; this was followed by an Israelite elementary school, which was in use up until 1890. Documents found in 1988 indicate that the local Jewish community was well educated and very religious. During the *Reichspogromnacht* ("Night of Broken Glass") in 1938, the last two Jewish families left Mönchsroth. Today, a memorial stone erected in 2006 commemorates the municipality's Jewish history. In addition, a stylised bovine head is still emblazoned on a nearby barn. This barn once belonged to the Jewish cattle dealer Behr.

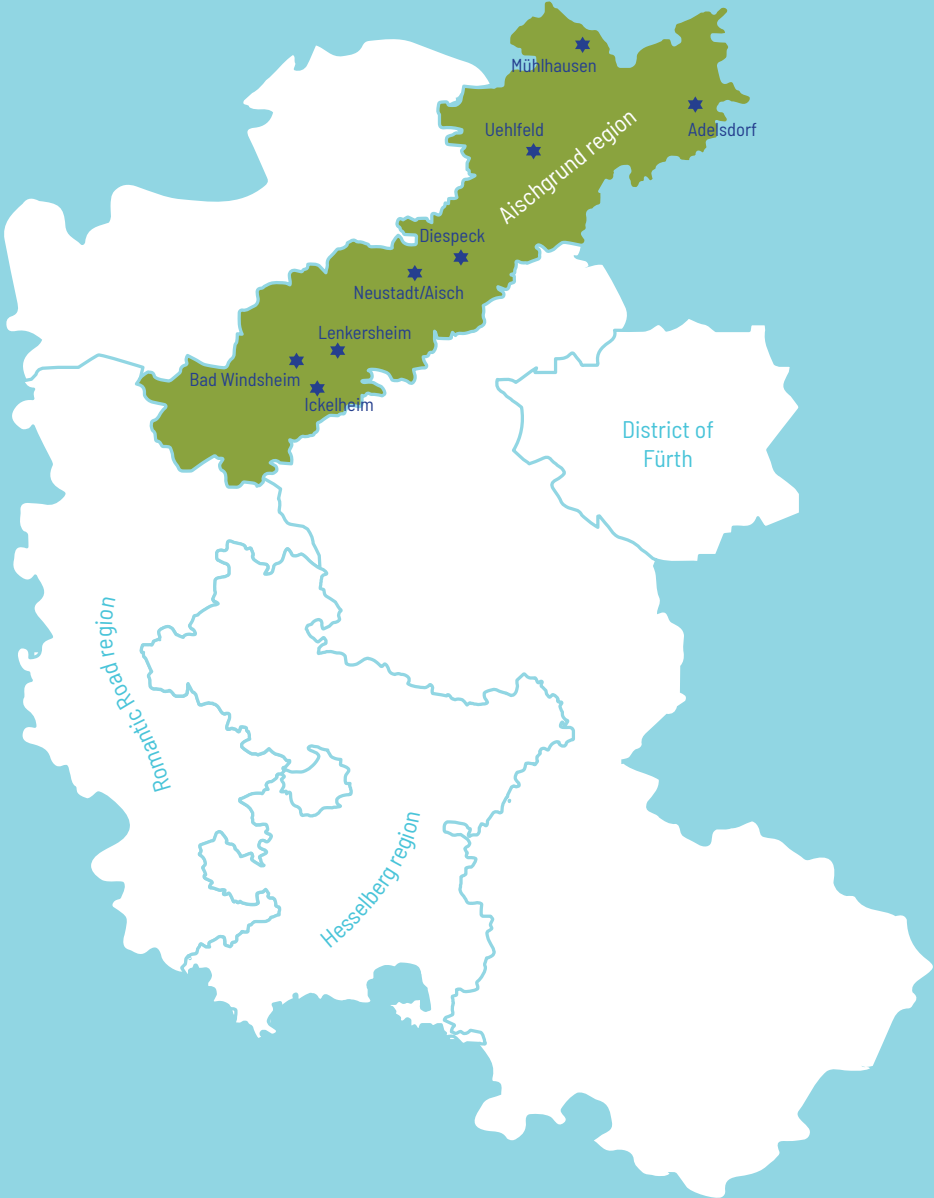


Memorial stone dedicated to the Jewish community



Bovine head on the former barn of the Jewish cattle dealer Behr in Mönchsroth

WEST-CENTRAL FRANCONIA



TRACES OF JEWISH LIFE IN THE AISCHGRUND REGION

INTRODUCTION

The Aischgrund region's Jewish residents are part and parcel of the area's history. Jews once lived in at least 16 of the 20 LAG municipalities between Gallmersgarten and Adelsdorf, mostly for several centuries and over many generations. In municipalities such as Adelsdorf, Diespeck, Mühlhausen, Jewish people sometimes made up 25 to 30 per cent of the population. In around 1830, almost half of the population of Uehfeld was Jewish.

Cemeteries, a few former synagogues and certain other buildings as well as field and street names – such as Judengasse in Bad Windsheim – bear witness to this past. However, much has been destroyed, obliterated, spoilt or left to decay.

The history of the Jews in the Aischgrund region goes back a long way – as far as the deepest Middle Ages. Periods of expulsion,

persecution and vilification alternated with phases of peaceful and prosperous coexistence, as evidenced by documents from Diespeck and Adelsdorf, for example. Nonetheless, Jews from the Aischgrund region were likewise only ever second-class citizens.

They were not allowed to own land or practise a craft trade, and they had to pay protection money and additional taxes – even in the “good” times.

Many residents of the Aischgrund region were also among those who died in extermination camps.



Diespeck Jewish cemetery

Most of the municipalities concerned have openly engaged with this darkest chapter of their past – thanks mainly to dedicated citizens. There are commemorative steles, plaques, memorials and *Stolpersteine* in Bad Windsheim, Neustadt, Diespeck, Mühlhausen and Adelsdorf which are dedicated to the victims.



BAD WINDSHEIM

There was a Jewish community in Bad Windsheim as long ago as the middle of the 13th century, but it was almost completely destroyed by pogroms in 1298 and 1348. The houses of the Jews of Windsheim were located in the “Judenhöflein” – a ghetto-like residential district not far from the market square. A street bearing this name is a modern-day reminder of this.

According to sources, Jews returned to the Free Imperial Town from 1360 onwards. However, they were expelled again around 1500. After this, only a few Jewish families resided here, leading a life that alternated between toleration and expulsion and forced to pay special taxes by the rulers, according to the website www.juedische-gemeinden.de.

This was also the case during the Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648): Jews were given refuge in Windsheim for a fee.

In the centuries that followed there are no records of Jewish inhabitants, and Jewish traders were only allowed to enter the town during the day for trading purposes. This right was soon denied to them as well, however. It is reported that in 1679 the mayor and the city council decided to prohibit Jews from trading and entering the town.

A “real” community with a synagogue did not become established until 1877 after Jews from the surrounding villages Ickelheim, Kaubenheim and Lenkersheim moved to Windsheim. Members of the community – whose numbers almost doubled from 1878 to 1892 – had access to a communal building at Hafenmarkt which had a synagogue room with a gallery for the women and a mikvah.

The deceased of the Jewish community were buried at the cemetery in Obernzenn, situated nearly ten kilometres away at the south-western border of Obernzenn.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

Year

1900

120

Jewish residents



1933

58



1937

27



1939

0

There were no longer any Jews living in Windsheim in 1939. They had moved away, 13 managed to emigrate.

At this time the families earned their living almost exclusively from trade.

There were still 58 Jewish inhabitants in 1933. As a result of the economic boycott and increasing reprisals, more than half of the Jewish residents had left the town by 1937.

BAD WINDSHEIM TRACES ...

COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

The synagogue was destroyed during the November pogrom in 1938. The ruin was initially left standing but was eventually demolished. A commemorative plaque was installed in 1995, the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The inscription reads: "In memory. Here at Hafenmarkt, the Jewish synagogue was set on fire in the early hours of 10 November 1938. In the subsequent period, the Windsheim Jews were expelled, deported to concentration camps and murdered. The town of Bad Windsheim honours these victims. 8 May 1995 - 50 years after the end of the war." The plaque is located at Hafenmarkt 4.



COMMEMORATIVE STELE

In 2008, a commemorative stele in the form of two prisms set against each other was also inaugurated at Hafenmarkt (photo right), bearing the names of the 40 Jews from Windsheim who were deported and murdered.

Commemorative stele in
Hafenmarkt, Bad Windsheim

Commemorative plaque at
Hafenmarkt 4, Bad Windsheim



STOLPERSTEINE

There are now also 17 *Stolpersteine* in the town centre, including one on the edge of the market square dedicated to the wine merchant couple Leopold and Sophie Waldmann. The Waldmann family had been resident in the Aischgrund region at least since 1759. They first lived in Lenkersheim and moved to Windsheim in 1877. Sophie and Leopold's only child Irmgard was born in 1920. The Waldmanns were among those imprisoned by local National Socialists in November 1938. Leopold was taken to Dachau concentration camp. Their daughter managed to escape to the USA. Her parents were deported to Poland in April 1942, where they died – presumably in early summer. Leopold was awarded the Iron Cross in 1918 for bravery during the First World War.

Other *Stolpersteine* are to be found in Herren-gasse, Schwalbengasse and Metzgergasse as well as in Hafenmarkt.



Stolpersteine at the edge of
Marktplatz in Bad Windsheim
Kegetstraße 1



11



TRACES IN TOWN DISTRICTS

LENKERSHEIM

From the end of the 18th century onwards, the Jewish community in the Lenkersheim district periodically grew to be quite large. Around 1815 there are said to have been 18 Jewish households living in reasonably satisfactory economic conditions. A building dating back to the 1730s served as a meeting place. The families left Lenkersheim in the second half of the 19th century, and no more Jews lived here from about 1900 onwards.

ICKELHEIM

In Ickelheim, another district of Bad Windsheim, there was a Jewish community in existence until shortly after the First World War. In addition to the burial ground, there was a prayer room, a school and a ritual bath in Ickelheim. A new synagogue was built in the 1850s. At that time there were still almost 20 Jewish families living in the village. Fluctuation and emigration caused community numbers to shrink considerably after 1850/1860. Around 1890 the Jewish community in Ickelheim was assigned to Windsheim before being dissolved completely around 1920.

ICKELHEIM SYNAGOGUE

There was probably a synagogue or prayer room here as early as the second half of the 17th century: documents dating back to 1672 indicate that there was a "Jewish schoolmaster" in Ickelheim. The building burned down in 1856. The fire was started deliberately and also spread to other buildings in the village.

The new synagogue building is dated at 1856. The sandstone building in Mittelgasse is preserved as a residential building and is privately owned but has been vacant for some time (photo left). The owner would like to make the property available for public use.



NEUSTADT AN DER AISCH

The first record of Jewish life in Neustadt dates back to 1298, when 71 Jews living here are said to have fallen victim to religious fanaticism.

There is no clear evidence that there were still Jewish families living in Neustadt in the 14th and 15th centuries. After the expulsion of the Nuremberg Jews in 1498/1499, numerous families settled in the Aisch valley; the liberal attitude of Electress Anna, who resided in Neustadt, favoured their settlement in Neustadt as well as in other villages in the region. However, the Jewish community only existed for a short period of time; after the death of the Electress in 1512, the Jews were driven out of the town around 1520.

Only in the 1860s did individual families settle in Neustadt again on a permanent basis – initially from the neighbouring town of Diespeck. Attempts to form an independent community failed at first. However, families living in

Neustadt were allowed to hold services at a special synagogue which was established in Gartenstrasse near the market square in 1878.

This synagogue came from the small village of Pahres, a few kilometres down the River Aisch. When it was no longer possible to hold services there due to a lack of community members, the synagogue was dismantled and rebuilt in Neustadt in June 1878.

A Jewish community only officially existed in Neustadt from 1915 onwards; prior to this, the community of the neighbouring village of Diespeck had been dissolved. The newly founded community now called itself *Kultus-gemeinde Neustadt-Diespeck*. The Neustadt Jews buried their deceased at the Diespeck cemetery.

By November 1938, most Jewish residents had already emigrated to other towns or had been deported; only a few emigrated. On 8 November 1938, the 22 remaining Jews were forced to leave Neustadt. Members of the SA stormed the synagogue and destroyed it; shortly afterwards it was demolished. According to sources, the last Jewish woman left the town on 15 December 1938.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

Year

1298

1930

1933

1938

71

Jewish residents



22



0

The Jews of Neustadt mostly worked as merchants and traders.

Neustadt was a stronghold of the NSDAP in the early 1930s, and Jewish residents were exposed to anti-Jewish agitation immediately after the National Socialists seized power in 1933. Their freedom of movement was severely restricted and they became impoverished.

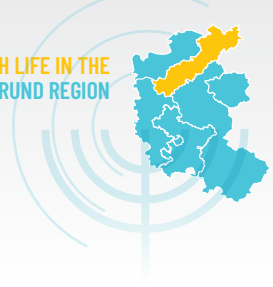
NEUSTADT AN DER AISCH TRACES ...

COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

In 1988, the Neustadt municipal authorities erected a commemorative plaque at the former site of the synagogue in Gartenstrasse which is inscribed as follows: "In eternal remembrance of our Jewish fellow citizens who lost their lives between 1933 and 1945. May their souls be bound to those of the living. The synagogue of the Jewish Community of Neustadt an der Aisch stood here, inaugurated on 31 May 1880, destroyed on 10 November 1938."



Commemorative plaque in Gartenstrasse,
Neustadt/Aisch



STOLPERSTEINE

Five of these were laid in Neustadt in spring 2013 at the school complex in Comeniusstrasse. In this connection, a group of pupils at Dietrich Bonhoeffer-Realschule produced an award-winning film entitled *Stolpersteine – The Fate of Jewish Children in Neustadt an der Aisch during the National Socialist Era* (2013).

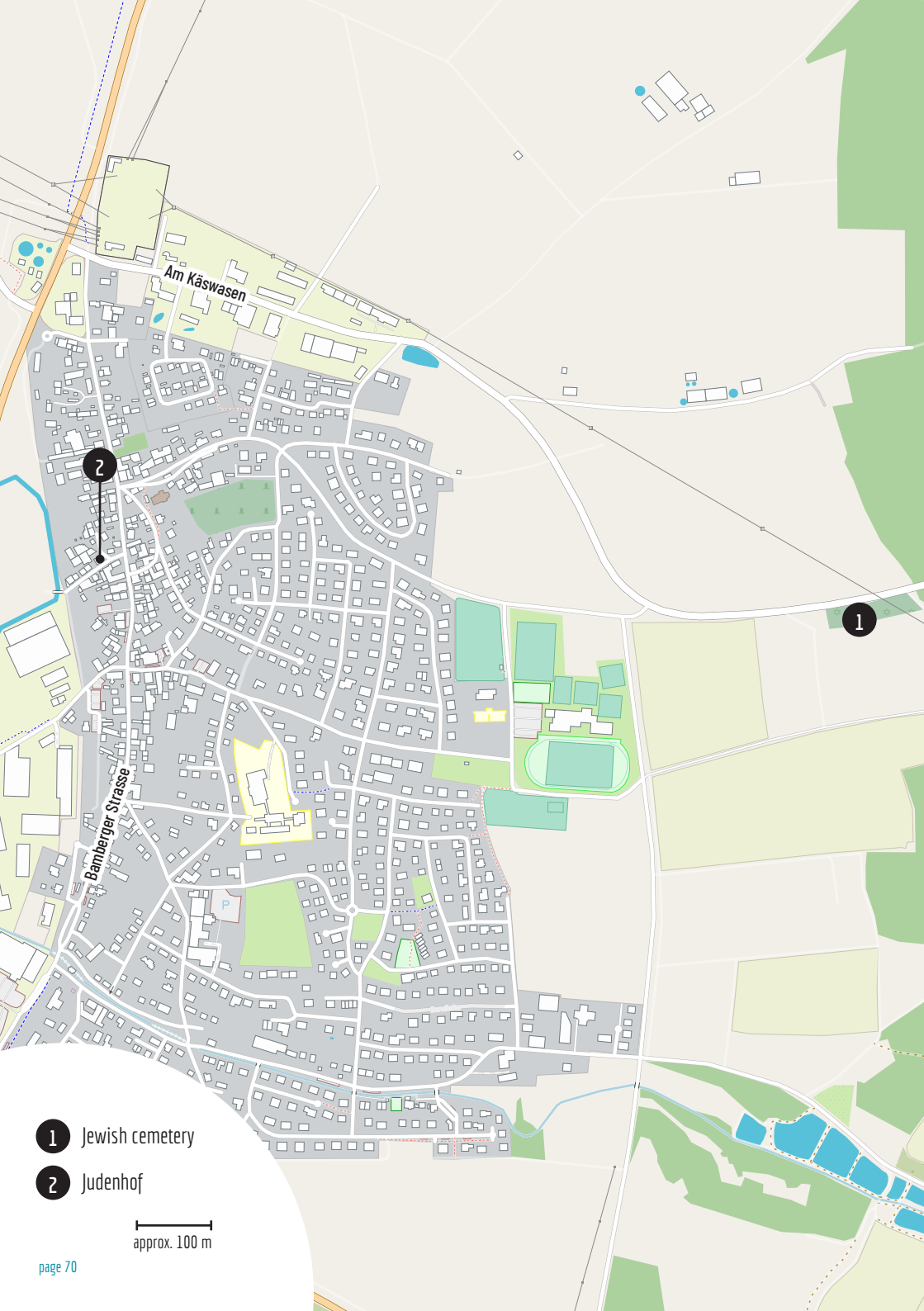


MUSEUMS

At the Altes Museum – exhibition depository

Some items of Jewish history are also on display at the LEADER-sponsored exhibition depository (*Schaudepot*) which has been open since summer 2020.

*Stolpersteine in
Neustadt/Aisch*



1 Jewish cemetery

2 Judenhof

approx. 100 m



DIESPECK

Jewish families also settled here after the end of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648); they were presumably Jews who had been expelled from Nuremberg. A "school" (prayer room) is said to have existed as long ago as 1669. Community facilities included a synagogue, a mikvah, a schoolhouse and a slaughterhouse with an apartment for the butcher. From 1832/1833 onwards the synagogue was housed in a converted barn.

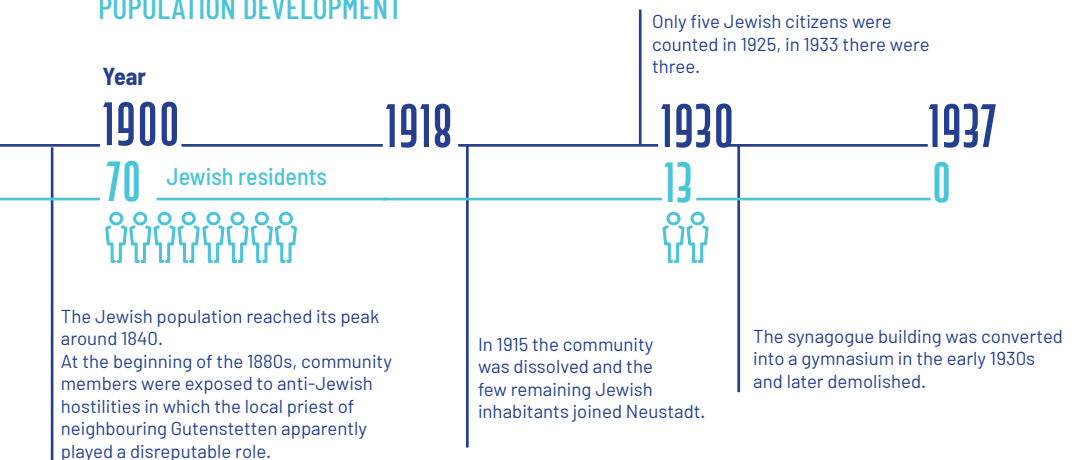
On a hilltop to the east of the village lies the Jewish cemetery, which was established in the late 18th century. It also provided a final resting place for the Jewish inhabitants of the neighbouring towns of Pahres and Neustadt. Before that, the deceased had to be brought to Ullstadt, 15 kilometres away.

In the 19th century, the Diespeck community belonged to the Rabbinate of Uehlfeld; after its dissolution, it was attached to the District Rabbinate of Fürth.

According to Wikipedia, the first mention of a Jewish settlement in Diespeck dates back to 1616, when there is evidence that one of the houses in the town belonged to a Jewish person.

A larger number of Jewish families moved to the neighbouring Neustadt during the second half of the 19th century. The Jewish community of Diespeck, by now much smaller, was affiliated to the community in Neustadt from 1915 onwards.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT



אברהם בן יצחק
ה'תק"ל

נפטר ביום שבת
אחד עשר שבט
ת"ת

ה'תק"ל

Hier ruht sanft und heilig
Julius Schönthal

von Diespeck,
geb. den 1. Dezember 1822,
gest. den 24. Februar 1882.
Pred. Hal. 3. H.



DIESPECK TRACES ...

CEMETERY

This is located about one kilometre outside the town on the road to Dettendorf. The oldest gravestones are to be found at the Tahara house. There is also a memorial to the Jewish villagers who died in the First World War. The names of the fallen soldiers are especially inscribed on small stones.

The deceased of the community were first buried at the Jewish cemetery in the Sugenheim district of Ullstadt. On 7 March 1786, the Jews of Diespeck received a purchase permit for a "small field of the very worst sandy soil", which "had been barren for more than ten years, thus being of no use to the tithe lord" (Wikipedia). Immediately after the land had been purchased, the community members and their fellow believers from Pahres built a cemetery wall and a Tahara house, which was renovated in 1862. The first gravestone, dating from 1786, has been preserved and can be found to the south of the building.

The documented name of the cemetery is *Judensäcker* – a word that includes a reference to both the designation *Gottesacker* (German for "God's acre" or graveyard) and the Hebrew word *secher*, which means remembrance or commemoration.

Memorial candle at Diespeck Jewish cemetery



In July 1930, several gravestones were knocked over and damaged at the cemetery. Desecrations also occurred during the National Socialist era. The cemetery wall was taken down after the last funeral in 1938. After the Second World War, locals had to rebuild the cemetery wall by order of the US military government.

Severe devastation occurred in 2007 when two youths pulled a total of 63 gravestones and the eleven memorial stones in the war memorial from their anchoring, knocking them over and breaking some of them. The perpetrators – right-wing extremists aged 17 and 18 – had previously committed an arson attack in Bad Windsheim in October 2006.

DIESPECK TRACES ...

Diespeck Jewish cemetery, stone for ritual ablutions



The juvenile chamber of Nuremberg-Fürth Regional Court imposed prison sentences of several years for both acts – as is documented in Wikipedia, for example. The overturned graves, in some cases damaged irreparably, were restored by September 2007. A total of 327 gravestones are preserved at the Jewish cemetery in Diespeck.

In front of the cemetery, the municipality has erected two information panels about the Jewish history of Diespeck and the cemetery. The cemetery is open to visitors: the key can be collected from the town hall.

From time to time there are guided tours, for example on Monument Open Day. The Tahara house is also open on this day (photo left).



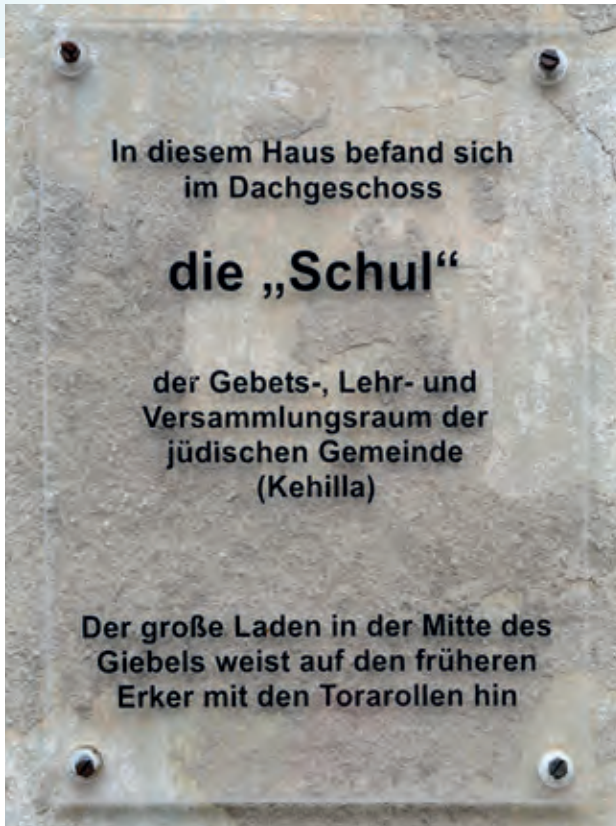
Jewish cemetery Diespeck



JUDENHOF

The Judenhof, also known as Birkenhof, is an ensemble of buildings in the south of the town which includes the former Jewish school house. It is still preserved today and is used for residential purposes. A plaque serves as a reminder of its former function.

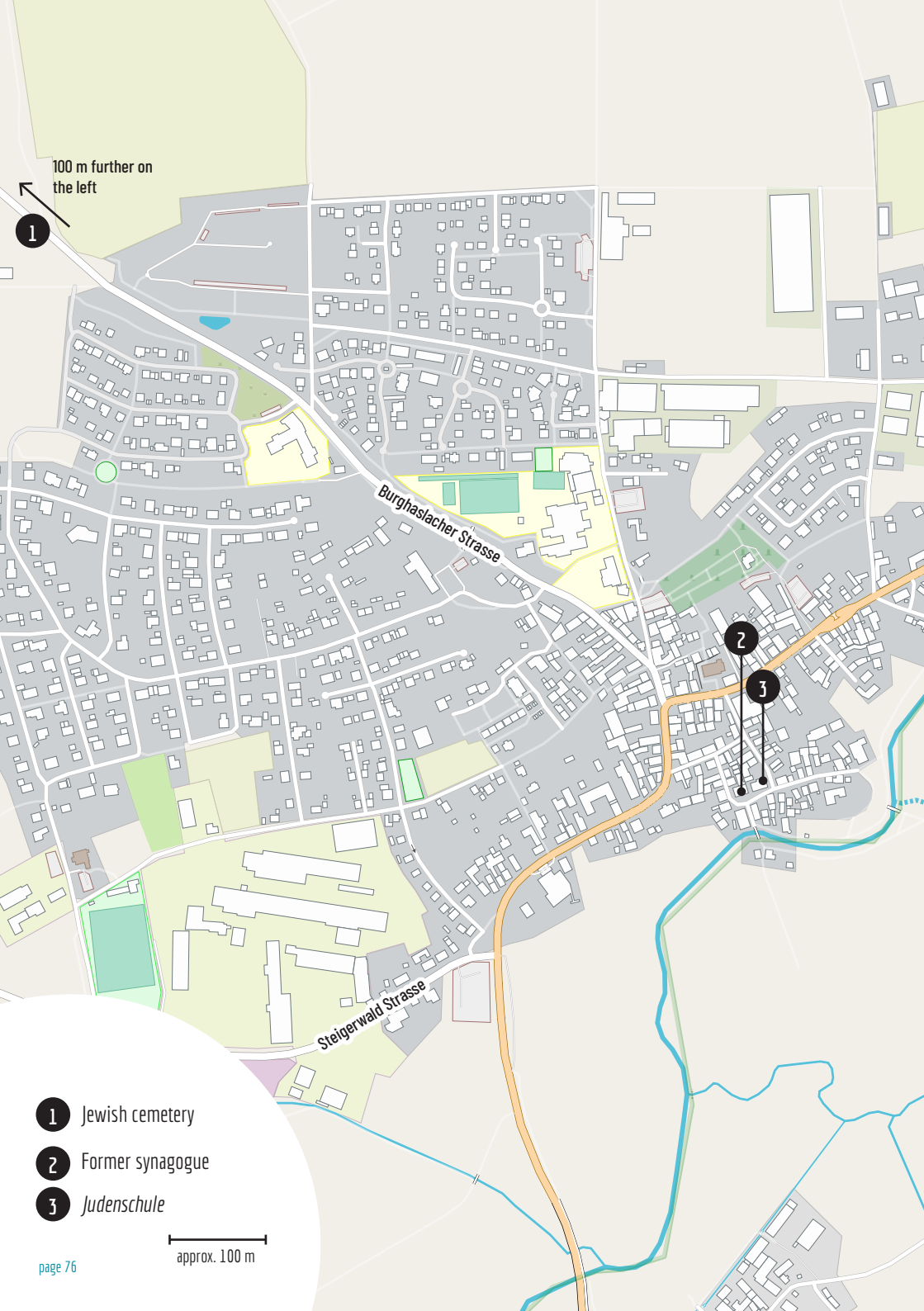
There is also a large panel providing information about the history of this special town district.



IN SEARCH OF LITERARY TRACES

The historian **Ilse Vogel** has her roots in Diespeck and has been researching the Jewish history of Diespeck and the surrounding villages for decades. She has published several books, including **Der Judensäcker. Begräbnisstätte der Juden in der Diespecker Flur. 1785 – 1938**, a documentation of Jewish life in the central Aischgrund region; **kosher oder trefa. Wie das Neben- und Miteinander von Juden und Christen in Diespeck zweihundert Jahre lang eine Dorfkultur schuf** and **Vom Land in die Stadt. 200 Jahre Judentum zu Pahres und 70 Jahre jüdisches Leben in Neustadt an der Aisch.**

“Schul” commemorative plaque,
Diespeck



100 m further on the left

1

Burghaslacher Strasse

Steigenwald Strasse

2

3

1 Jewish cemetery

2 Former synagogue

3 Judenschule

approx. 100 m



UEHLFELD

Jewish families probably settled in Uehlfeld as early as the 16th century; a prayer room is said to have existed here in 1584. When the Jews of Nuremberg were expelled from the Imperial City shortly before 1500, numerous families were able to settle in the Aisch valley, including Uehlfeld. By 1706 there were already some 130 Jews living in the town on the border to the district of Erlangen-Höchstadt. The village population reacted rather negatively to this sharp increase, although the local priest obviously encouraged such an attitude by making anti-Jewish statements.

In 1696, Margrave Christian Ernst granted permission for the construction of a synagogue; until then, prayers had been held in private houses.

After almost 120 years of using the prayer house, the community then purchased a neighbouring plot of land and had a new synagogue built there; it was inaugurated in the spring of 1818.

Afterwards the previous building was converted and served as a Jewish schoolhouse.

In 1888 a devastating fire destroyed numerous houses in Uehlfeld's old town, including the synagogue. The religious community began building a new facility on the same site right away, and the synagogue was inaugurated in the same year.

Uehlfeld was the seat of a district rabbinate in the 18th/19th century. In 1876 the position was not filled again and the Jewish community of Uehlfeld was affiliated to the District Rabbinate of Fürth.

From 1813 onwards there was a Jewish elementary school in Uehlfeld which closed in the 1920s.

In the 18th/19th century, Uehlfeld became the town with the biggest Jewish population in the region, with Jewish residents making up more than 40 per cent of the total population at times.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

Year

1706

1920

1933

1938

130 Jewish residents



50



0

Some 40 Uehlfeld Jews died in the extermination camps.

From the mid-19th century onwards, the Aischgrund region also saw a high level of emigration movement and the Jewish community diminished in size considerably.

The local NSDAP group in Uehlfeld stirred up anti-Jewish sentiment as early as the 1920s. Long-established Jewish families were harassed and threatened.

UEHLFELD TRACES ...

CEMETERY

In 1732, Margrave Georg Friedrich Karl allowed Uehlfeld's steadily growing Jewish community to establish its own burial ground; before this, the deceased had to be taken to the Jewish cemetery in Zeckern – which was situated a long distance away, further down the River Aisch. The Uehlfeld cemetery was opened in 1734; years later a surrounding wall was built along with a Tahara house. Located on a small hill just outside the village to the north-west on the road to Burghaslach, the cemetery contains some 270 gravestones.

The earliest of these – some of them now sunken into the soil – were erected in the eastern section. More recent graves can be found to the right of the wrought-iron entrance gate in the western part of the cemetery.

Attacks on Jewish inhabitants took place as early as 1923. After 1933, the facilities of the Jewish community in Uehlfeld were defiled several times, including the cemetery. In August 1935, rioters overturned gravestones and in December 1936 the windows of the synagogue were smashed. The last Jewish funeral probably took place here in 1938. In September of the same year, two Uehlfeld Jews were arrested for “subversive utterances”. The small Tahara house in the cemetery was completely demolished during the National Socialist era. Guided tours of Uehlfeld's Jewish cemetery are offered on an occasional basis: please consult Uehlfeld municipal authority for details:

www.uehlfeld.de

Jewish cemetery Uehlfeld





SYNAGOGUE

The former synagogue building is still standing: the ruins were rebuilt after 1945 and the structure was then used as a warehouse. On the outer wall of the synagogue there is a panel with interesting facts about the site. Its history began in 1684 when Marx (Frommel) decided to establish a prayer room in a building on Hauptstrasse, according to Alemannia Judaica. However, the Margrave initially prohibited services at that time. Twelve years later, in 1696, the first synagogue was built by Solomon Aaron. It was "two storeys high, much better than in Bayersdorff", as the Alemannia Judaica account continues. After the construction of the new synagogue in 1818,

the Jewish citizens used the old building as a schoolhouse and taught their children there. This school has been preserved and is now a residential building in Kirchenstrasse. Rabbi Samson Wolf Rosenfeld inaugurated the new synagogue in 1818.

Several attacks were directed against the building from 1933 onwards. As mentioned, the windows were smashed at the end of 1936. The synagogue was set on fire in the pogrom on 10 November 1938. The building burnt out, along with its furnishings and ritual objects. After 1945, Raiffeisenbank Uehlfeld acquired the ruin and converted it into a warehouse.



Former synagogue in Uehlfeld

SCHOOL

The former Jewish school has been used as a residential building for many years and, like the former synagogue next to it, is no longer recognizable as having once been a Jewish institution.



Former Jewish school in Uehlfeld

CHRONICLE OF BUILDINGS

The municipal authority of Uehlfeld has had thorough research carried out into the town's Jewish past. The result of this is Gisela Naomi Blume's book *Uehlfeld. Jüdisches Leben und Häuserchronik*.



- 1 Jewish cemetery
- 2 Synagogue
- 3 Memorial site

approx. 100 m



MÜHLHAUSEN

Mühlhausen is located in the Erlangen-Höchstadt district. At the beginning of the 19th century, some 25 per cent of the total village population were Jews. The earliest references to Jewish inhabitants date back to the late Middle Ages. From 1464 – the first documented reference – the Jewish community here is said to have existed without major interruptions until 1942, i.e. for almost 500 years. During the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), Jews from Mühlhausen and their families sought refuge in the Catholic Höchststadt, which seems to have been granted to them. After the end of this war, the village authorities deliberately settled Jewish families in Mühlhausen. In 1699, Jewish properties were looted in the course of anti-Jewish riots against at Bamberg monastery. A synagogue existed in Mühlhausen as long ago as the second half of the 17th century, with a larger synagogue being built to replace the smaller one in 1756. In addition to a classroom, there was now also an apartment for

the teacher. A re-inauguration of the synagogue is dated at 1833; before this the prayer room had undergone thorough renovation. Individual prayer desks were replaced by rows of benches. The community also had a mikvah. After ritual baths were installed in private homes, the communal mikvah became less important. Up until about 1835 Mühlhausen had its own rabbi; after this, the community was first assigned to Adelsdorf rabbinate and later to the District Rabbinate of Bamberg. In addition to a religious school, the Jewish community of Mühlhausen also ran a general elementary school in the synagogue building from 1868 to 1920. From 1909 onwards, Jewish families from the LAG municipalities of Lonnerstadt and Vestenbergsgreuth were also included in the religious community here. Jewish inhabitants had also lived there for several centuries, though in smaller numbers than in Mühlhausen, Adelsdorf and especially Uehlfeld.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

Year

1850

130 Jewish residents



An emigration wave began around 1850. Within a few decades, the Jewish population of Mühlhausen halved, having once numbered more than 200.

In 1925 there were still 50 Jews living in the village, in 1933 there were 43.

1938

1941

50



SS members inspected the interior of the synagogue and school during the November pogrom of 1938; the two buildings were spared from arson.

At least 20 Jewish citizens from Mühlhausen died in the Holocaust. In 1942, the last four remaining Jews were deported to Izbica/Lublin Reservation.

1942

0

MÜHLHAUSEN TRACES ...

Former
synagogue in
Mühlhausen



Jewish cemetery Mühlhausen



CEMETERY

Around 1740, a separate burial ground was laid out on a hill outside the village, one kilometre north-west of the village centre; the lords of Egloffstein had sold the land to the Jewish community. Up until then, the deceased had been taken to the cemetery in Zeckern, about 25 kilometres away.

The cemetery in Mühlhausen has nearly 380 gravestones on a surface area of some 8,000 square metres. The Baroque-style Tahara house was probably built shortly after the purchase of the cemetery plot.

SYNAGOGUE

This listed synagogue is one of the oldest in Bavaria and its structural fabric is still preserved. Despite the rather inconspicuous exterior, the interior is impressive with its colourful and largely intact ceiling decoration. The construction of this new synagogue is dated at 1755. It was extensively renovated in 1833 and re-inaugurated on 6 September 1833.

During the November pogrom in 1938 the synagogue was not set on fire but was defiled and wrecked. It is also said that SS

men broke in through a window and laid waste to the interior. They burned some of the furniture and ritual objects on the market square. One year later, a private individual purchased the synagogue building and, after some alterations had been made, a carpentry workshop was established there. Years after the end of the war, a farmer took over the building and used it as a machine hall and carpentry workshop.

A friends' association entitled *Forum Alte Synagoge Mühlhausen* was founded in autumn 2018 and is currently seeking to acquire and renovate the synagogue building at Schlossweg 5 and develop a utilization concept. The aim is for the building to serve as a place of remembrance, learning and encounter. See www.synagoge-muehlhausen.de



MEZUZAH RESEARCH

Mühlhausen local history researcher Johann Fleischmann wrote ten mezuzah volumes not just on the Jewish history of Mühlhausen but also about traces of Jewish life in the entire lower Aischgrund region. See www.mesusa.de

💡 ALSO

In 1923, the Jewish brothers Sigmund and Otto Reizenstein founded a “care institution for small children” – a forerunner of the modern kindergarten. They both died in Chicago in the 1930s and were made honorary citizens of Mühlhausen in 1924.

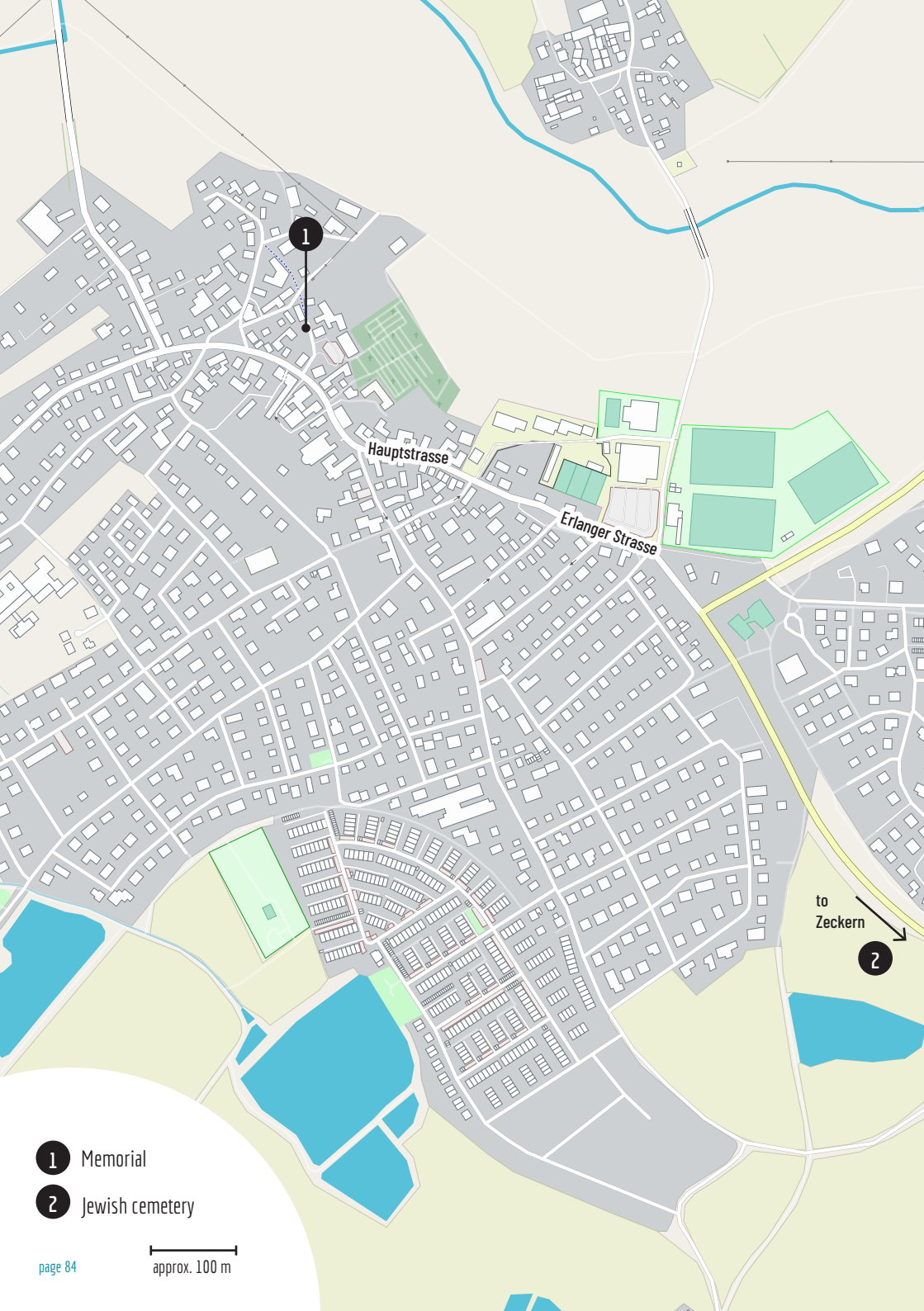
Commemorative stele
in Mühlhausen

COMMEMORATIVE STELE

In 1996 a stone memorial was erected on the square next to the Protestant church which is dedicated to members of the Jewish community who were murdered during the National Socialist era; it bears the following inscription:

WE COMMEMORATE THE JEWISH CITIZENS OF MÜHLHAUSEN WHO
WERE HUMILIATED, PERSECUTED, EXPELLED AND MURDERED DURING
THE NATIONAL SOCIALIST DICTATORSHIP

This is followed by 20 names.
WE ONLY LEARN IF WE DO NOT FORGET



1

Hauptstrasse

Erlanger Strasse

to
Zeckern

2

1 Memorial

2 Jewish cemetery



ADELSDORF

Adelsdorf is also located in the Erlangen-Höchstadt district. A Jewish community existed here up until 1938/42. It is thought to date back to approximately the 16th or 17th century. A Jew is mentioned for the first time in the village in 1448. Four families were living there in 1598. In 1630, a local statute regulated the influx of Jewish residents. The Jewish share of the population was at least 30 per cent around 1800.

Because of the importance of the Adelsdorf community, a rabbinate and a school were established there in the 18th century, but there does not seem to be any record of a

synagogue until the beginning of the 19th century (newly constructed in 1822). In 1852 the synagogue underwent extensive renovation, which was celebrated with a festive re-inauguration. After the Second World War the building served as a fire station. It was not demolished until 1979.

The Adelsdorf Rabbinate existed until 1845. The deceased were buried at the Jewish cemetery in the nearby village of Zeckern. In the 19th century, Adelsdorf was one of the major Jewish rural communities in Central and Upper Franconia. Several well-known personalities have their roots here.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

In the night of the pogrom in 1938, the synagogue and school were destroyed by members of the SS and the interior decoration and all written records were burned on the market square.

Year

1825

280 Jewish population



The community was at its largest around 1825 (about 280 people). Like elsewhere, numbers decreased steadily due to emigration and relocation to towns and cities.

Most of the Jews in Adelsdorf lived in somewhat poor conditions and earned their living by trading in household goods and livestock, later also as craftsmen.

1933

60



23 Jewish inhabitants were still living in the village at the outbreak of war. Those remaining were deported in 1942.

1939

23



ADELSDORF TRACES ...

CEMETERY

Adelsdorf Jewish cemetery is located in Zeckern, a district of the neighbouring municipality of Hemhofen. It is one of the largest and oldest Jewish cemeteries in Bavaria. Its vast catchment area extended from Hirschaid in the north to Büchenbach in the south, and from Forchheim in the east to Vestenbergsgruth in the west.

Its oldest gravestone is a moss-covered, almost square tomb with Hebrew letters hewn into it. It dates back to the year 1600.

There are 1,500 graves and 800 gravestones spread over a surface area of at least 15,000 square metres. It is estimated that a total of around 6,000 people were buried here up until 1941.

This cemetery was also desecrated during the National Socialist era; numerous gravestones were stolen and used for other purposes. In the older graves, most of the stones have sunk into the soil; these are to be found in the lower part of the sloping terrain.

From the entrance it is not far to the Tahara house.



Gravestones on the Jewish
cemetery in Zeckern



This was probably built after 1710, and an extension was added in 1893. There is also said to be a well preserved in this flat building from which water could be drawn for the ritual ablutions of the deceased.

In September 1998 a memorial stone was erected in the cemetery, not far from the entrance gate. It bears 31 names of Adelsdorf residents who were murdered at the extermination camps in early 1940. The list includes the names of six children.

The cemetery is located outside Zeckern (to the north-west), close to the main road B 470. There is a larger-sized pond opposite called the *Judenweiher* ("Jews' Pond") Access is via Zeckerner Hauptstrasse and Kaspar-Lang-Strasse.

Incidentally, a Jewish community never existed in Zeckern itself.

The cemetery's
oldest gravestone

Memorial to Jewish victims in Hemhofen/Adelsdorf



MEMORIAL

In autumn 2000, the municipality of Adelsdorf erected a stone memorial near the site where the synagogue once stood to commemorate the Jewish victims of the National Socialist regime, listing their names. The inscription reads: "In memory of our Jewish fellow citizens who were oppressed, kidnapped, abused and murdered under the National Socialist tyranny." The monument is located at the car park in Adelhardsgasse, not far from the town hall.



IN ADDITION TRACES ...

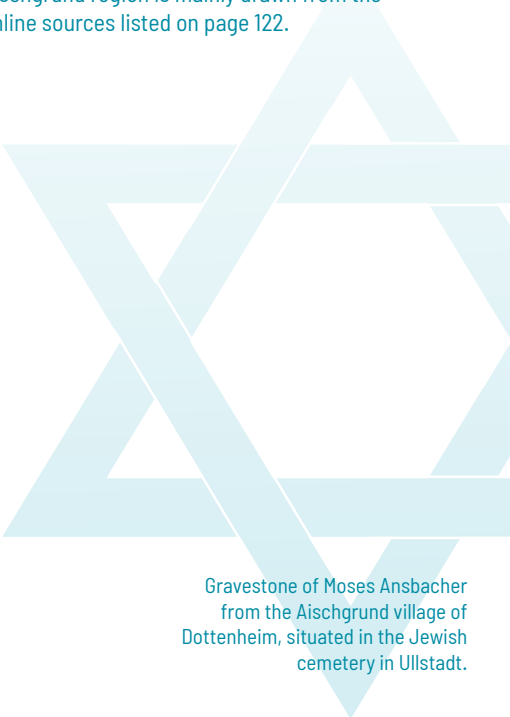
Other cemeteries in the immediate vicinity deserve mention because even though they are not located in the Aischgrund region, inhabitants of the Aischgrund region were buried there. These are the cemeteries in Oberzenn and Ermetzhofen (mainly Jewish residents of Bad Windsheim), the Sugenheim district of Ullstadt (Diespeck Jews were buried there until the construction of a cemetery in Diespeck, as well as Jewish people from Dottenheim) and Burghaslach (mainly Jewish residents of Vestenbergsgreuth). There were Jewish residents in Vestenbergsgreuth from 1700 to 1906, reaching a peak in 1810 with 70 people (20 per cent of the total population). A Jewish communal centre was built in 1828 but nothing of its historical fabric has been preserved.

A Jewish cemetery is also said to have existed in the Uelfeld district of Schornweisach, but no traces of this can be found. In Schornweisach there was a small community from about 1579 to 1877. Documents show that nine Jewish families were living there in 1868; in addition to a synagogue there was also school and a mikvah.

Records indicate that there were Jewish residents in Burgbernheim from the 14th century to 1850, but only a small number of families. There is a street called *Judengässchen* in the town centre. Ipsheim is very probably the place where the important Jewish linguist and poet Elia Levita was born in 1469; he died in Venice in 1549.

In the Ipsheim district of Kaubenheim, a Jewish community was founded around 1700 and dissolved in 1898 – it had a synagogue (demolished in 1985), a school and a mikvah. There were 42 Jews living there in 1848, and a plot of land still exists in Ipsheim today which is called *Judenseelein*. In neighbouring Dottenheim, in the district of Dietersheim, a smaller community existed from the 17th century until the end of the 19th century. The originally large Jewish community in Pahres, in the district of Gutenstetten, was dissolved before 1900; the Pahres synagogue moved to Neustadt in 1878, as described above.

The description of traces of Jewish life in the Aischgrund region is mainly drawn from the online sources listed on page 122.



Gravestone of Moses Ansbacher
from the Aischgrund village of
Dottenheim, situated in the Jewish
cemetery in Ullstadt.

Moses Ansbacher

brn

Dollnheim.

gest. den 27. März 1867.

WEST-CENTRAL FRANCONIA





TRACES OF JEWISH LIFE IN THE DISTRICT OF FÜRTH

INTRODUCTION

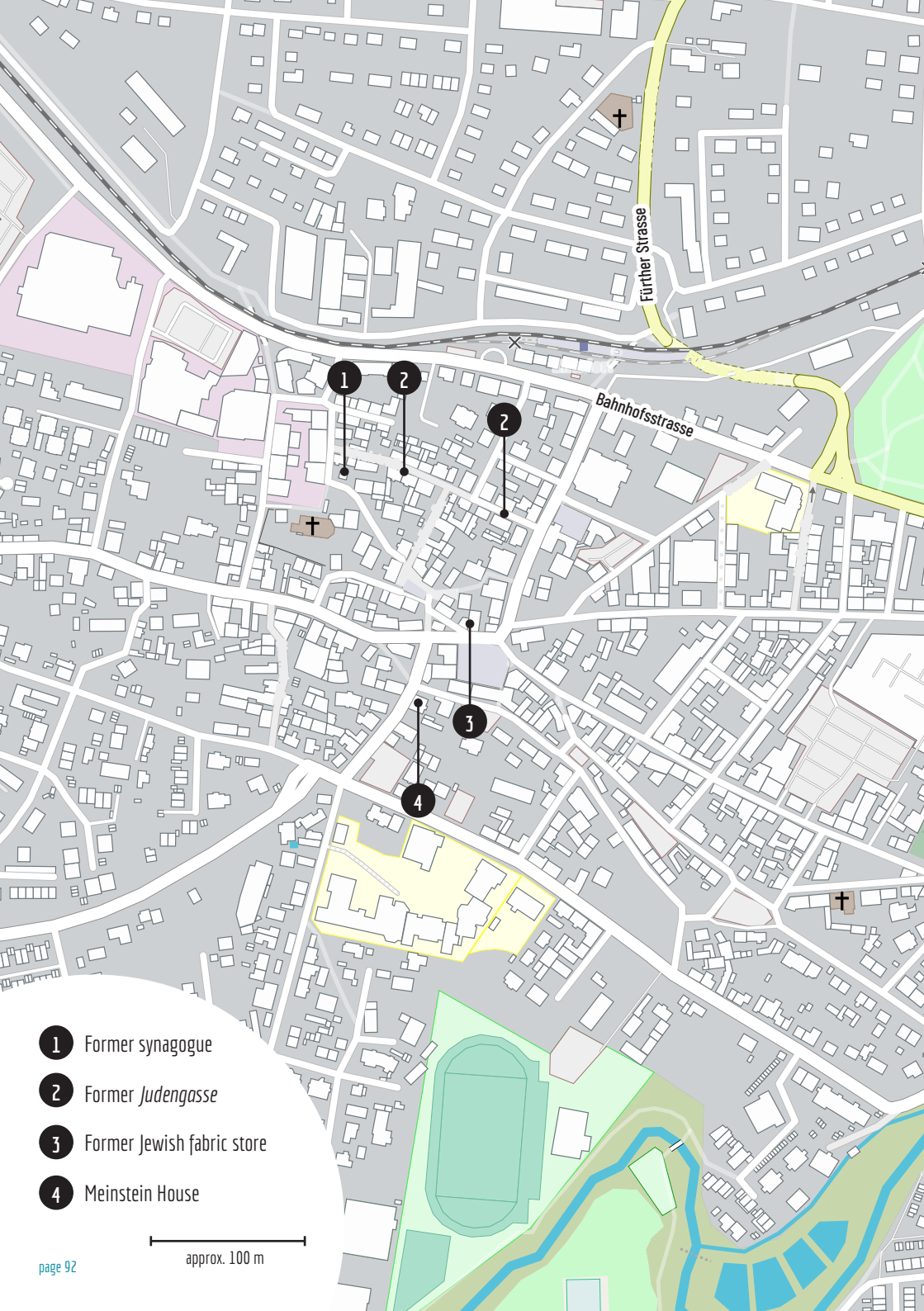
The administrative district of Fürth, until 1938 Fürth District Office, emerged from large parts of what was formerly the Cadolzburg administrative unit of the Principality of Brandenburg-Ansbach and the imperial knightly state of Wilhermsdorf. There were Jewish communities in three towns in these territories from the 15th and 16th century onwards, namely Wilhermsdorf, Langenzenn and Zirndorf.

Of these, we have most information about the one in Langenzenn, the smallest of the three, because there are several volumes of files concerning the Jews that have been preserved in the municipal archives of Langenzenn. These include inquiries and replies relating to numerous matters, statistics and official decrees, as well as safe-conducts dating back to the period subsequent to the Thirty Years' War .

In 1742, Pastor Johann Christian Wibel wrote about the Jewish community in the State of Wilhermsdorf in Chapter 11 of his very well-researched book *Historische Beschreibung von Wilhermsdorf* ("Historical Description of Wilhermsdorf"). In it, he repeatedly quotes original sources that were still available to him at the time, but which no longer exist today.

There is mention of the settlement of a Jewish family in Zirndorf on 11 January 1558. Margrave Georg Friedrich allowed the Jew Jacob and his brother Samuel to settle in the village. "Like the other citizens, they are to share the burdens of the community (Zirndorf), as they shall likewise enjoy all municipal rights including water, grass, fodder and pasture, bath, midwife and meat purchase".

(Extract from the brochure
Stätten jüdischen Lebens im Landkreis Fürth
by Helmut Mahr, 2009)



- 1 Former synagogue
- 2 Former *Judengasse*
- 3 Former Jewish fabric store
- 4 Meinstein House

approx. 100 m



ZIRNDORF

The first references to Zirndorf Jews date back to the 16th century. A Zirndorf priest complained in 1538 about the expansion of the Jewish community in the village. It was said that the people demonstrated a complete lack of tolerance and charity. In 1551, the city of Nuremberg complained to the Margrave of Ansbach that Jews from Zirndorf were trading in Nuremberg.

The Zirndorf Jews were probably those who had been expelled from the Imperial City of Nuremberg in 1499. The Margrave of Ansbach granted them protection for a fee. They were repeatedly threatened with expulsion from the principality, however. Not until 1591 were they granted the right to settle again. With the Margrave's permission, they built a synagogue in 1685 (see below).

In 1807 Zirndorf had a total population of 1,453 including 86 Jews. Among the 28 Jewish heads of household, there were ten small traders in haberdashery, white goods and drapery, as well as seven cattle dealers.

According to the parish description of 1831, there were 132 Jewish residents, but numbers subsequently decreased again. The settlement of Jews often involved restrictions – a “respectable” profession was often required with sufficient income.

The Jews of Zirndorf were considered poor and their economic situation was not to improve for a long time. Samson Österreicher, the head of the Jewish community in Zirndorf, provided the government with the following response on request: “A large part of the Jewry in Zirndorf is impecunious and must be either entirely maintained or supported by the rest.”

The statutes of the Israelite religious community of Zirndorf of 1910 were comparable to those of a political rural municipality, with a committee and an assembly. The committee – with a board of directors, treasurer and three assessors – administered all matters and represented the religious community, also exercising its rights and obligations vis-à-vis exterior bodies.

All taxpayers had to pay municipal levies according to their financial circumstances. Bridal couples were required to pay the usual fees before the wedding and purchase a place each at the synagogue. The children could later acquire these places if their parents died. Although the financial situation became more and more difficult, the Israelite religious community was always ready to support public aid activities for needy residents.

When the Israelite religious community of Zirndorf received a notice of household tax, it replied to the Fürth tax office that it was unable to pay the amount of 278.68 Reichsmarks. The community members were “so impoverished that probably not a single one of the 15 families pays income tax”. The regional association was asked for help. The latter recommended that a mortgage be taken out on the synagogue in order to pay the taxes.



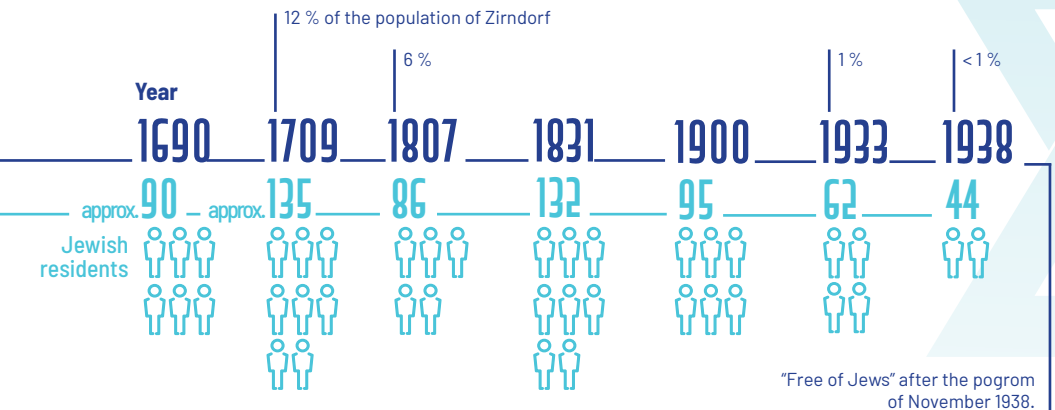
Zirndorf synagogue plaque

An attack was carried out on the Zirndorf synagogue a few days before the nationwide pogrom of November 1938. Valuable objects such as Torah scrolls, candlesticks and goblets were stolen. The burglars also destroyed the furniture. The incident was reported to the police but no action was taken. During the night of the pogrom on 9–10 November 1938, SA hordes ravaged Jewish shops and apartments. They demolished shop fittings and forced the owners to hand over the contents. Broken shop window panes lay on the pavements. The SA destroyed furniture and other furnishings in the apartments, terrifying the Jewish inhabitants as they did so. National Socialists continued to riot in the synagogue. The last remaining religious objects were broken. They did not set the house on fire, however, because there was a risk that the flames would spread to other buildings.

The Jews remaining in Zirndorf were finally expelled. They were only able to take essential possessions with them. Mayor Julius Eichner telegraphed Gauleiter Julius Streicher that Zirndorf was now “free of Jews”.

A notary public in Fürth notarized the forced sale of the synagogue in Kleinstrasse to the municipality of Zirndorf for a price of 2,000 Reichsmarks. The Nuremberg Gestapo collected the amount – the Jewish residents of Zirndorf received nothing.

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT





ZIRNDORF TRACES ...

SYNAGOGUE

With the permission of Margrave Johann Friedrich von Ansbach, the Jews of Zirndorf built a synagogue in 1685. The site in what is now Kleinstrasse was situated on the western edge of the village, north of the Protestant church. An explicit condition for the construction of the synagogue was that the “Christian church (rectory and school) should not suffer any handicap or decline”.

At least ten adult men over the age of 13 had to be assembled in a religious community in order to enable construction of a Jewish place of worship. 29 Jewish families lived in Zirndorf at the time.

The building was reconstructed several times. It contained the prayer hall, a community room and an apartment for the religious instruction teacher. After all the Jews had been expelled in November 1938, the town took possession of the property. The synagogue was not set on fire by the National Socialists because there was a risk that the flames would spread to other buildings. Since then the building has not been used for religious purposes.

Zirndorf used to be divided into two parts. In the western part, which was under the control of the Margrave of Ansbach, the Jews were reasonably safe. In the eastern part, which was supervised by the Imperial City of Nuremberg, they were just as undesirable as in the neighbouring city. The Jewish community included families who had been expelled from Nuremberg in 1499.

A narrow corridor divided the synagogue building into an eastern and a western section. The eastern section contained the prayer room with a raised women’s gallery. The western section had two floors for the teacher’s apartment and the community room, where religious instruction took place.

In the 1930s, the religious instruction teacher was only responsible for services on Friday and Saturday. There were no longer any school children.

The town temporarily allowed the former synagogue to be used by the Zirndorf voluntary medical service. After this, the building was renovated for use as residential or business premises. Now it is owned and rented by the municipal housing association.

Viewing is not possible. The history of the synagogue is explained on guided tours.

Zirndorf synagogue,
Zirndorf, Kleinstrasse 2
(old street number 148)



ZIRNDORF TRACES ...

JEWISH CATTLE DEALERS' HOUSE

In 1885, the Jewish cattle dealer Salomon Meinstein, born in Zirndorf, bought property number 60 from an estate for the price of 15,700 marks. It consisted of a residential house with "farm buildings", outhouses, a courtyard and a spice garden. The plot covered a total surface area of 0.078 hectares, or 780 square metres.

The fact that the number of the building is a low one indicates that it was built no later than the 18th century. The owners added more sheds and renewed the manure pit and cess-pool, later adding a workshop with a garage.

Salomon Meinstein was one of the few Zirndorf Jews who were financially well-off. He was granted citizenship early on and had two votes in the municipal assembly. When his son Julius took over the estate in 1914, it was worth 20,000 marks.

The National Socialists accused Julius Meinstein of political subversion and had him arrested by the local police in 1933. He sold the property for 27,000 marks and left the city with his family. They emigrated to America in 1938.

A shop with a display window had been built into the front of the building in 1905. This was rented out. Later it contained a fabric store belonging to Freising & Co. In the pogrom night in 1938, the shop was demolished and the contents stolen from the owner, Fritz Krämer.

In the post-war period, the property was used for various purposes. In the 1970s, the *Arbeiterwohlfahrt* (workers' welfare association) moved into the rooms on the first floor, using them as offices of their Fürth-Land district association. The store latterly sold seeds, plants and gardening utensils.

The Eder family purchased the property in 2003 and renovated it extensively. Since then the building has also housed holiday apartments. The large stable was converted into a café.

Zirndorf, Spitalstrasse 1
(previously street number 60)

Jewish cattle dealers' house





The photograph of “Meistein House” was probably taken in the 1920s.



ZIRNDORF TRACES ...

JUDENGASSE

Most Jewish families lived in today's Schulstrasse (formerly Judengasse) and Kleinstrasse. The small Jewish quarter on the western edge of the village was located in the area that was under the protection of the Margrave of Ansbach. In the Nuremberg section they were unwelcome.

The paths and alleyways of Zirndorf did not initially have official names. It was not until the 19th century that the main streets were given names, while some of the other pathways acquired popular names. Judengasse probably got its unofficial name because it was the way to the synagogue. It was located just around the corner in Kleinstrasse.

After a new school building was erected in Judengasse in 1871, the people of Zirndorf referred to it as Schulgasse. Later, the local council chose the official name Schulstrasse.

The lane has changed in appearance considerably since then. Some buildings have been renovated, others demolished and rebuilt. There is no reminder of the Jewish people who once lived there.

Many Jews did not own houses (most of them lacked the necessary means) but rented them instead. Only some of them were able to buy a property over time. They would not have done so in the Jewish quarter, however, but in other streets in the town. Since Zirndorf was no longer divided into two sections, they could settle anywhere.



Today's Schulstrasse (unfortunately there are no historical photographs of what was popularly called Judengasse).



JEWISH FABRIC STORE

It is not known when the house was built and by whom. It must have been in the 18th century at the latest, because it is one of the houses that was assigned a low number in an inventory taken at the beginning of the 19th century, namely 103. At that time there were about 150 properties in Zirndorf.

Towards the end of the 19th century Jewish merchant Berthold Lüneburger purchased the building on the market square, having come to Zirndorf only shortly before.

In 1897 he opened a "manufactory store" for fabrics there. He also added ready-made clothing to the range of products. Soon after opening the store, Berthold Lüneburger applied to have awnings installed on the outside. The municipal authorities had no objections.

The Jew Max Gutmann took over the business in 1919 and expanded the range of products sold. The store was now called Kaufhaus Lüneburger.

Both Lüneburger and Gutmann were very active merchants. They regularly advertised their products in the local newspaper. They were also patriotic and supported aid organizations for the needy by donating

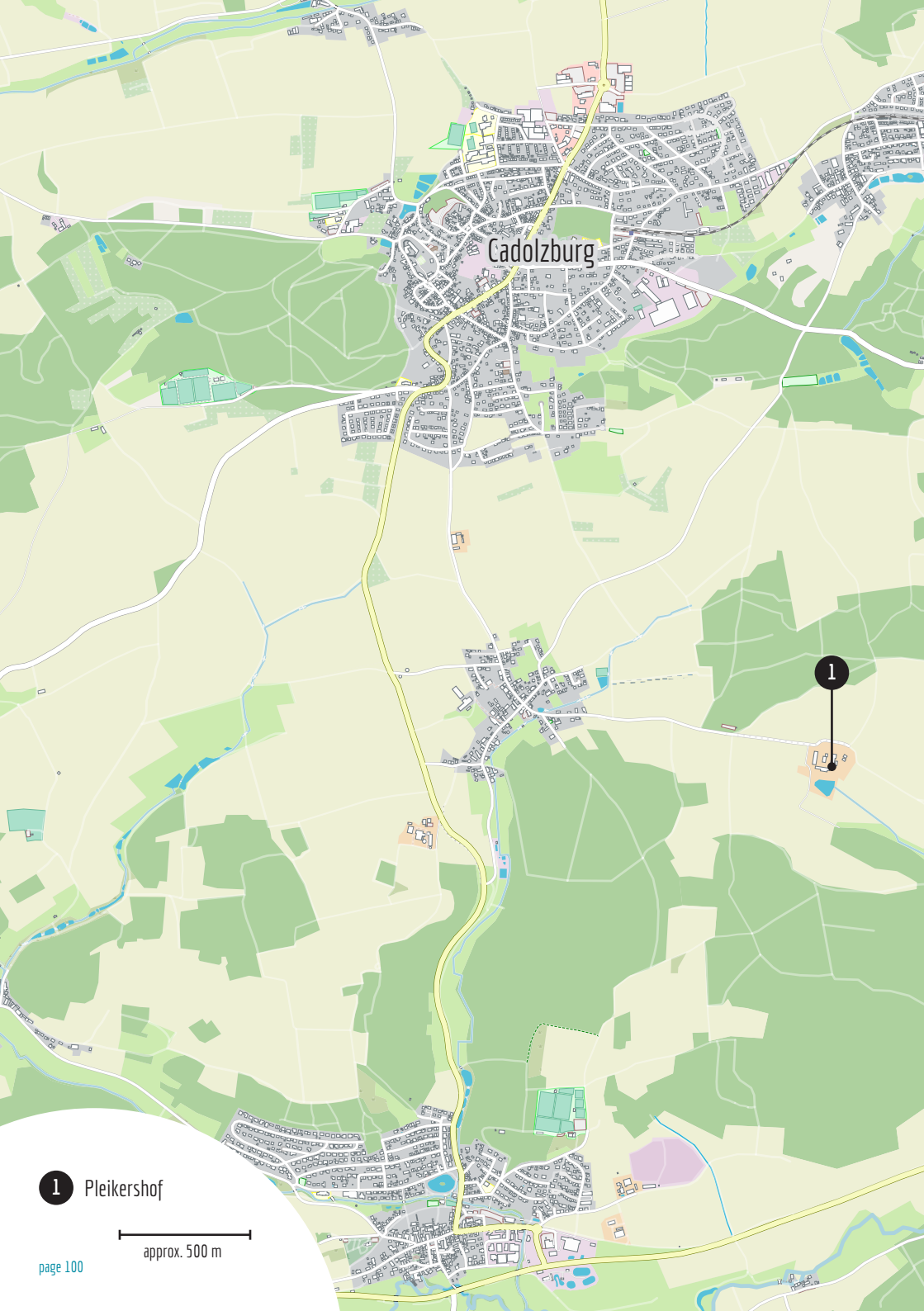
money and goods. Berthold Lüneburger was politically active, too. He was a member of the *Deutsche Volkspartei* (German People's Party) and was a candidate on their list for the city council elections in December 1911, but he did not get enough votes.

Burglaries and damage occurred from the 1920s onwards. The store windows were smashed several times. In 1935, Gutmann sold the property to the chemist Maag, who turned it into a pharmacy.

Zirndorf, Marktplatz 3 (old street number 103)

Jewish fabric store in Zirndorf. The first photograph was taken before the store was opened up to the front. The year of the photograph is not known. The second photograph was taken in the 1920s.





Cadolzburg

1

1 Pleikershof

approx. 500 m



CADOLZBURG TRACES ...

PLEIKERSHOF

The district of Pleikershof belongs to the market town of Cadolzburg and is situated between the villages Weinzierlein, Steinbach and Wachendorf in an idyllic, secluded location amid fields and forests.

The village is first mentioned in a document dating back to 1334 as "Bleicksdorf". From 1334 to 1436 the village became deserted, with only a single farm left.

From 1936 until the end of the war, the estate covered an area of at least 80 hectares and was owned by Julius Streicher, Gauleiter and publisher of the newspaper *Stürmer*. In accordance with his wishes, the original farm was almost completely demolished and replaced with a prestigious three-wing country house (a fourth wing was in fact planned but never realised).

Pleikershof – from then on known further afield as Streicherhof – became Julius Streicher's place of exile in 1940 after he fell afoul of the National Socialist regime due to corruption.

After the end of the war, Streicher was sentenced to death for "crimes against humanity" at the Nuremberg trials and Pleikershof was confiscated.

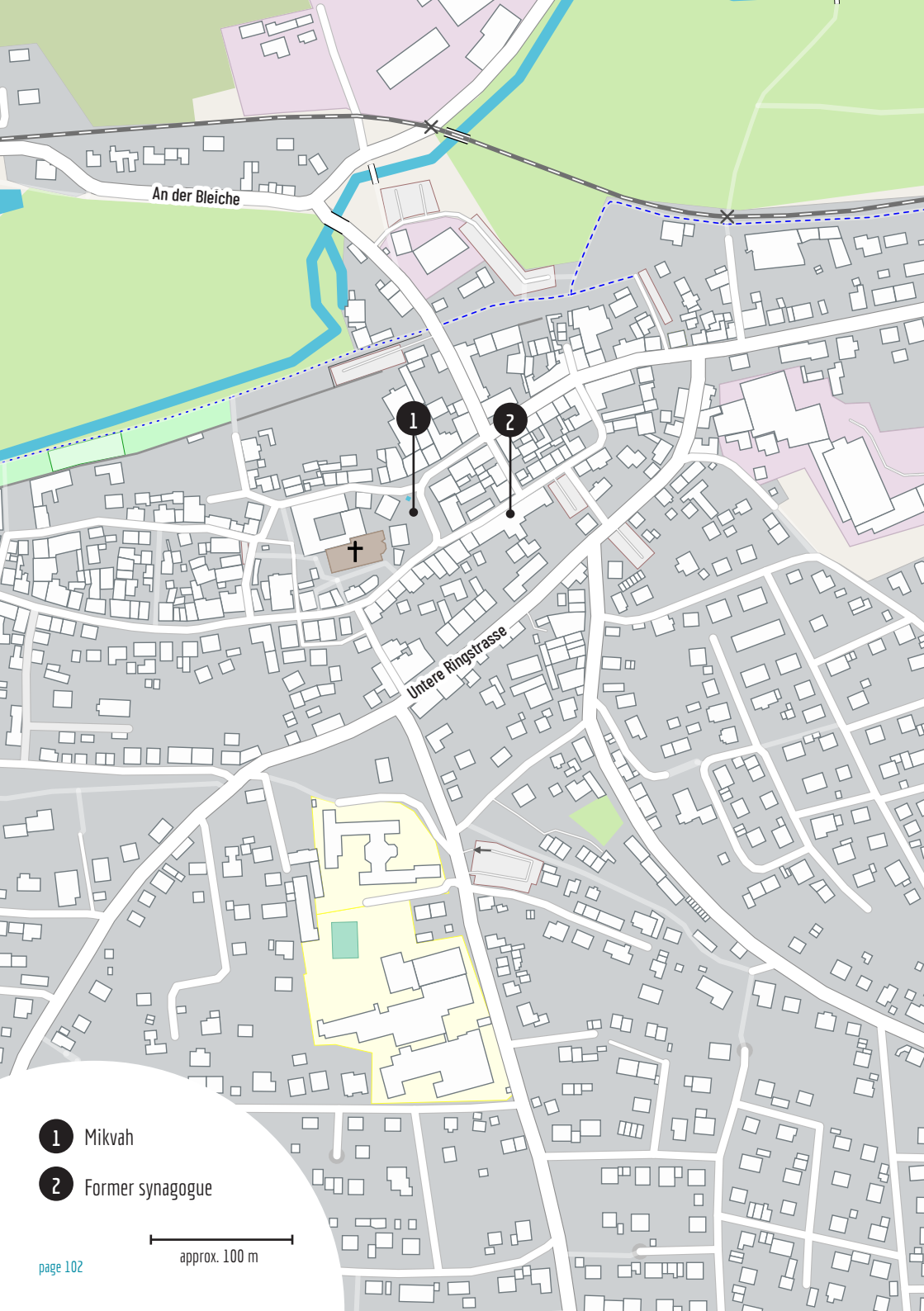
A kibbutz was established here at the instigation of the Allies. As many as 150 survivors found a temporary home in this Jewish settlement. For many of those who wished to emigrate, it provided an intermediate stage on the way to Israel.

From 1949 onwards refugees from the Czech Republic, Latvia and Poland found shelter here, and later German re-settlers.

Pleikershof was eventually divided up and passed into private hands in 1959; today it houses a farm, among other things.



Pleikershof today



An der Bleiche

Untere Ringstrasse

1 Mikvah

2 Former synagogue

approx. 100 m



LANGENZENN TRACES ...

MIKVAH

In the 18th century, this building housed a synagogue and a Jewish school, as well as the entrance to a mikvah at the rear, which is still visible today. The facilities belonged to the Jewish religious community of Langenzenn which existed from 1535 onwards, as records show. It was dissolved around 1900.

A mikvah is a ritual immersion bath that is regularly used by Jewish men and women, as well as for cleaning objects and dishes for the purpose of kosher cooking, for example. Twelve steps led down to the groundwater and the bath itself. The bath and the staircase were filled with concrete around 1935: only the entrance to the mikvah is still visible.



SYNAGOGUE

There was a Jewish community in Langenzenn from about 1535 until the beginning of the 20th century. The synagogue had a school and a ritual bath (mikvah). The Jewish community in Langenzenn was small and was not able to pay a rabbi. For this reason, support was provided by the district rabbi in Fürth. The community synagogue burned down in a town fire in 1720, so another one was built in its place.

The Jewish community in Langenzenn was dissolved at the beginning of the 20th century, however. The reason for this was increased emigration to Nuremberg and Fürth. The building was then sold by the religious community to a Langenzenn resident. The building has since undergone several structural changes. The only reminder that a synagogue once stood in Langenzenn is a sandstone plaque bearing the date 1827.

The closed entrance to the former mikvah is still visible today.



5

Towards
Siedelbach

5

800 m after the
village boundary
sign

2

1

3

Hauptstrasse

6

4

1

Synagogue and
Israelite school

2

Michelsohn & Keiner
brush factory

3

Judentor

4

The Hebrew printing houses

5

Jewish cemetery

6

Memorial stone

Note: There are information
panels on or close to the above
buildings.

approx. 100 m



WILHERMSDORF

The Jewish community in Wilhermsdorf can be traced back to the year 1452. This date could once be seen on a gravestone. So Jews settled in Wilhermsdorf very early on. Being a territory that was directly subject to the Empire, it offered protection for Jews. A safe-conduct to this effect dating back to 1703 is still preserved.

Under Hohenlohe rule there were Jewish print works in Wilhermsdorf. A synagogue was built at the present site in 1727, the previous one having been destroyed in the 30 Years' War. There was an Israelite school here from 1823 to 1923. In the 19th and early 20th century Jews were active in politics, trade, associations and the military. Among other things, they ran a hospital support association and a *chevra kadisha*.

48 Jewish citizens fell victim to Nazi terror. Information panels, guided tours, a street name, flyers and a memorial stone in the grove of honour (*Ehrenhain*) are reminders of them today.



Wilhermsdorf memorial stone, in the grove of honour near the Spitalkirche (6)

POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

Year

1811 _____ 1871 _____ 1900 _____ 1910 _____ 1925 _____ 1933

1130 Total population _____ 1311 _____ 1396 _____ 1419 _____ 1507 _____ 1737

226 Jewish residents _____ 172 _____ 81 _____ 65 _____ 47 _____ 35



The Jewish population in Wilhermsdorf grew by 37 members between 1810 and 1811 and maintained this peak until 1837.

WILHERMSDORF TRACES ...

Name	Vorname	geboren	Geburtsort	Todesort	Deport-/Todesjahr
Adelberger, Charlotte		1872	Neu	Gern	1940
Ansbacher, Julehen		1890		Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Ansbacher, Wilhelm		1884		Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Braun, Rosa		1883	Aisch	Rige-Jungfernhof	1942
Eichenbrenner, Frieda		1889	Neu	Isbach	1942
Eichenbrenner, Silvia		1893	Neu	Isbach	1942
Egstein, Emma		1896	Kohn	Kornau	1943
Felwiger, Franz		1883	Kohn	Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Fröck, Maria		1897		Anschwitz	1942
Fröh, Frieda		1887	Neuburger	Anschwitz	1943
Fröh, Katharina		1864	Neu	Theronsmstadt	1942
Güldenacker, Josim		1876		Theronsmstadt	1942
Grißfeld, Frieda		1906	Neuhilf	Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Gilhofer, Paula		1901	Schleifeld	Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Kohn, Julius		1891		Anschwitz	1942
Lammfrosen, Dora		1897	Grißhausen	Anschwitz	1942
Lauschbauer, Rosa		1889	Kohn	Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Leiter, Maria		1883	Frei	Anschwitz	1942
Mai, Jette		1872	Neu	Theronsmstadt	1944
Mars, Hannah		1880	Hornshild	Roersmnd	1941
Meinhardt, Hermann		1876	Kohn	Dummsdorf	1935
Michelska, Balotta		1890	Kohn	Theronsmstadt	1942
Michelska, Frieda		1898	Stark	Puritz	1942
Michelska, Max		1875		Isbach	1942
Michelska, Hanka		1881	Maisstein	Isbach	1942
Neu, Doris		1876	Neu	Theronsmstadt	1943
Neu, Clara		1879	Hirschmann	Theronsmstadt	1943
Neu, Justus		1882		Isbach	1942
Neu, Leopold		1875		Fürth	1943
Neuburger, Rosine		1884		Anschwitz	1942
Neuburger, Justin		1882		Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Neuburger, Max		1888		Isbach	1942
Rosenbaum, Pauline		1882	Kohn	Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Rothschild, Justin		1882		Anschwitz	1943
Sämann, Betti		1904	Neu	Isbach	1941
Sämann, Fritz		1899		Isbach	1941
Sämann, Werner		1928		Isbach	1941
Schlesberger, Regina		1860	Kohn	Theronsmstadt	1942
Schleifeld, Regina		1867	Neu	Treibtska	1942
Strauß, Jakob		1872		Anschwitz	1944
Ucholdler, Rosa		1886		Isbach	1942
Ucholdler, Siegfried		1883	Zeilberger	Isbach	1942
Walder, Selma		1880	Kohn	Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Wannemann, Rosa		1874	Kohn	Theronsmstadt	1942
Weinstein, Anni		1924		Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Weinstein, Hilda		1877	Neuhilf	Rige-Jungfernhof	1941
Wintersdorfer, Jenny		1876	Neu	Strogen-Dehen	1944
Viad, Frieda		1883	Schleifeld	Rige-Jungfernhof	1941

Jewish victims of Nazi terror



The Jewish cemetery near Wilhermsdorf

JEWISH CEMETERY

The *Juderhäggsch* is first mentioned in a *Salbuch* (land register) in 1568. According to J. Chr. Wibbler (a chronicler), the oldest gravestone dates back to the year 1452. The cemetery was extended in 1863 to its present size (approx. 4,000 square metres) and was also used by the Jews of Markt Erlbach and Dietenhofen. There are more than 500 gravestones in total, even though the cemetery was repeatedly desecrated (1877, 1879, 1938, 1945). The complex is classically oriented to the south-east (Jerusalem). The oldest gravestones are to be found at the large entrance gate. Graves from the 15th to 18th centuries are to be found in the central section, while graves from the 19th and 20th centuries are located at the northern and western walls. The most recent gravestone bears the date of 8 April 1936 and was laid for the burial of Naphtalie Gottlieb.

In the older part of the cemetery, the gravestones are made of sandstone and bear Hebrew inscriptions. In the more recent section the gravestones are made of marble and have both German and Hebrew inscriptions. There are also various symbols on the stones and they are numbered on the back from 1 to 491.

On the road to Siedelbach about 800 m after the village boundary
 Visits: Key available at Wilhermsdorf town hall
 Information:
 Robert Hollenbacher, Tel. 0170 / 31 0 01 85
 Landesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden i. Bayern, Munich



MICHELSONN & KEINER BRUSH FACTORY

Founded in 1881 by Jakob Michelsohn and his brother-in-law Julius Keiner, the brush factory was the largest employer in Wilhermsdorf with as many as 120 employees. The town's first employment regulations regulated the duties and rights of the workforce: working hours of up to 67 hours per week (Monday to Saturday) and compulsory health insurance for employees. Brushes and mops of all kinds were produced at the factory. The products were sold in 25 countries. There were also branches in Leipzig and Silesia. In 1939 the company was "aryanized", i.e. taken over by a "German" entrepreneur.

Michelsohn & Keiner brush factory, managing
director and staff (historical photo)
Hauptstrasse 10 and 10a

WILHERMSDORF TRACES ...

Historical
postcard (detail)
of Wilhermsdorf
synagogue with
tower



SYNAGOGUE

A *Schul* (synagogue) and a Jewish cemetery are mentioned in a *Salbuch* (land register). Pastor J. Chr. Wibel confirms the existence of this synagogue in his *Historische Beschreibung von Wilhermsdorf* ("Historical Description of Wilhermsdorf" – 1742), but its site is not known. In 1727 the Jewish community built a synagogue in a rear building at what is now Hauptstrasse 3, but it appeared on the so-called Wagner Plan of 1771 as number 117.

Under the local council leaders Heinrich Ehrenbacher and Moritz Spalter, the synagogue was demolished between February and August 1893 and rebuilt with a Tahara house (house of the dead) and an Israelite school according to plans drawn up by local master builders and carpenters Kiesel, Reichel and Streng. In October 1938 the synagogue was desecrated by young Nazi fanatics and the interior fittings destroyed. The market town subsequently purchased the synagogue below value and sold it to a private individual. Today it is used as a residential building.



Synagogue in Wilhermsdorf



ISRAELITE SCHOOL

The school consisted of a classroom on the ground floor, a basement, a small garden and a teacher's apartment on the first floor. After the school was closed in 1923, there was a religious school here for a short time. Jewish pupils then attended the local elementary school or the Israelite secondary school in Fürth.

Hauptstrasse 3
Israelite school



The Judentor in Wilhermsdorf from the north, watercolour by Rossweissl



THE JUDENTOR

The former gatehouse of the count's head forester became Jewish property, thereby acquiring the name of *Judentor* ("Jews' Gate"). From 1880 onwards it was a residential and commercial building (clothing, drapery, tailor's) belonging to the Neuburger family: this had to be demolished in 1965 for traffic-related and structural reasons.

From the end of the 18th century onwards the Neuburgers were long-established citizens and active in the political and Jewish community (lawyer Dr. Leopold N., municipal councillor Justin N., highly decorated veteran of World War I Max N. – all were members of municipal and Jewish associations). While the brothers Max, Benno, Justin and their sister Frieda fell victim to Nazi terror, Justin's daughter Irmgard was able to emigrate to England.

Former Hauptstrasse 13/corner of Stelzenbachstrasse, opposite CVW Privatbank



Moshe Rosenfeld *Jewish Printing in Wilhermsdorf*, cover page

THE HEBREW PRINTING HOUSES

In 1669 Count Wolfgang Julius von Hohenlohe offered the Jewish printer Isaak Jüdel from Sulzbach/Oberpfalz protection and a loan to establish a print works. The agreement was that in return, paper was to be purchased from the Count's paper mill in Ernsbach an der Kocher. The print works was discontinued in 1690. Zebi Hirsch ben Chaim took over the printing company in 1712 but had to give it up in 1739 because of economic and political problems after falling heavily into debt. The print works were housed in a farm building in the manor house park (today Schlosshof).

APPENDIX

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CONTACTS,
MUSEUMS AND ACCESS POINTS,
GLOSSARY, PICTURE CREDITS,
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND OTHER SOURCES, LEADER PROJECT
COOPERATION PARTNERS
LIST OF REFERENCES



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CONTACTS

If you have any questions regarding a particular municipality, the LAG managers will be more than happy to put you in touch with the relevant specialists.

We would like to thank all those involved in producing this brochure!

LAG AISCHGRUND E.V.

Contact: Anne Billenstein
E-mail: lag@kreis-nea.de

Guided tours and articles

Dr. Kolbet Christiane, Hemhofen and Uehfeld
Vogel Ilse, Diespeck
Weigand Harald, LAG Aischgrund

LEADER REGION

LANDKREIS FÜRTH E.V.

Contact: Alida Lieb
E-mail: leader@lra-fue.bayern.de

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Bogendörfer Ralf, Gemeinde Wilhermsdorf
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Contact: Anuschka Hörr
E-mail: lag@region-hesselberg.de

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Dommel Herbert, Bechhofen
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Contact: Pia Grimmeissen-Haider
E-mail: LAG@gemeinsam.bayern

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Klemm Susanne, Feuchtwangen and
Friedhof Schopfloch



MUSEUMS AND ACCESS POINTS WITH INFORMATION ON JEWISH HISTORY

Adelsdorf

Gemeinde Adelsdorf

Rathausplatz 1, 91325 Adelsdorf
Tel. 09195 94 32 0
gemeinde@adelsdorf.de
www.adelsdorf.de

Aischgrund-Touren

Dr. Christiane Kolbet
Bruckäcker 18, 91085 Weisendorf
Tel. 0151 2621 1382
aischgrund-touren@t-online.de
www.aischgrund-touren.de

Bad Windsheim

Fränkisches Freilandmuseum

Eisweiherweg 1, 91438 Bad Windsheim
Tel. 09841 6680 0
info@freilandmuseum.de
www.freilandmuseum.de

The old synagogue from Allersheim is to be reconstructed by approx. mid-2022.

Colmberg

Informationszentrum – Jüdische Familiengeschichten in Colmberg

Ansbacher Str. 6, 91598 Colmberg
For further details, contact:
Marktgemeinde Colmberg
Tel. 09803 9329 0
info@colmberg.de

Diespeck

Heimatverein für Geschichte und Kultur

www.heimatverein-diespeck.de
Guided tours of the Jewish cemetery

Dinkelsbühl

Haus der Geschichte Dinkelsbühl

Altrathausplatz 14, 91550 Dinkelsbühl
Tel. 09851 902 180
hausdergeschichte@dinkelsbuehl.de
www.hausdergeschichte-dinkelsbuehl.de

Ebrachgrund

Heimatverein Reicher Ebrachgrund

www.mesusa.de
www.reiche-ebbrach.de

Feuchtwangen

Fränkisches Museum Feuchtwangen,

Museumstrasse 19, 91555 Feuchtwangen
Tel. 09852 25 75
info@fraenkisches-museum.de
www.fraenkisches-museum.de

Fürth,

Jüdisches Museum Franken in Fürth

Königstrasse 89

Jüdisches Museum Franken in Schnaittach

Museumsgasse 12-16

Jüdisches Museum Franken in Schwabach

Synagogengasse 10a
Tel. 0911 950988 0
info@juedisches-museum.org,
www.juedisches-museum.org

Langenzenn

Heimatverein Langenzenn

Chairperson Gudrun Nasa,
Honorary chairperson Kurt Sellner
Prinzregentenplatz 15, 90579 Langenzenn
info@heimatverein-langenzenn.de
www.heimatverein-langenzenn.de



Heimatmuseum Langenzenn

Non-public library
Martin-Luther-Platz 4, 90579 Langenzenn
info@heimatverein-langenzenn.de
www.heimatverein-langenzenn.de

Mühlhausen

Verein Forum Alte Synagoge Mühlhausen e. V.

Christian Plätzer (Chairperson)
Am Weingartsgraben 14, 91315 Höchstädt
info@synagoge-muehlhausen.de
www.synagoge-muehlhausen.de

Neustadt/Aisch

Museen im Alten Schloss – Schaudepot

Operated by: Geschichts- und Heimatverein
Neustadt a.d.Aisch e.V.
Untere Schlossgasse 8
91413 Neustadt a.d.Aisch
Tel. 09161 662 09 05
info@museen-im-alten-schloss.de
www.museen-im-alten-schloss.de

Rothenburg ob der Tauber

RothenburgMuseum

with Judaica section
Klosterhof 5, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber
Tel. 09861 939 043
museum@rothenburg.de
www.rothenburgmuseum.de

“Le Chajim” –

Rothenburg Week of Jewish Culture

every October since 2010
Dr. Oliver Gussmann,
Pastor for tourists and guests
Oliver_Gussmann@yahoo.com
For details, see:
www.rothenburg-tourismus.de

Guided tours of Jewish Rothenburg

Lothar Schmidt, Tel. 098611376
lothar.schmidt.rot@outlook.de
Hans-Gustaf Weltzer, Tel. 09861 86317
Rothenburg Tourism Service
Tel. 09861 404-92

Uehlfeld

Gemeinde Uehlfeld

Rosenhofstrasse 6, 91486 Uehlfeld
Tel. 09163 9990 0
uehlfeld@vg-uehlfeld.de

Wilhermsdorf

Heimatverein Wilhermsdorf und Umgebung e. V.
Guided tours of the Jewish cemetery
Robert Hollenbacher
Tel. 0170 3100 185
heimatverein-wilhermsdorf@web.de
www.heimatverein-wilhermsdorf.de

Gemeinde Wilhermsdorf

Key to the Jewish cemetery

Ralf Bogendorfer
Tel. 09102 9958 135
bogendoerfer@markt-wilhermsdorf.de

Zirndorf

Städtisches Museum Zirndorf

Director: Christine Lorber
Spitalstrasse 2, 90513 Zirndorf
Tel. 0911 96060590
museum@zirndorf.de
www.zirndorf.de/museum

GLOSSARY

Anti-Semites	Anti-Semitism, hatred or hostility towards Jews, a term that denotes racially motivated antagonism towards Jewish people.
Brit milah	(Hebrew: covenant of circumcision) Male circumcision (removal of the foreskin of the penis by a mohel) is a fundamental precept of Judaism and is seen as symbolising the entry of the male offspring into a covenant with God.
Bimah	(Hebrew: platform) The place in a synagogue from where the Torah is read during a service.
Hanukkah	Also known as Festival of Lights, it commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem (165 BC). The Hanukkah candelabrum is kept alight for eight days. A candle is lit on the evening of the first day, followed by an additional one on each following day. The ninth movable holder is used to light the other eight candles.
Hanukkah candelabrum	Eight or nine-armed candle-holder for candles to be lit to celebrate Hanukkah (see page 17).
Haggadah of Passover	Sets out the order and sequence of the Seder celebration.
Halakha	(Hebrew: go, walk) The religious laws of Judaism handed down orally and in writing. It has undergone constant change in the course of its history and comprises the 613 mitzvot (regulations).
Court Jews	Wealthy Jewish minority in the 16th/17th century They were employed at centres of courtly power or at the court itself as bankers, financial advisers, suppliers to the army or court and diplomats and were exempt from the restrictions that applied to ordinary members of the faith.
Holocaust	(Greek: fire victim) This term is considered to be a problematic synonym for Shoah because of its origin.
Yeshiva	A Jewish educational institution for the study of the Torah and Talmud.
Judaica	Collective term for handwritten or printed Jewish literature, rare Jewish arts and crafts objects as well as ritual and sacred articles.
Judenschule	(literally: "Jewish school") This word was used in German-speaking countries as another word for a synagogue since religious instruction was given there.
Kibbutz	A rural collective settlement in Israel with shared property and grass-roots democratic structures.
Religious community	Jewish communal structure (kehilla).



Lachoudish	A kind of secret language consisting mainly of Hebrew and West Yiddish words, with roots in Franconian dialect (see page 31).
Matrikelparagraph/ Judenmatrikel	(Registration Paragraph) Jewish Edict issued in Bavaria in 1813. It governed the legal status of Jewish residents in Bavaria. Restrictions were imposed on the numbers of Jewish families allowed to settle in the municipalities by means of a registry. Instead of their usual circumcision names, Jewish people were required to adopt civil names.
Memorbuch	(literally "memory book") Manuscript used to record the history of the Jewish communities for descendants. It would typically contain the name of the deceased, their age and date of death as well as the cause of death; special events were also recorded and the victims of earlier persecution were commemorated (see page 25).
Menorah	(Hebrew: chandelier, lamp) Seven-armed lampstand
Mikvah	Ritual immersion bath. The purpose of the mikvah is to attain ritual purity.
Mitzvah	A commandment in Judaism that is identified in Talmudic literature as appearing in the Torah or that could also have been established by rabbis.
Mohel	An expert who performs the brit milah according to Jewish custom. The training for this takes several years.
Par force	(French: by force, against all odds)
Passover:	The "Feast of Unleavened Bread" is one of the most important Jewish festivals and celebrates the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.
Pogrom	Violence against national, religious, ethnic or political minorities.
Rabbi, rav	(Hebrew: rabbi – my master, teacher) A legal scholar who has studied the interpretation of the Torah. Spiritual leader of a Jewish community.
Rabbinate, district rabbinate	Official seat of a rabbi; Jewish communities were grouped into districts in the 19th century, each headed by a district rabbi.
Responsa	Legal answer issued by a Jewish authority, i.e. a Jewish legal scholar, with the aim of giving a guiding decision in response to an inquiry.
Rintfleisch massacres	(<i>Rintfleisch</i> = beef) Persecution and mass murder of Jews in 1298 in Franconia, the Upper Palatinate and parts of Altbayern (Old Bavaria).
Ritual	An action that takes place according to predetermined rules, usually formal in nature and often solemn and festive, and always highly symbolic. It is often accompanied by certain predefined words and gestures and can be either religious or secular.
Ritual objects	Jewish ritual objects include the Hanukkah candelabrum, Seder plates, water jugs, candles and scrolls. These ceremonial items are used to perform Jewish rituals.

GLOSSARY

Shabbat /Sabbath	(Hebrew: rest) This is regarded as the seventh day of the Creation and the last and most important day of the Jewish week. It begins on Friday when the first evening star appears. The woman of the household lights the candlesticks and the two Shabbat candles. After this a blessing is spoken and the family celebrates Shabbat with a festive meal.
Shoah	(Hebrew: calamity, great misfortune, devastation, destruction) The genocide of several million European Jewish by the National Socialists within their territory from 1933 to 1945.
Secher	(Hebrew) The historical name of the cemetery in Diespeck is <i>Judensäcker</i> . This word contains a reference to both <i>Gottesacker</i> (German for “God’s acre” or graveyard) and the Hebrew word <i>secher</i> , which means remembrance or commemoration.
Seder plate	Passover begins with the Seder ceremony, which is celebrated in the family. Symbolic dishes are placed on the plate that symbolize slavery and the exodus from Egypt.
Siegeltypar	A German word for “seal stamp”
Stolpersteine	(literally: “stumbling stones”) This is a project initiated by the artist Gunter Demnig in 1992. Small commemorative plaques laid into the ground recall the fate of people who were persecuted, murdered, deported, expelled or driven to suicide during the National Socialist era.
Synagogue	(Greek: to assemble) A building of assembly and common worship and the centre of instruction of a Jewish community, also referred to in German as <i>Judenschule</i> (“Jewish school”)
Tahara house	The building in Jewish cemeteries where the bodies of deceased Jews are washed (tahara) before the burial takes place.
Talmud	(Hebrew: teaching, study) One of the most important writings of Judaism. It contains negotiations and discussions between scholarly Jewish academies in Palestine and Babylon and consists of two elements: the Mishnah (“repetition”) and the Gemara (“completion”).
Torah	(Hebrew: instruction) This is the first part of the Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible. The Torah consists of the five books of Moses (Pentateuch) and 613 commandments.
Torah ark	(Hebrew: the holy shrine) This is where the Torah scrolls are kept in the synagogue. In the Middle Ages it usually only consisted of a niche in the eastern wall; in the modern period it was often a wooden cupboard.



PICTURE CREDITS

Bouillon Wolfgang: p. 9

Eder Familien-Archiv: p. 97

Fohrer Günther: p. 43, 44 and 45

Fränkisches Museum Feuchtwangen, p. 40 (Inv. No. 00466) and p. 41 (Inv. No. 08445)

Gronauer Dr. Gerhard: p. 25, 27 and 29

Gussmann Dr. Oliver: p. 10 and 19

Hollenbacher, Robert: p. 105 to 109

Klemm, Susanne: p. 47

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LAG Region an der Romantischen Strasse: Back cover, picture 2 and 4, p. 13, 18, 20, 32 and 35

LAG Region Hesselberg: Cover page, picture 1, back cover, picture 1 and 3, p. 7 and 49 to 57

Poetzsch Johannes: p. 22

RothenburgMuseum: Cover page, picture 4, p. 17 and 19

Schmidt Günter: p. 8, 32 and 40

Schopfloch Gemeinde: p. 34 and 35

St. Jakob Rothenburg o.d.T., slide archive: p. 23

Stadtarchiv Nürnberg: p. 38 -148. (Picture credit: Stadtarchiv Nürnberg E39/I No. 73/1)

Tropper Walter: p. 15 and 20

Weigand Harald: Cover page, picture 3, p. 59 to 89

Zirndorf Geschichtswerkstatt e.V.: p. 95 and 99

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Mit meinem Herzen bleib ich in Bechhofen und in Gedanken unter euch. Eine Biographie über Amson Schloss, jüdischer Textilwarenhändler in Bechhofen, Gerhard Hess Verlag, Bad Schussenried.

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LEADER PROJECT COOPERATION PARTNERS



Lokale Aktionsgruppe Region an der Romantischen Strasse e.V.

Rothenburger Strasse 14
91637 Wörnitz

Tel.: 09868 / 95 97 591

Fax: 09868 / 95 97 590

E-mail: lag@gemeinsam.bayern

Internet: www.gemeinsam.bayern



Lokale Aktionsgruppe Region Hesselberg e. V.

Hauptstr. 11,
91743 Unterschwaningen

Tel.: 09836 / 970 573

Fax: 09836 / 970 773

E-mail: lag@region-hesselberg.de

Internet: www.lag-hesselberg.de



Lokale Aktionsgruppe LEADER Region Landkreis Fürth e.V.

Im Pinderpark 2
90513 Zirndorf

Tel.: 0911 / 97 73-1030

Fax: 0911 / 97 73-1061

E-mail: leader@ira-fue.bayern.de

Internet: [www.landkreis-fuerth.de/
gewerbe-im-landkreis/leader](http://www.landkreis-fuerth.de/gewerbe-im-landkreis/leader)



Lokale Aktionsgruppe Aischgrund e.V.

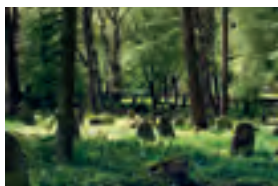
Konrad-Adenauer-Str. 2
im Gesundheitsamt, Zimmer E07
91413 Neustadt a. d. Aisch

Tel.: 09161 / 92 7550

Fax: 09161 / 92 90 755

E-mail: lag@kreis-nea.de

Internet: www.lag-aischgrund.de



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Lokale Aktionsgruppe
Region an der Romantischen Straße e.V.

Rothenburger Straße 14
91637 Wörnitz

E-mail: lag@gemeinsam.bayern
Tel.: 09868/95 97 591
Fax: 09868/95 97 590

Registered offices: Wörnitz
District Court of Ansbach Register of Associations No.
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Homepage: www.gemeinsam.bayern

Executive Director:
Pia Grimmeißen-Haider

Chairperson:
Herbert Lindörfer



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