

# CONNECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DESCENDANTS OF  
THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF AUGSBURG



June 2020

Volume 3, Number 1

## Family Attitudes towards German Traditions and Culture

**We asked you:** What was your family's attitude towards maintaining German traditions and culture in the home where you grew up? This could include food, language, music, games, etc. Did you own a copy of *Struwwelpeter* or *Max und Moritz*? Did your parents play "Hoppe Hoppe Reiter" with you? Have any of these traditions continued in your own families? Did you sing German folk songs? Which ones?

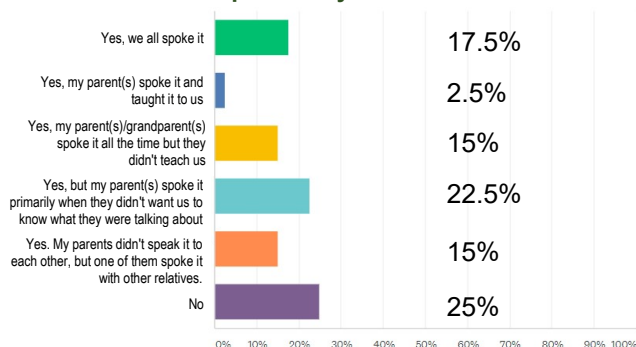
We heard from more than a third (about 38%) of you. Based on the survey and the articles we received, it seems our German roots remain strong. Survey results begin here. Theme-related articles follow beginning on Page 5.

### Survey Results

The following charts and compilations of comments we received portray the results of the first survey. The percentages shown are based on the 40 responses we received.

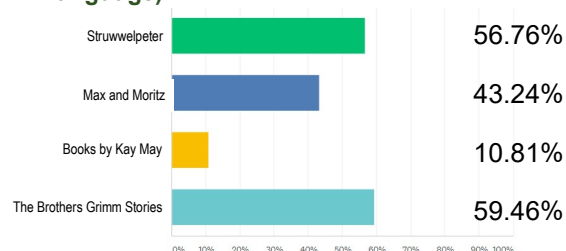
Thank you to everyone who participated.

#### Q1 - Was German spoken in your home?



The comments on this question were very interesting. We had several respondents whose parents used German as a sort of "secret language" that was used to have private conversations while in front of their children. Some picked up German by listening at home; others were offered the opportunity to learn German, but didn't; still others studied German in school. A couple of people had German and American parents, so while the German parent spoke it with other relatives, it was not spoken at home.

#### Q2 - We had the following books in our home (in any language).



Respondents added the following to the list above:

Books by Goethe and Schiller, *Die Buddenbrooks*, *Der Zauberberg*, *Plisch und Plum*, Hans Christian Andersen books, *The Adventures of Maja the Bee*, German Art books, other German classics and literature, and a big technical book about machines.

One respondent said they read mostly American/English classics for children including *The Wind in the Willows*, *Winnie the Pooh*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and also read English translations of Russian and Nordic literature such as Chekov short stories and Kafka. This person came from the tradition of Bildungsbürgertum. The responder "gobbled up this literature," but felt it put them at a disadvantage in school, because they didn't read what most kids read. However, they also noted that they didn't realize it at the time.

*Survey Results and Articles Continue on Page 5*

#### Inside this issue...

- Pg. 2: Message from our Co-Chairpersons; From the Editor
- Pg. 3: Letter from Dr. Staudinger; Meet the Staff
- Pg. 4: Letter from Alexander Mazo - Augsburg Synagogue Requires Renovation
- Page 5: Survey Results, *continued*
- Pgs. 6-10: *Theme-related Articles* authored by Michael Bernheim, Diane Fischer Castiglione, Kim Fellner, Max Sturm, Deborah Sturm Rausch, Adam Yamey, Steven Felgran, and Jeffrey Englander
- Pg. 11: Lest We Forget...
- Pg. 12-15: Family Spotlight: Memorial Band (*Erinnerungsband*) for Martin, Clara, and Erwin Cramer; Installation of a Stele Commemorating the Kahn & Arnold Textile Firm; Reunion of Augsburg Relatives: Neuburger Family; Inspiration from Kriegshaber Torah Ornaments
- Pg. 15: Virtual Tours of the JMAS Museums Now Available
- Pg. 16: Recipe Corner - *Semmelknödel*
- Pg. 17: In Memoriam: Liese B. Fischer
- Pg. 18: Readers Feedback; Volunteer Request; Next Issue Theme



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Bettina Kaplan

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## CONNECTIONS, THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DESCENDANTS OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF AUGSBURG (DJCA)

is published by DJCA, a United  
States-based association founded  
in 2018.

### Our purpose is to:

- Build Community
- Preserve History
- Conduct Outreach
- Support the Jewish Museum  
of Augsburg/Swabia  
*Jüdisches Museum Augsburg/  
Schwaben (JMAS)*

### SUBMISSIONS:

CONNECTIONS is published bi-  
annually in June and December.  
Articles, family news, family  
recipes and Food for Thought  
ideas are welcome. **Please send all  
your submissions to the editor at  
[djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com).**

### DEADLINES:

*June Issue - April 15*

*December Issue - October 15*

*Please note that posted deadlines  
for submission of articles are firm.*

Information about the Jewish  
Museum of Augsburg/Swabia can  
be found at [www.jkmas.de](http://www.jkmas.de) and on  
Facebook at  
([https://www.facebook.com/  
juedischesmuseumaugsburg/](https://www.facebook.com/juedischesmuseumaugsburg/))

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## A Message from our Co-Chairpersons

*Written by Diane Castiglione*

Wow. So much has changed since our  
last issue came out only six months ago. It  
seems like we live in an entirely new world,  
one filled with phrases like "social  
distancing and PPE - Personal Protective  
Equipment," and, perhaps most  
disturbingly, "I Can't Breathe."

Unfortunately, our families know all too well the consequences of hatred and  
extreme discrimination, intolerance and injustice. We also know the consequences  
of indifference. The intersection of the pandemic with recent events here in the  
United States has created a profound moment in time. However, both in the United  
States and globally, it is not being met with indifference. This is what gives us a  
measure of hope that these long standing issues may finally be addressed.

Throughout all of these events, one thing hasn't changed, and that is the human  
need to form **connections**. Notwithstanding "Zoom fatigue", we have all found  
ways to continue our work and volunteer efforts, to stay in touch with friends and  
family, to celebrate milestones like birthdays and graduations, and to express our  
thoughts on critical issues.

We hope our newsletter will help you to feel part of a larger community during  
this unsettling time. We continue to receive emails from people who have just  
discovered our group, requesting to be added to our mailing list. We've received  
articles from first time contributors, widening our circle. And, we've discovered  
descendants who live near each of us. We have shared meals with them... and  
hope to do so again once we are able.

In the meantime, we join in offering virtual **connections**. We hope that our  
newsletter is one way to help bridge the physical distance that we are feeling more  
strongly than ever. It is our way of sending you a warm embrace. We hope that you  
and your families, friends, and colleagues stay well.

Please stay in touch with them and with us! ☸



*L-R: Diane Castiglione and Bettina Kaplan*

## From the Editor

This issue of **Connections** focuses on the theme of **Family  
Attitudes towards German Traditions and Culture**. Although  
we were forced out of Germany due to hatred and oppression,  
according to the survey and articles we received, many of us  
maintain a **connection** to our German roots. But let's look at  
the underlying reason this newsletter and other groups and  
communications connected to the Holocaust even exist. Our  
families faced annihilation, bigotry, hatred, and persecution - -  
and somehow we survived.

During the month of June, specifically, we are called upon to raise our collective  
consciousness about ongoing prejudice against people, especially people who are  
in minority groups. Our concern focuses on prejudice against black and brown  
people, people who identify as GLBTQ+, and, yes, even anti-Semitism, which is on  
the rise. And, underlying this, is our overarching concern, and indeed fear, of the  
COVID-19 virus that has changed our lives worldwide, probably forever.

While we are deeply concerned about these current events, we are grateful that  
our ties to each other remain strong. **Thanks to everyone who contributed to this  
issue!** We hope the theme articles are meaningful for you, that you enjoy the  
compelling stories in our **Family Spotlight**, that you get to know the museum staff,  
and that you try the food featured in our **Recipe Corner**. We invite you to contribute  
to our December issue as we take our roots to the next level and ask: **How has our  
heritage influenced your view of the world?** The theme is further described on  
the last page of this issue.

I leave you with words from the past that are as important as ever today. Martin  
Luther King, Jr., said, "He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he  
who helps to perpetrate it." And, Elie Wiesel said, "We must always take sides."

We look forward to hearing from you. It's your input that makes **Connections** so  
special and important. **Thank you for not staying silent.** ☸



*Deborah Sturm Rausch*



## Letter from JMAS Director Staudinger

May 2020

Dear Descendants of the Jewish  
Community of Augsburg - Dear  
Friends of the Jewish Museum,

COVID-19 hit Bavaria in  
March and paralyzed public and  
cultural life. To protect the  
museum staff, our visitors, and the Jewish community, we  
had to close the Jewish Museum on March 16. Our  
exhibition "The City Without. Jews Foreigners Muslims  
Refugees", therefore, closed without visitors. We do not  
know when we will be able to open again, but what we  
can promise you is an exciting program in autumn.

We are currently preparing a temporary change within  
the permanent exhibition. The showcases, which deal with  
Jewish tradition, are being redesigned and will in the  
future reflect social values from a Jewish perspective:  
community, family, welfare, equality, and justice. Using  
objects from our collection as well as some loans, we will  
tell stories that deal with the question of how social values  
have influenced the lives of individuals in the past and  
present. Additionally, we can announce new digital  
developments. On the occasion of International Museum  
Day on May 17, 2020, we have a surprise for you! You  
can virtually visit the Jewish museum via a 360-degree  
tour. We look forward to your visit online and in person!

The theme for the year 2020 is "Jewish feminism".  
Therefore, we will show the art exhibition "The Invisible  
Woman" in cooperation with the Artists' Association of  
Swabia in the former Synagogue Kriegshaber in summer  
or early autumn and, on November 18th, we will open our  
big exhibition "Schalom Sisters! Jewish-feminist  
positions". At several locations in the city, as well as in  
public spaces, we will deal with questions like "What is  
Jewish about feminism?" and "What does feminism mean  
at all?" Historically, the exhibition ranges from the religious  
basic principles to current Jewish-feminist positions in  
Germany, as well as in the United States and Israel. In  
terms of content, it addresses both orthodox and liberal  
Judaism. Above all, however, the exhibition is intended to  
be fun and to show that Jewish feminism in all its facets is  
fighting for a fairer world without discrimination – a world  
we need right now.

2020 is also an important year for the museum and the  
Jewish community for another reason. After long  
negotiations, the urgently needed renovation of the  
synagogue on Halderstraße will now begin. It will take  
several years to complete and will also entail some  
changes for the Jewish Museum. The permanent  
exhibition will be redesigned and a temporary exhibition  
room will be built on the synagogue grounds. This major  
project, which will not only preserve the historic building,  
but will also provide the Jewish community with more  
security and space in the future, will cost a total of 27  
million euros. The Jewish community will have to pay 10  
percent of the total sum. It is now up to all of us to help the  
Jewish community to raise 2.7 million euros. In a first step,  
the mayor of Augsburg has started a fundraising  
campaign within the city and in a further step, additional  
donors are now to be found. I am very hopeful that  
together we can achieve the goal - the Jewish Museum



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*Continued on Page 6*

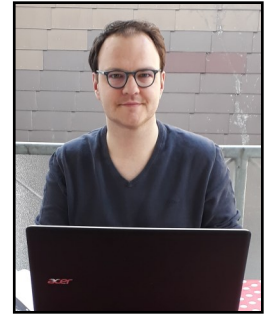
## MEET THE STAFF

We are pleased to profile a  
different staff member of  
the Jewish Museum in  
each issue. The local  
interviews are conducted

by Michael Bernheim, a descendant of the Bernheim family who  
lives (again) in Augsburg.

### Meet Dr. Torsten Lattki

**Introduction:** My name is Torsten  
Lattki. I was born in Germany in  
1985. I hold a bachelor's degree  
in Protestant theology and non-  
Christian religions and a  
master's degree in history of  
Jewish-Christian relations. The  
subject of my PhD thesis is the  
life and work of Rabbi Benzion  
Kellermann. I joined the Jewish  
Museum in Augsburg in 2015. My area of responsibility  
is communications and public relations.



**What is your role at the museum?** We are a small team,  
so everyone has to be familiar with everything to some  
extent. Communications and Public Relations  
comprises: planning and organizing the program in  
close cooperation with Barbara Staudinger; staying  
abreast of what is going on in Jewish life; relations with  
newspapers, radio, TV, and, for a long time social  
media; coordination of single projects; copyediting for  
publications and exhibitions of the museum and content;  
and related collaborations. I also do guided tours for  
students and adults, which I like doing very much.

**What do you like best about your work?** I like the  
challenge of the multifaceted tasks, of complex projects,  
and of the scientific level required. And I enjoy the  
teamwork and meeting all kinds of fascinating people.

**How did you get interested in German Jewish  
history?** From childhood on, I felt attracted by religious  
buildings. In college, I became interested in the history  
of religion in general and was especially fascinated by  
the richness of Jewish culture, philosophy, and religion.

**What do you feel is the most important aspect of the  
work being done by the Museum and the DJCA?**

One is to make visitors become curious and interested  
in Jewish life. The other one is to make the best use of  
the abundance of knowledge and memories within the  
Descendants' network.

**What do you like to do when you are not at work?**

I read a lot and I have a soft spot for graphic novels.  
Furthermore, I like music, cultural events, visiting  
exhibitions, cycling and traveling.

**What is your favorite food?** This is very difficult! There  
are so many good things to eat; I really can't make up  
my mind what I like best.

**What is your favorite travel destination?** Berlin, where I  
have lived for seven years. Otherwise, Hamburg, or the  
island of Amrum and, in general, locations in the North  
Sea.

**What superpower would you like to have?** I am a  
commuter and on weekends I spend a lot of time on the  
train. Therefore, sometimes I wished I could "beam"  
myself to any place within seconds. ☸



ISRAELITISCHE KULTUSGEMEINDE SCHWABEN – AUGSBURG  
KÖRPERSCHAFT DES ÖFFENTLICHEN RECHTS



VORSTAND / PRESIDENT

IKG, Halderstraße 6-8, D-86150 Augsburg

unser Zeichen: vka

May 26, 2020

Dear Descendants of the Jewish Community of Augsburg!

In 2017 our synagogue in Halderstraße was 100 years old. Built between 1913 and 1917, it overcame the November pogrom and the Shoah and is still the centre of Jewish life in Augsburg. After the building was renovated between 1983 and 1985, we are again facing a great challenge today.

In order to preserve the synagogue, it must be fundamentally renovated. We, today's Jewish community, have taken on the responsibility to carry out this major project.

The total cost of the renovation amounts to 27 million euros. The Federal Republic of Germany will pay 13 million of the, the Free State of Bavaria as well as the city of Augsburg will also pay a large sum. However, 10 percent of the renovation costs, i.e. 2.7 million euros, must be paid by the Jewish Community. We are doing our best: we will take out a loan in order to be able to raise part of the sum in this way, but we are dependent on help for the rest.

The city of Augsburg helped us to start a fundraising campaign for the synagogue. The aim is to collect donations that will help the Jewish Community to pay its required contribution to the renovation costs. Therefore we also address our request to you as descendants of the Jewish community in Augsburg: If you have a possibility to donate yourself or to help us to collect donations, we would be very grateful. Your support will help to maintain the synagogue where your ancestors had bar mitzvahs, got married and attended the service. This joint effort, we hope, will help bring us, the former and current Jewish communities of Augsburg, closer together.

If you want to contribute to the renovation of the synagogue, we would ask you to make a donation to the following bank account, under the keyword "Preservation of Jewish life in Augsburg."

Bank account: IKG Schwaben-Augsburg K.d.ö.R.  
IBAN: DE92 7205 0000 0000 7878 20  
BIC: AUGSDE77XXX

Also, we have started a fundraising campaign at GoFundMe.com to make donating easier. You can find our GoFundMe page under the following link: [gofundme.com/f/Preservation-of-Jewish-life-in-Augsburg](https://gofundme.com/f/Preservation-of-Jewish-life-in-Augsburg)

Thank you for support you can give our project.

Sincerely yours,

Alexander Mazo  
President of the Jewish  
Religious Congregation in Augsburg

IKG, Halderstraße 6-8, D-86150 Augsburg, **Postanschrift:** Postfach 101817, D-86008 Augsburg  
Telefon: (0821) 509 93 13 / Telefax: (0821) 509 93 26.  
E-Mail: [synagoge-augsburg@t-online.de](mailto:synagoge-augsburg@t-online.de), [www.ikg-augsburg.com](http://www.ikg-augsburg.com)  
Bankkonto: Stadtparkasse Augsburg IBAN: DE40 7205 0000 0000 2240 22 BIC: AUGSDE77XXX  
Spendenkonto Kto. IBAN: DE92 7205 0000 0000 7878 20 BIC: AUGSDE77XXX  
Bürozeiten: Montag – Donnerstag: 9:00 Uhr bis 17:00 Uhr, Freitag: 9:00 Uhr bis 12:00 Uhr



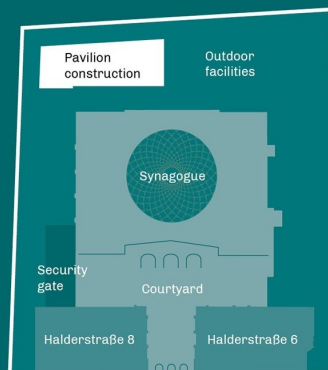
## WHY RENOVATE?

The last major construction measures took place almost 30 years ago. There is a considerable need for renovation throughout the building complex with regard to serious structural defects, accessibility and fire protection.

In addition, the house technology and the sewage system must be completely renewed.

The security measures should also be significantly expanded.

Furthermore a multifunctional pavilion will be attached to the museum, which serves modern museum standards and additionally will be used for temporary exhibitions or as a seminar room among other things.



- Technical issues such as security, fire protection and accessibility
- Renovation of the Synagogue Augsburg
- Renovation of the Jewish Museum with the construction of a multifunctional pavilion

## Required donations

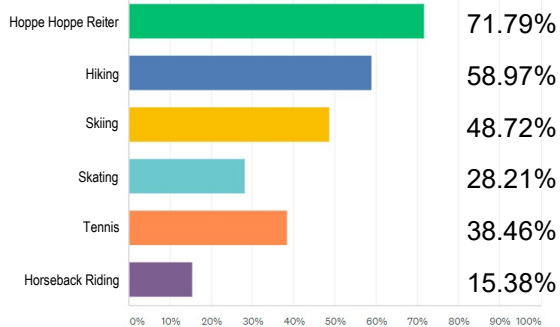


**Editorial Note:** The fact that we, the *Descendants of the Jewish Community of Augsburg*, exist and are able to share stories so that the legacies of our respective families and the lessons of the Holocaust will long endure, is a direct result of the reunion that occurred in conjunction with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Synagogue of Augsburg. Our deep connection and relationship with the Synagogue and Museum is reflected in our four stated goals (see pg. 2). Therefore, while we do not normally post requests for funds, we have made an exception in this case. We hope our readers will join us in supporting this very worthy cause. Thank you very much.



## Survey Results and Articles, *continued*

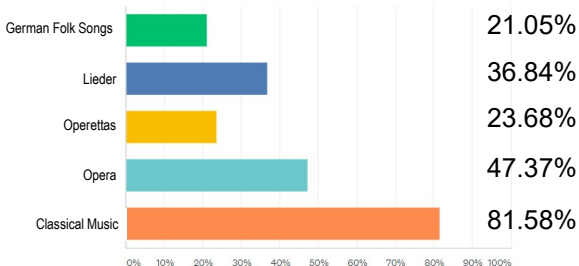
### Q3 - We did the following activities?



An overview of the comments received for this question further illustrate how much *Hoppe Hoppe Reiter* has been carried forward even today. It is listed as a rite of passage for one family and mentioned as something one respondent does with their grandchildren.

Several people mentioned they did none of the activities listed. One person stated that their dad was a communist and an inventor of machines, so the family talked about those subjects. Some mentioned vacations to places that reminded their parent(s) of Augsburg. Activities such as hiking, walking, and swimming were mentioned.

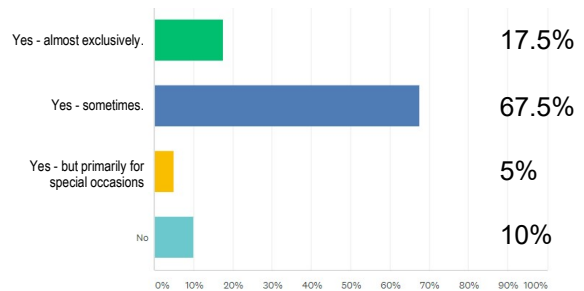
### Q4 - We listened to or sang the following types of music in our home at least in part because of the family connection to Germany or a parent/grandparent having grown up in Germany.



Anecdotal information for this question showed a focus on music, which was a common theme.

Additional comments included: attending October Fests, going to concerts and operas, listening to the radio, playing the piano, singing German folk songs, hearing opera music and German folks songs as bedtime lullabies, singing German Christmas carols, and parents who were musicians and shared those talents with their children.

### Q5 - Was German food served in your home?



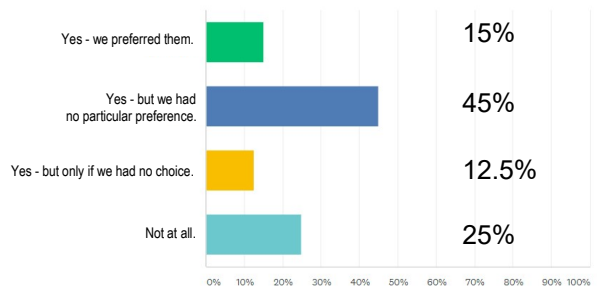
Food was, and is, an important ongoing connection with our German roots. Delicious items, many of which are listed here, are among those we continue to love. **We invite people who listed foods to submit family recipes for our *Recipe Corner*.**

Foods listed include: Sauerbraten, Spätzle, Schnitzel, Wursts, red cabbage, Königsberger Klopse, German pancakes (Pfannkuchen), Saure Leber, Roulade, herring, cucumber salad, German potato salad, soups, roasts, brats, Leberkase, Aufschnitt (jerky), and liverwurst.

Desserts - so many pastries, tortes, Kuchen, pies, and cakes are enjoyed by our Descendants Group. Desserts include: Kaiserschmarrn, Lebkuchen, Gugelhupf, Apfelstrudel, Marzipan, chocolate, and Schlag.

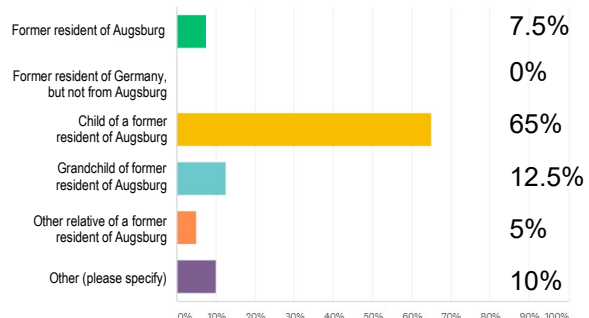
Holiday specialties included: Rosh ha Shanah plum-based tortes (Zwetschekuchen/Tzvetchkadaatschi); Passover: matzah coffee, matzah charlotte, and lemon creme (a lemon and egg based dessert); Yom Kippur Break Fast with boiled chicken and Flanken.

### Q6 - Did your family purchase German products made by German companies?



A few people responded that their families did not buy German products. However, cars, beer, gummy bears, and mustards in tubes were mentioned.

### Q7 - Which category best describes you?



The "Other" response included someone whose "forefathers came from Augsburg and environs," a grandchild of a former resident who died after being picked up, and a child of a resident of Fischach. ☘

# Family Attitudes towards German Traditions and Culture

## Living in Germany after 1945

By Michael Bernheim, son of Erhard Bernheim. Michael lives in Augsburg.

We probably were an exception among the descendants of the former Augsburg Jewish families. My father Erhard, being half-Jewish, had survived in Germany, and after he and my non-Jewish mother Hildegard had gotten married in 1950, they started raising a family in Augsburg. We lived not far from the small chemical plant which had – at least partially – been restituted to the Bernheims. We called it the “shop.” At first glance, I suppose, we were a normal German family. We spoke German, of course, and the cooking was German, southern German, at any rate heavy stuff after the austerity of the 1940s.

My parents read to us the classical children’s books, like *Struwwelpeter*, *Max und Moritz*, and Grimm’s fairytales. We sang German nursery rhymes like *Backe, backe Kuchen*, *Alle meine Entlein*, or *Fuchs, du hast die Gans gestohlen* (Fox, you stole the goose). My brother Christoph, my sister Eva, and I learned the “typical” German virtues: to be always exactly on time, to be diligent students, and not just to say “good morning” to the neighbor, but to say “good morning, Fräulein Müller.” In summer, Christoph and I wore Lederhosen, also in school, like many other boys. On sunny weekends, it was mandatory to go hiking in the woods. And in 1959, my father bought his first Mercedes.

But there were subtle differences. The record-player in the living room played, apart from classical music, French chansons by Edith Piaf or Yves Montand or American music: Louis Armstrong, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Pete Seeger - hardly ever any German pop-music, never brass-bands or German folk songs. In the classical sector, Richard Wagner was taboo.

The language around the family table had to be Bavarian, not too rural though, a cultivated upper-class Bavarian, but definitely not High German, which was stigmatized as “Prussian.” My father, whose fate it was to continue living in Germany, consciously or unconsciously, put the blame for what had happened to Prussian militarism and absolved Bavaria which, of course, was historically not justified. He acknowledged the Federal Republic of Germany as a safe and prosperous place to live and to work, but not as homeland (*Heimat*). His identity was Bavarian, not German. When we were abroad, we tried not to appear as Germans more than inevitable and spoke English or French as internationally understood languages whenever possible.

For the summer holidays in the Swiss Alps, Christoph and I had to wear long khaki pants. The Lederhosen had to stay at home. They would have been far better suited for the dirty trails, but would have identified us as Germans immediately.

In his everyday language at home, my father used quite a number of Yiddish expressions. I am sure that they had been handed down to him from generation to generation. And, apparently, he also inherited a lot of Jewish jokes which he loved to tell us over and over again. All this is still alive among his children’s families.

My father hated events with large masses of people, including soccer matches, which, of course, were very popular. Consequently, in elementary school, I was the only boy in my class who was not informed about what was going on in soccer. Our house was located not too far from a soccer stadium, and on Sunday afternoons, we could hear the roar of the crowd. When I was young, I never thought of that, but now it appears to me that maybe this kind of noise brought back traumatic memories to my father, e.g. of Nazi parades he had watched as a child when his father was in prison. He had never told us about such experiences, and we had never asked.

As a child, you look at everything as “normal.” That’s the way it is. You have no way to compare. ☸



The Bernheims (the author, his brother Christoph, and their mother Hildegard) in the early 1960s on vacation in Austria where traditional alpine clothes are common and in Switzerland where only German tourists wear them.

Barbara Staudinger letter, continued from Page 3

will support the Jewish community wherever possible.

Within this newsletter is a letter from the President of the Jewish Community, Alexander Mazo, in which he asks you all to support the Jewish Community in this project. Especially today it is important to show solidarity and I deeply believe that this project will be the beginning of a new, intensive and good relationship between the descendants and the current Jewish community in Augsburg.

Stay healthy.

Yours,  
Barbara Staudinger ☸

**Editor’s Note:** This letter was received in early May when the Museum was closed. It reopened on May 18, and remains open while adhering to specific COVID-19 guidelines.



## Reconciling Ourselves with German Culture

by Diane Fischer Castiglione

*Diane lives in Gaithersburg, MD and is the daughter of Liese Fischer, a member of the Einstein family of Kriegshaber*

When it came to elements of German culture, my parents were neither strong proponents nor vehement boycotters. Nevertheless, I knew that both sides of my family were originally from Germany (My mother was from Kriegshaber/Augsburg and my father was from Breslau, now Wroclaw, Poland.). By the time I was born, both of my parents had been in English-speaking environments for approximately 20 years so English was the primary language of our house. However, certain expressions crept into our vocabulary, often overheard in conversations my parents had with older relatives or friends who felt more comfortable in German. When my mother was angry, yelling at us in English was one thing. But when she started to shout, "*Donnerwetter noch einmal!*" it was time to run. Most frustrating was when someone would tell a joke in English but end with a punchline in German. My brother and I would eagerly ask for a translation only to be told, "Ach, you can't translate it!"

Serving red cabbage at Thanksgiving and Pesach seemed entirely normal to me. It wasn't until I was much older that I realized this was not part of the typical American's Thanksgiving meal. My mother occasionally shopped at what, in 1960s and 1970s Long Island, was an exotic store called, "Food of all Nations", where the prized purchases included packets of Dr. Oetker's pudding mix and Bahlsen cookies. My mother didn't bake the all-American pie but we had plenty of tortes, lebkuchen, and marzipan (which she handmade, even though she, herself, didn't like it!). Having people over for afternoon coffee and cake was a typical way for my parents to entertain.

I have vivid memories of my parents playing *Hoppe Hoppe Reiter* with me. This game became a rite of passage for every child on my mother's side of the family and the tradition continued when my son Michael was born. More interesting, however, was something that my father requested not long after Michael was born. My father was a very quiet man who didn't want to impose on anyone. However, out of the blue, my mother relayed to me his request to be called "Opa" and her agreement with the idea. I was caught by surprise, not only because it was so unusual for my father to express his preferences so directly, but because I had not expected that my parents would want to perpetuate this connection to Germany in such an obvious way. This had not come up when I was a child because I had no living grandparents, as my mother's parents had died in Auschwitz and my father's parents both died before I was two years

old. Except for one of my mother's uncles, these terms were not used on either side of my family. If this was so important to my father that he spoke up about it, I was not going to say no – not to mention that it helped solve the very practical problem of how to differentiate between two sets of grandparents. So, my parents became Oma and Opa.

I've often wondered why this was so important to my father. One of the theories I've developed is that, despite all of the horrible events that occurred in Germany, my parents retained positive memories of very happy childhoods. So many of the elements of German culture that revealed themselves in our house can be tied to childhood – childhood games, books, songs, comfort foods, etc. Like it or not, this was part of their identity. It has also become a part of my identity. So, if the occasion ever presents itself, I have a feeling that I, too, will be an Oma. ☿

## Passing the Musical Torch from the Old Augsburg to the New

*By Richard Mayer, who lives in Monterrey, California and is the son of Julius Mayer.*

I was raised in a very musical household, although my parents weren't musicians. My father, Julius Mayer, had grown up in pre-World War II Augsburg and came to the United States in 1939 when he was in his 30s. Instead of going to the movies or baseball games when he was a kid, like his American contemporaries, he used to frequently go to the Augsburg opera house, libretto in hand, and follow the action, page by page.

His knowledge of classical music was prodigious, and he often played a version of "Name That Tune" with my mother, brother, and me at the dinner table, as the local classical music station serenaded the evening meal. It was only logical and inevitable, then, that my parents would one day bring home musical instruments for my brother, Steve, and me to play. As I remember, they may have gotten a package deal on a used flute, along with a series of lessons with a doddering old flute teacher at a downtown music school. At any rate, I don't recall volunteering for the flute or for the lessons - it was a *fait accompli*.

I finished the series of lessons and must have shown some aptitude, because my parents didn't return the instrument. They found a teacher closer to home, though, in the person of Mary Roberts Wilson, an energetic and impatient blonde woman in her 30's, who taught in her home several blocks away from ours. She had to start me over again on the flute, since my first teacher had managed to inculcate several nearly fatal (in a flutistic sense) bad habits in his time with me.

Suddenly, I started to make alarming progress on the instrument in the fall of my tenth year on earth. I already had attained a dislike for practicing my weekly lesson, but had uncovered an ability to sight-read by playing through the lesson book (any piece but the current one). I would manage to stumble through the lesson, to the consternation of Mrs. Wilson, again sight-reading the assigned piece, for all practical purposes.

This continued for three years. In the end, I could manipulate the keys of the flute with facility on vaguely familiar classical music, had performed frequently around

*Continued on Page 8*



*Michael Castiglione's Bar Mitzvah in March 2005. (L-R) David Fischer, Diane Fischer Castiglione, Michael, Lee Fischer (Oma), Harry Fischer (Opa)*

Minneapolis, but balked at learning any kind of technique, musical theory, or serious pieces. On one side stood

my parents and teacher, who had high hopes that I would become a sensible pupil, do my lessons, enter contests, and perhaps bring fame and honor to the undertaking.

On the other side were my neighborhood classmates, who couldn't understand why I would want to play classical music on a sissy instrument like the flute, rather than football on the front lawn.

Eventually, Mrs. Wilson moved across town and I vainly hid my flute case under my school books on the bus to keep the other kids from getting the wrong idea. And by the time I was 14, I had quit taking lessons.

The flute retired to the closet. My parents and I continued to battle over the radio to see which station - - rock or classical - - would serenade the family supper. And I retired to the back alley to perfect my jump shot.

### Postscript:

When I was in my early 20s, I reclaimed my German heritage, including the love of German classical music that I received from my father as a child. I reapplied myself to playing the flute, and before long became quite proficient on that instrument. And, eventually, my soprano wife Norma and I were invited to play a concert at the Augsburg synagogue where my ancestors had worshipped before they left for America in the 1930s. Our concert took place there on the European Day of Jewish Culture in 2009.

Thank goodness for the gift my father Julius Mayer gave me, even though it took some time for me to appreciate it! ❧



Richard Mayer (flute) and his wife, soprano Norma Mayer, at a concert at the Augsburg synagogue.

Reprinted with permission from Richard Mayer. Photo: Schöllhorn

## Wimpfheimer/Heilbronner/Steinfeld Descendants' Reflections

The next five Theme Articles were compiled by Deborah Sturm Rausch. The authors are all descendants of the Wimpfheimer/Seligmann family who were from Ichenhausen but who moved to Augsburg in the 1800s. Authors Deborah Sturm Rausch, Jeffrey Englander, Steven Felgran, and Max Sturm are descendants of Michael Heilbronner and Henrietta Wimpfheimer, whose daughter Lina married Hugo Steinfeld, and their twins, Anna and Hedwig Steinfeld. Hedwig married Paul Englaender and Anna married Max Sturm. The authors are their grandchildren. Adam Yamey is a descendant of Henrietta's Wimpfheimer's sister, Rebecka, who married Rafael Seligmann.

### Memorable Times

By Max Sturm, who resides in New York, NY



(L-R) Walter, Ilse, George and Max Sturm, Augsburg 1938

My father, George Sturm, was only 9 years old when he and his parents fled Germany in 1939. More than 80 years have elapsed since then and yet his memory of his childhood in Augsburg is eerily acute and intact. They were memorable times and he was an impressionable kid, but he remembers so much more than Hitler marching down his street, or his brother being taken off to Dachau concentration camp, or seeing the Statue of Liberty for the first time. He remembers Germany - its people, its language, its culture. He remembers marketing with his mother, the sausage stands, barrels of sauerkraut, long walks with his grandfather, and collecting chestnuts throughout the forest. He remembers the nightly ritual of music in his home, the tunes and lyrics and feeling of togetherness. He tells stories of sibling antics, like his brother puncturing a hole in his sister's bike tire, just to get a rouse. Or the time his father (who I'm named after) had him thrown into a pool, in hopes of teaching him something about swimming and courage and character. He remembers names and faces, personalities and idiosyncrasies. He remembers jokes and expressions, and the people who gave them voice. And in sharing these memorable fragments of his childhood, his stories have become our stories.

For all that was lost or destroyed in the thirties and forties, my father's recollections remain. It's the act of storytelling - the telling, listening, retelling, and remembering - that's become our family tradition. ❧

Wimpfheimer/Heilbronner/Steinfeld Descendants continues on Page 9

## Ain't Misbehavin'

Written and photographed by Kim Fellner, living in the Washington, D.C. area, and the daughter of Anita Heufeld née Fellner (1925-2011) from Fischach.

To be fair, I think our *Plisch und Plum* and *Der Struwwelpeter* came from my father's Viennese youth, not from my mother's German childhood. They (the books, not my parents) sat next to each other on the bookcase in the living room, and oh how I hated them! P&P was big, with black and white illustrations and verses that I couldn't stand; but the small, skinny *Struwwelpeter* was even worse. Each poem was a morality play on what happens to disobedient children, with the flames and bloody consequences of misbehaving etched in vivid color; and the doggerel attacked the brain like a bad song and continues to crop up more than a half century later. I especially recall the fate of little Paula, who wouldn't stop playing with matches, despite the dire warning of the family cats ("Miau! Mio! Miau! Mio! Wirf's weg! Sonst Brennst Du lichterloh!"). She ends up as a ghoulishly portrayed pile of steaming ashes, leaving behind only her red shoes and two weeping felines. Happily, my parents did not follow the childrearing practices condoned in the book and I never did quite learn how to behave! ❧





## Wonderful Memories

By Deborah Sturm Rausch, who resides in Upstate NY

I have always thought of myself as being of German descent. It's as ingrained in me as my name. My father, Walter Sturm, was a master at compartmentalizing the good and bad parts of growing up in Germany, and despite the horrible chapter of the Holocaust in his late teens, always wanted us to have a warm, favorable connection with the Germany he knew and loved as a child. While we did not speak German in our home, my father and my grandparents (I called them the diminutive Omi and Opi) and my father's extended family always spoke German together. My mother, Lillian, is not German, but she worked hard to help my father preserve his happy memories, and thus my siblings and I enjoyed many of the things he loved in Germany in our home growing up on Long Island.

My father enjoyed a wonderful childhood. He was raised with music, including classical music, opera, Lieder, and German folk songs. He enjoyed sports he learned as a kid like hiking, skiing, ice skating, tennis, swimming, water skiing, and more, so we did all of these as kids.

Music has always been a huge part of our lives. Our family song is *Muss i den, Muss i den* (*Muß i den, Muß i den*), a German folk-style song in the Swabian German dialect. We sang it in our home and whistled whenever we wanted to find one another in a crowd. I learned it as a child, and the whistle can still be heard if ever my husband, Lee, or our children, Becca and Rachel - and their families - need to locate one of us outside of our homes. We sang many German folk songs, like *Muß i den; Es tönen die Lieder; O Susanna, wie ist das leben doch so schön*; and so many others, around the piano and especially when we were hiking together as a family. I was taught Lieder and sang Goethe's *Heidenröslein* at many family gatherings. "Sah ein Knab' ein Röslein stehen, Röslein auf der Heiden!"



Walter Sturm playing the accordion, mid 1930s.

My Dad was quite the musician. He played the piano and many other instruments including the famed accordion (see photo left), and also sang really well. He could pretty much play anything he heard - - complete with harmonies. He just sat down and out it came. That included arias from most operas, popular songs, jazz, classical music, and just about everything. I have very fond memories of him playing four-hands with my sister Susan, especially Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, which my sister and daughter now play when they get together. (My own piano-playing left much to be desired, but I do love to sing.)

My Dad taught us to ski when we were quite young and it was something we loved to do with him every winter. Even as a child I marveled at his level of patience helping us lace up our ski boots and hook up our bindings! His family skied and hiked when they vacationed in Füssen. When I visited there with my children, we went to the *Ruchti Haus* where I actually saw where he fell and broke his arm as a child! As kids we also went ice skating on a nearby pond while pretending to be *Hans Brinker*. In summer we swam, and as kids we had a speed boat. He taught us to water ski, and then moved on to sailing, which we also loved to do, and my brother continued for many years.

Food glorious food! We loved, and still adore, all the



Left: Max Sturm (Opi) hiking with children (L-R) Ilse, Walter, and George, mid 1930s. Right: The Sturm family hiking in the Adirondacks (L-R) Debbie, Bob, Lillian, Walter, and Susan, mid 1970s



German foods. We shopped at Karl Ehmer, and feasted on all sorts of Wursts, Leberkäse, tiny hot dogs, German potato salad, cucumber salad (especially at Omi's and Opi's), Himbeersäfte, Königsberger Klopse, special meats, and the list goes on and on. My father tried until he came up with as close as he could get to his family's calves liver recipe - delish! And, desserts: Sacher Torte, Pischinger Torte, and Linzer cookies my father called *Schpitzbooben*. When he and I were in Augsburg together, he delighted in taking me to taste Schlotfeger and Dampfnudel. Of course, the pièce de résistance, was *Tzvetchkendaatsche* (See June 2019 *Connections*).

We played *Hoppe Hoppe Reiter*, which I loved as a child, and I did this with my children and still play with my grandchildren. Max and Moritz was one of his favorite books. I bought it a few years ago so I could read it to my grandchildren, but when I reread the stories I was mortified. No way will I share those graphically painful misdeeds with them! But, our all time favorite, misty-eyed memory from our early childhood is the book about the Adventures of Maya the Bee (*Die Biene Maja*), written by Waldemar Bonsels. My father hand-carried that book in his sack when he left Germany after being in Dachau, and my siblings and I fondly remember the flowered cover which, by the time he read it to us, was worn and tattered. It was in German, but he translated it to us word by word when he read it to us at bedtime.

Speaking of bedtime, my father always sang the prayer from Hansel and Gretel to us as kids at bedtime. My sister and I sang it to our kids, and my daughter and I sing it to her children, who love it and, at ages 4 and 6, can hardly fall asleep without it. **Ah... such wonderful memories.** ☿

## My Connection to Augsburg

By Adam Yamey, who resides in London, England

Contrary to my cousin Debbie Rausch's family experience, it is only me who has taken any interest in our Augsburg links. We never referred to it when I was younger. My mother knew that Augsburg figured in our heritage, but never elaborated on it. It was only when I began delving into our past that I found out about it. My parents, both born in South Africa, preferred not to visit Germany. They moved to London before I was born. Although my mother's parents and grand-parents spoke German, there was little if anything related to German tradition in our home. The only food I remember having was pickled cucumbers! Unlike me, my parents tended to look to the future, rather than the past! ☿

Wimpfheimer/Heilbronner/Steinfeld Descendants continues on Page 10

## Memories of Augsburg

By Steven Felgran, who resides in Larchmont, NY

My mother, Ilse Felgran, was born Ilse Sturm in Augsburg in 1922, the middle child between older brother Walter and younger brother Günter (George). She met my father, Howard Felgran, another émigré from Germany (Cologne), at a German-Jewish bungalow colony in the Catskills. When they married in 1949, their intention was to put the past behind them. It didn't quite work out that way.

I will spare the details of the many unhappy memories and the losses. But my mother did manage to hold on to quite a few happy childhood memories of Augsburg, which she shared during my childhood. They centered on the gemütlich togetherness of family and many friends, the warm feelings at Christmas time (yes, it was celebrated in a secular way), and a home filled with literature, poetry and music. I also heard with some family pride about how men of Augsburg would tip their hats when they recognized my mother's grandfather, Hugo Steinfeld, on the street. He was well-known because he was City Commissioner from 1909-1917 and City Councilman for the liberal German Democratic Party from 1920-1924.



Steven Felgran playing his accordion

One Augsburg tradition my mother kept very much alive was music in the home. And not any music but operas (*Die Zauberflöte*), German Lieder (by Schubert and others) and lullabies (*Guten Abend, gut' Nacht*), and Volksmusik, often with accordions. My mother told me many times that her brother Walter was the "life of the party" with his accordion. And so off I went to accordion lessons twice a week for years, until one day I realized it just wasn't "cool!"

Another tradition involved food. We were lucky to have a German delicatessen right across the street from our apartment in Queens, NY, where we could buy Knockwurst, German potato salad (the real kind without mayonnaise), bottles of *Himbeersaft*, and other good things.

My parents also continued the German tradition of leisurely hiking, which often took the form of day hikes. That translated into frequent Sunday trips to Bear Mountain, Harriman State Park, Sterling Forest Gardens, and other places within driving distance of NYC where one could get some fresh air and a little exercise. These parks and gardens were hardly the Allgäu, which my mother sorely missed, but they had to do.

And so my mother, who passed away in 2001, shared enough happy memories and continued enough traditions that the darkness I knew was back there was a little less dark. ❧

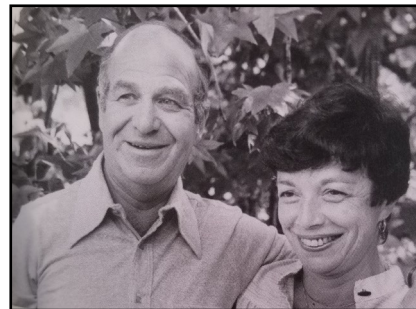


Ilse and Howard Felgran

## German Memories

By Jeffrey Englander, who resides in Great Neck, NY

My experiences growing up were shaped by the two very different forces which came together in America as my parents: Dad, seemingly a typical Bavarian in his earlier years, and Mom, a typical "Prussian" born in Berlin who had emigrated at age 11 with her parents. Their credo was to speak only English in the household, the language of their adopted country and the one of which they were proud to be new citizens. The last thing they wanted to do was speak the language of the country which had compelled them to escape persecution and death. That changed, however, when they concluded that German was the best means to speak in front of "die Kinder" on subjects they did not wish to share with their young offspring - - their way of telling secrets in public. That ended fairly quickly when they concluded that those offspring had been able to glean from context, speech pattern, and colloquialisms the full details of virtually every topic discussed. I went on to take German in college as what was then a "gut" course for me.

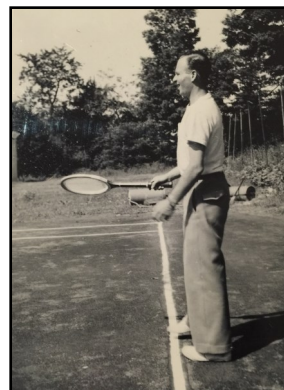


John and Eva Englander

The "clash" of cultures manifested itself in other ways: Two different styles of cooking which eventually became blended together much to my gastronomical delight. And, of course, the curious fact that in speaking about the specialties of their respective youths it was almost as if they were speaking two entirely different languages! Rotkohl vs. Blaukraut. Berliner Pflaumenkuchen vs. Augsburger Zwetschgendatschi. But delicious in any dialect.

On a "roots trip" in 1993, Dad proudly showed us the Tennis Club (*Privaten Tennisgesellschaft Augsburg*) at which he played with his Jewish friends when the seeds of discontent were in germination.

Once in the United States, he continued to enjoy tennis, both as a participant and spectator taking me to the U.S. Amateur Tennis Championships at Forest Hills for the first time in 1961 and thereafter annually (until it was I who took him) for many, many years, becoming the U.S. Open and moving from hallowed grounds in Forest Hills to Flushing Meadow. In the early 1970s, I had a fairly regular game, as well, with Henry Landman at the courts at Whitney Pond Park in Manhasset. ❧



Johnny Englander playing tennis in the United States.

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## Lest we forget... The valuable work of the Erinnerungswerkstatt

By Michael Bernheim, a descendant of the Bernheim family who lives (again) in Augsburg.

The first time I came across the *Erinnerungswerkstatt* (Remembrance Workshop) was in May 2017, when one of their representatives approached me at one of the first installations of Stolpersteine in Augsburg which was for the grandparents of Miriam Friedmann. I have since learned that the Remembrance Workshop is, according to their own definition, "...a loose association of initiatives, institutions and private persons of the city society. Its aim is to explore the biographies of the Nazi victims of Augsburg and bear them in remembrance."

Founding members in 2012 were Benigna Schönhagen, former Director of the Jewish Museum of Augsburg, and Verena von Mutius, member of the Augsburg City Council. They were joined by Nikolaus Hueck, a Protestant theologian, and Angela Bachmair, a journalist.

The following years were filled with groundbreaking activities: joining the discussion with all stakeholders involved about the best way of honoring the memory of the victims, organizing a contest for the design of the *Erinnerungsbands* (Remembrance Posts), teaching interested volunteers how to use archives for writing biographies, and, last but not least, raising funds.

At that time, another organization promoting the idea of *Stolpersteine* (stumbling stones) had already been created. *Stolpersteine* had been controversially debated among the Jewish communities in Augsburg. Therefore, the Remembrance Workshop thought of an alternative memorial which was not buried in the sidewalks and treaded upon but rather mounted higher up. That is how the Remembrance Posts were developed.

In 2016, the Augsburg city council gave permission for installing both *Stolpersteine* and Remembrance Posts for all groups of Nazi victims on public areas. This solution, which finally put an end to the controversial debate, is called the "Augsburg Way". As of today, 21 Remembrance Posts have been set up. Some of them are sponsored by descendants' families, others by individual Augsburg citizens or groups, such as the team of the Jewish Museum.



*Installation of a Remembrance Post for Wolfgang Bernheim, May 2018. Background from left: Two high-school students who presented Wolfgang's biography, Wolfgang's half-sister Ursula, Frank Schillinger, Jewish Museum, the author, and Nikolaus Hueck, Remembrance Workshop (from behind) Photo credit: Ilya Kotov*

Also, in 2016 the *Gedenkbuch* (Memorial Book) with victims' biographies was made publicly accessible on the internet at [www.gedenkbuch-augsburg.de](http://www.gedenkbuch-augsburg.de). Some months later, fifty biographies of Nazi victims were available. Today, the number has grown to 170. Nearly fifty different authors have researched the lives of former Augsburg citizens and have written their biographies. High school students wrote about half of these stories. The student readings of the biographies have become a regular feature of the annual Holocaust memorial event on January 27th in the Augsburg *Rathaus* (City Hall). They present "their" new biographies to the audience. Having spent considerable effort and time researching the life of a victim, they will most likely remember the fate of this person for the rest of their lives and are thus able to act as multipliers and ambassadors. The young generation is key for making sure that what has happened in Germany will not be forgotten and for preventing it from happening again. I regard this as the most valuable result of the work of the Remembrance Workshop. A great asset in this respect is Frank Schillinger, historian and member of the Jewish Museum team, who works part-time for the Remembrance Workshop.

There are sometimes heated discussions about how to best preserve the memory of the victims of Nazi terror, and this included and still includes the definition of the term "victims" itself. There is consensus now that "victims" are Jews, Sinti and Romanies, political opponents of the Nazis (active members of labor unions, the Social Democratic or the Communist parties), homosexuals, and victims of euthanasia and medical experiments. There is one limitation, though: the Augsburg city administration has decided that (at least for the time being) *Stolpersteine* and Remembrance Posts must be installed for only those who lost their lives between 1933 and 1945. This may be for the purpose of setting priorities, but everybody involved feels uneasy about this situation. On the other hand, the biographies published in the *Gedenkbuch* encompass all victims, including those who survived.

To do real justice to the victims of Nazi terror is not possible. But it is necessary that we at least try to do our best - together. For more information, please visit:

<http://erinnerungswerkstatt-augsburg.de> (in German). ☞



### Seeking Volunteer Translators (German to English)

Augsburg's *Erinnerungswerkstatt Augsburg* (Remembrance Workshop), is looking to translate the biographies in its online *Gedenkbuch* or Remembrance Book (<https://gedenkbuch-augsburg.de/>) into English. They are looking for individuals, who can write in English (ideally as their first language) and can read German. It's a great opportunity to provide an important service to ensure the victims are not forgotten.

If you or someone you know would like additional information, please contact, Nikolaus Hueck at [nikolaus@hueck-augsburg.de](mailto:nikolaus@hueck-augsburg.de). Thank you.



## Family Spotlight

The **Family Spotlight** is a regularly featured column in our newsletter. This is a place where you can help us get to know your family and its history by sharing stories that focus on an event, a family heirloom, your family's contributions to Augsburg, etc. Please include photos (.jpgs please) and contact information with your submission. Thank you!

### Memorial Band (*Erinnerungsband*) for Martin, Clara, and Erwin Cramer

Written by Martin Tom Cramer who resides in New York City.  
Submitted by Claire Cramer Jebesen (twin sister of Martin Tom Cramer) who resides in Norway. They are the grandchildren of Martin and Clara Cramer.

The following was read in German at the installation ceremony on January 17, 2020:

We remember today the Cramer family who lived here at Prinzregentenstrasse 9 until 1942:

**Martin Cramer** was born on August 8, 1880, in Speyer, Germany. He moved to Augsburg in the early 20th century. He was a business man, but not very successful. He owned a cigar shop and worked temporarily for a detective agency. But Martin was most interested in music (He played the cello.) and literature. He loved the German language and often wrote poems for all kind of occasions. He had an important role in Augsburg's cultural life. He founded the "Literarische Gesellschaft" together with Bertold Brecht.

**Clara Cramer** (née Berberich) was born August 26, 1886, in Augsburg. She attended high school at the "Maria Theresia Gymnasium" and married Martin Cramer in 1911. Martin and Clara Cramer had three children: Ernst (born 1913), Helene (born 1916), and Erwin (born 1921). Helene emigrated to the United States in 1938. Ernst was a prisoner at Buchenwald concentration camp for a short while. In 1939, he was able to emigrate to the United States.

**Erwin Cramer** stayed in Augsburg with his parents.

After Kristallnacht in 1938, Martin Cramer was arrested by the National Socialists. His library was ravaged. They also smashed Clara's precious china collection and Martin's cello. Martin was released after eight weeks in Dachau and returned to his family. For too long, Martin believed that there would be an, albeit limited, possibility of life for Jews in Germany, even under the National Socialists.

In April 1942, Clara, Martin, and Erwin were picked up by the Nazis in their apartment. They were deported to Poland (Piaski) and murdered. No details are known.

Martin left behind a piece of paper with a poem:

*The song is over  
Although you can still hear  
Some quiet melodies.  
However, it's over. THE SONG IS OVER.*



The poem was found by their cook Clothilde, who worked for the Cramers until the end. The last words she heard from Erwin from the stairwell were "Clothilde, bete für uns" (pray for us). She stayed alone back at the apartment.

Martin and Clara were our grandparents. Erwin was our uncle. We never got to know them.

The city of Augsburg helped us by setting up the memorial band outside their last residence in Augsburg. We want to keep their memory alive. ☘



Martin Tom Cramer and Claire Cramer Jebesen outside their former family residence in Augsburg

### Installation of a Stele Commemorating the Kahn & Arnold Textile Firm

By Lawrence Kahn, a great grandson of Aron Kahn, who resides in New York City.

Aron Kahn and Albert Arnold began a textile business in 1869 that grew into one of the most prominent textile firms in southern Germany. More than a hundred and fifty years later, and long after Spinnerei und Weberei am Sparrenlech, Kahn & Arnold was "aryanized" under the National Socialist regime, Augsburg officially recognized the contributions of the firm by the installation of an informational stele (monument) steps away from the former site of the factory. A group of about 25 people attended a very moving ceremony on February 19, 2020, held to mark the occasion.

Following the founding of the wholesale textile company, Kahn & Arnold flourished to the point that it was able to acquire a weaving factory in 1886, construct a spinning factory in 1899, and expand to Berlin in the early twentieth century. Two of Aron's sons, Alfred and Bertold, and two of Albert's sons, Benno and Arthur, took over management of the firm and it continued to prosper. In 1923, Kahn & Arnold rescued another textile firm, Neue Augsburger Kattunfabrik (NAK), from



Continued on Page 13





## Family Spotlight

*Kahn & Arnold Stele, Continued from Page 12*

financial ruin and became its major shareholder in exchange for its financial assistance. In 1938, however, Kahn & Arnold, and its interest in NAK, were confiscated in the guise of a "voluntary" sale to the NAK.

Several officials and others spoke at the installation of the Kahn & Arnold stele at the Schwibbogenplatz-Platz, near the site of the firm's former factory. Wolfgang Poeppel, a history teacher at the Rudolf-Diesel-Gymnasium, the historian Gerhard Fürmetz, Elisabeth Kahn (the moving force, along with others, in generating the revival of the Kahn & Arnold story), and I were among the speakers.

Immediately before that ceremony, the group gathered at the City Gallery, a large shopping mall, for the installation of a stele for NAK. That firm, which dated back to the 18th century, was forced to close in 1996 due to the decline of the textile industry.

Thomas Weitzel, then Augsburg's Cultural Affairs Director, and the historian Dr. Karl B. Murr, Director of the State Textile and Industry Museum (TIM) — which held an exhibition in 2017-18 entitled Kahn & Arnold, Rise, Persecution and Emigration of two entrepreneurial Families in the 20th century — spoke at the NAK installation.

The speakers at the two ceremonies discussed the history of the firms, their "aryanization," the process that led to Augsburg's decision to install the stelae, and the relevance of what happened in the 1930s to events of the present day.

The two stelae were the first to be installed on Augsburg's Textile Path, which

commemorates the City's former textile industry. Augsburg's decision to install the Kahn & Arnold stele came after a concerted effort for such recognition and knowledge about the history of the firm generated by the exhibition at the TIM and a theatre production in 2017 of *The Broken Chalice*. Persecuted. Bereft. Forgotten.

The *Broken Chalice*, performed by students, brings to life much of the history represented by the newly installed stelae. The play focuses on the "aryanization" of Kahn & Arnold, is based on historical documents and articles of the local press from the 1930s, and includes film footage of Augsburg under the National Socialist regime. It was revived this year for five performances in mid-February to accompany an exhibition at the TIM, *City Without Jews Foreigners Muslims Refugees*. We attended the last performance of the play on the day of the installation.

I think it fair to say that those attending the installation felt it represented a welcome, if long overdue, recognition of Kahn & Arnold, an important firm in Germany's textile industry that until very recently had disappeared from public consciousness. ❧



*Karl B. Murr, Director of the TIM and Thomas Weitzel, then Cultural Affairs Director of Augsburg at the stele installation.*

## Reunion of Augsburg Relatives: Neuburger Family

*By Janice Balin (née Buff), who is the daughter of Lotte Buff and resides in Rockville, MD*

Daniela Tinzmann (née Neuburger) and her teenage children Anabel (19) and Fabian (15) travelled from Augsburg to the Washington, D. C. area in late October 2019 to connect with distant relatives who they had never met. Unfortunately, her husband Wolfgang was unable to accompany them due to work responsibilities. My husband and I welcomed them into our home as guests and played tour guides in D.C. for six days.

Daniela is the daughter of Lothar and Herta Neuburger. She was born and raised in Augsburg to parents of the Protestant faith. Daniela's grandfather had married a non-Jewish woman in 1931. At this point in her life, Daniela has an interest in learning about her family roots and her Jewish ancestors. She had visited New York City on previous trips to America and connected with my parents (my mother, Lotte Buff, is her grandfather's cousin) on several occasions. She had a keen interest in meeting the next generation and to visit Lotte in her new home in Rockville, Maryland. This trip was highly anticipated because she was anxious to see Lotte (who was 98 at the time) and to meet her children.

The Tinzmann family arrived at Dulles Airport on a Friday evening and the three of them came through customs exhausted but very excited to meet us. They greeted us with "I MAG DI" cookie hearts on a string!!! We immediately fell in love with this family. From the minute we met there wasn't a lull in the conversation. Over the week we discussed religion, politics, family, ethics, education, children, teenagers, and more.

The visit began with a family gathering at our home in Rockville. My cousin Howard Fleischmann, son of Susan Fleischmann (née Neuburger) came from Cleveland. My brother Gary Buff joined us, as did our son Jason Balin and his family. Of course, my mom was thrilled to have so many generations together to meet the cousins from Augsburg.

Daniela and her children came to D.C. with two goals: to spend time with my mom (Lotte Buff) and get to know the next generation, and to see the sights of D.C. Each day they insisted that we committed enough time to visit with my mom. They conversed in both English and German. Daniela and her kids were so



*(L-R) Howard and Barb Fleischmann, Janice Balin, Lotte Buff, Daniela, Fabian & Anabel Tinzmann*

*Continued on Page 14*



## Family Spotlight

impressed with her memory of her childhood life in Augsburg. Although my mom has only been back to Germany once since 1939, she

remembered so much of her life growing up in Augsburg.

Anabel and Fabian had a list of D.C. sights that they wanted to see. We started our days early, hoping to check off everything on the list. One day, we walked to all the monuments, including a ride to the top of the Washington Monument. Another day, we ventured into a few museums including a few hours at the U.S.

Holocaust Museum, which brought tears to their eyes. The third day, we had a tour of the Capitol Building and the Library of Congress. Of course, no visit to America is complete without some shopping, especially since the Washington Nationals won the World Series while they were visiting, meaning that Fabian had to take a commemorative t-shirt home.

We tried to give them a true American gastronomic experience. Meals included "deli" sandwiches from a Jewish style deli and local chains for lunch in D.C. Home cooked meals did not include wurst and sauerkraut on our menu! I made Kase Spatzen for dinner the last night that they were visiting. It is a favorite of my mom's and my children's. They were very surprised at my culinary skills!



The Tinzmann kids



Bob & Janice Balin (on right) with Daniela, Fabian & Anabel Tinzmann outside the U.S. Capitol.

My husband and I were so impressed with Daniela's teenage children who not only spoke English almost as well as our own children but were as excited about their family roots as their mom was. They loved the sights in D.C. and look forward to spending more time in America in the future. We feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity to meet our distant relatives and share with them our city. My husband and I are planning a

reciprocal trip to Augsburg once

it is safe to travel abroad again. We look forward to visiting Augsburg, Munich, and other sights in the Bavarian countryside.✿

## Inspiration from Kriegshaber Torah Ornaments

By Helen Einstein, wife of Jeffrey Einstein, son of Sigmund Einstein of Kriegshaber. Jeff and Helen live in Sydney, Australia.

In 2017, our daughter Loren Jaffe had the wonderful privilege to attend the reunion of the Jews of Augsburg organized by JMAS. It was unfortunate that because of ill health we couldn't attend, but the follow on and feedback from Loren, Jeff's sister Louise and her husband Arthur Lipschitz from Israel, cousins Philip and Daphne Kuhn and Siggy and Zelma Meinstein from South Africa, and Loren's dear first cousin Talia Keren (Louise and Arthur's daughter) from Boston has made us feel so much closer to the stories and family traditions that Jeff's dad Sigmund (Siggy) Einstein took with him from Kriegshaber to South Africa.

We have also had the pleasure of making contact with cousins of Siggy Einstein: Diane and Michael Castiglione from the Washington, D. C. area, Chava Sheps from Israel, and the Ansons from Glasgow and Canada.

We have planned a trip to Augsburg this year in October, with Louise and Arthur joining us, but maybe because of COVID-19 we won't be able to travel. We sincerely hope that this trip will take place.

### From South

### Africa to

**Australia:** Our branch of the Einstein family now lives in Sydney. It was a huge decision to leave South Africa, where we grew up in a very closeted Jewish community and, as children, were unaware of the events of apartheid going on around us.



The Einstein Family: Front (L-R): Jeff, Loren's son Dylan and daughter Sienna, Kevin's wife Elea. Back (L-R): Loren, Loren's husband Craig, Helen, Kevin

Now in Sydney we have been blessed with success. Our children, Kevin and Loren, have grown up here and went to a Jewish Day School (Masada College) for their high school years. They have the most wonderful community and Jewish values. Both Kevin and Loren are married to Jewish partners and Loren has two children, Dylan and Sienna, who, we are happy to say, are also now at a wonderful Jewish day school, Mount Sinai College.

Very exciting news is that Kevin and his wife Elea are expecting a new Einstein to add to our precious family tree.

### Pesach traditions imported from Kriegshaber:

Pesach has been another uplifting experience for us in the face of the plague now impacting the whole world. We had Seders in our own three homes, connected with Zoom! Our children and grandchildren had the joy of making their own Seder plates, and Jeff, Craig (Loren's husband), and Kevin were the heads of the table in their

Continued on Page 15



*Inspiration from Kriegshaber, Continued from Page 14*

own homes – together but apart, connected by the most fantastic technology, but socially distanced.

Regarding the past from Germany and our connections to the traditions in today's world, especially here in secular Australia, we have talked about our late father Siggy many times this Pesach. He loved the food and treats that he remembered from his childhood in Kriegshaber, especially the Pesach food! Jeff and his family in Ficksburg, South Africa enjoyed the "pampoeshka" (<https://www.seriousseats.com/2019/04/how-to-make-matzo-pancakes.html>), "matza coffe" (<https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/the-best-passover-snack-youve-never-heard-of>), and the delicious carbohydrate filled Seder meals. Siggy was the one in the family who steered the family rituals, traditions, and food. Now Jeff and Louise also make the lovingly remembered recipes.

**Inspiration from Kriegshaber Torah ornaments:** Jeff Einstein became a manufacturing jeweler when he had completed his compulsory military training in South Africa. He was introduced to the trade by his mother Phyllis' brother, Wally Kofsky.

The year was 1971, 50 years ago next year!!!

Unfortunately, Uncle Wally died suddenly. Jeff was lucky to find an apprenticeship with an outstanding master jeweler who had emigrated from Germany. There were quite a few very talented Germans in the jewelry industry in South Africa at that time.

Jeff is passionate about every aspect of this inspiring business and it was wonderful for Jeff to see the beautiful craftsmanship in the silver Torah breast plate, bells, and pointer which he has inherited from the Einstein family. This silver was used in the synagogue in Kriegshaber and when Jeff's father Siggy lived in Ficksburg, a small country town in South Africa, the silver was used in the shul there.

This same silver was once again used just over two years ago when our son Kevin was called to the Torah for his *Aufruf* on the Shabbat before his



(L-R) Elea, Kevin and Jeff at the *Aufruf*

marriage to Elea Neuman. This was at the shul within the school grounds of Masada College, on Sydney's north shore, where both Kevin and Loren went to high school. Now we are awaiting the arrival of Baby Einstein in early July; another Einstein! This is truly a victory for the descendants of Augsburg and all Jews.❧

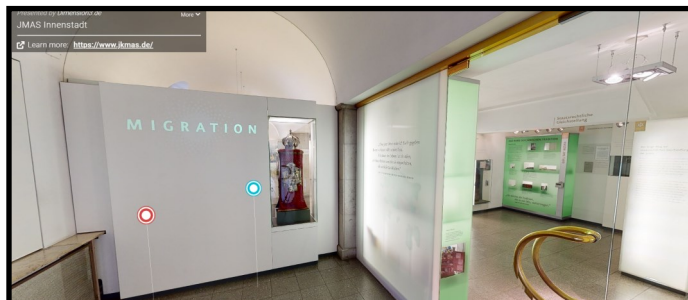


Photos: JMAS/Richard Weinstein.



## Virtual Tours of the JMAS Now Available

We were excited to learn that virtual tours of these two incredible museums are now available for anyone in the world to do online!



**Main museum:** <https://dimension3.cloud/jmas-innenstadt>

**Kriegshaber:** <https://dimension3.cloud/jmas>

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, beginning on May 17, which was International Museum Day, JMAS has made their permanent exhibition in the synagogue in Augsburg's city center and the former Kriegshaber synagogue available as a 3D tour online. You can virtually move through the locations and learn a lot about Jewish history in Augsburg and Bavarian Swabia from the Middle Ages to the present day.

The Jewish Museum Augsburg Swabia was established in 1985 in the west wing of the Augsburg synagogue. It is the first Jewish Museum in the Federal Republic funded by a foundation, and it provides historical evidence of Bavarian Swabian Jewish history. It is a place where aspects of migration, integration, home and culture are discussed, and the fact that cultural diversity is neither a threat nor an enrichment, but normalcy is clearly presented.

JMAS' permanent exhibition is located in the Halderstrasse synagogue building in the city center. A tour of the exhibition also includes a look at the magnificent synagogue, inaugurated in 1917, which is used by the Jewish community.

There is an additional location in the former Synagogue Kriegshaber, which is the oldest surviving synagogue in Bavarian Swabia. This location was opened in 2014 and shows in a very special way that the Jewish history of Augsburg cannot be told without that of the rural communities in Swabia. The former synagogue now also contains exhibition space.

We, together with JMAS, wish you many exciting discoveries as you virtually tour these magnificent exhibits!❧

# Recipe Corner

## Semmelknödel (Bavarian Bread Dumplings)

Submitted by Claire Jebesen, who lives in Norway and is the daughter of Ernst Cramer.

"Semmelknödel" is actually one of the many German words that is made from two words: Semmel and Knödel. The name derives from southern Germany, where Semmel means bread rolls and Knödel refers to something that has been kneaded. The "ö" is kind of pronounced like the beginning in the word "early" and the "k" before the "n" is not silent.

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cook time: Approximately 20 minutes

Makes: 6-8 dumplings

### Ingredients

- 8 hard rolls (let them sit out a day or so until hard) [*Hint: you can also use unseasoned stuffing cubes. Just let them sit out for a day to make sure they're dried out.*]

**NOTE on the bread:** you should use a good bread that has some firmness like baguettes, Kaiser rolls or German brötchen. Soft white sandwich bread or breadcrumbs will fall apart when cooking!

- 1/2 pint milk
- 4 eggs
- Chopped onions
- Parsley
- Pinch of salt
- *Optional:* pepper to taste
- Some breadcrumbs

### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 325°F/160°C. Cut rolls into fine slices and dice into small cubes. Lay out the bread pieces on a baking tray or sheet and bake for 8-10 minutes or until slightly dry. If it's still moist, you can dry it out in the oven.
  - Heat the milk, but do not boil.
  - Pour hot milk over bread, cover, and let sit for 30 to 45 minutes.
  - Heat butter in a frying pan and cook the onions until transparent; do not brown.
  - Add the cooked onions to the bread mixture along with the eggs, parsley, salt, and (*optional*) pepper.
  - Knead the mixture together with your hands until thoroughly combined. If dough is too wet, add breadcrumbs.
  - Wet your hands with cold water to prevent the dough from sticking, and form Knödel about the size of a tennis ball. Press together so they are compact.
  - Bring an 8-qt. saucepan of lightly salted water to a boil over high heat.
  - Carefully drop the *Semmelknödel* in the water and let them simmer for 15-20 minutes. Work in batches if necessary.
- NOTE:** Water should not boil!
- Carefully lift them out with a slotted spoon.
  - Drain briefly on paper towels.
  - Transfer to a serving platter; sprinkle with fresh parsley.

**Serving Suggestions:** Serve along side sauerkraut & pork, roast meats with the gravy, stews or some kind of sauce. These dumplings are great for sopping up the rich pork gravy from a braised roast.



PLEASE SEND  
YOUR FAMILY RECIPES TO  
[djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com)  
THANK YOU!





## In Memoriam

Please let us know if a former member of the Jewish community of Augsburg passes away. Please send an article and a photo to [djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com). Thank you.

### In Memory of Liese B. Fischer (née Einstein)

*Submitted by Diane Fischer Castiglione, her daughter*

My mother, Liese Babette Fischer (née Einstein), passed away on December 18, 2019 at age 94. Born in Kriegshaber in 1925, she grew up in the large Einstein family which was active not only in the Jewish community (Her family essentially ran the Kriegshaber synagogue.) but also in civic and professional associations in the community more generally. As was true for so many of the Jewish residents of Augsburg, my mother enjoyed a very normal childhood until the Nazi regime began to impose restrictions on Jews in Germany.

After the events of Kristallnacht in November 1938, her parents decided to send her and her older brother, Siegbert, on the Kindertransport to England. They left Germany on July 25, 1939 and were assigned to a home for refugee boys in Westgate-on-Sea, Kent. Their time there was difficult. They both attended school



*Liese and Siegbert Einstein, 1936*

and my mother worked as a maid. Sadly, only seven months after their arrival, Siegbert died of a rheumatic heart on my mother's 15<sup>th</sup> birthday. She had to notify her parents, who were still in Kriegshaber. Her cousin Hilde Einstein, who had emigrated to Manchester to work as a housekeeper, arranged for my mother to live with her. My mother worked as a domestic until 1943 when she began nurses' training. She worked in Booth Hall Hospital for Sick Children in Manchester as a sick children's nurse until she emigrated to the United States in June 1947. Her parents, along with eight aunts and uncles, died in the Auschwitz and Piaski concentration camps.

In the United States, my mother received certification as a registered nurse and worked as an obstetrics nurse at Beth Israel Hospital in New York City. She married another German Jewish refugee in 1954 and they had two children. Resuming her nursing career after raising her family, she worked in a Nassau County public health clinic until her retirement in 1997. After both my father and brother passed away, my mother moved to Maryland in 2009 to live near me and my son. She continued to do volunteer work, including giving talks about her experiences and her family's history, until her death.

My mother had always said that she never wanted to return to Germany. However, in 1985, the opportunity to reunite with many of her cousins for the rededication of



*Liese Fischer with students from the Stettensches Institute at the Lebenslinien program, November 2012.*

the synagogue in Augsburg proved to be too tempting. My brother and I joined her for that memorable trip, which became the first of several that she made to Augsburg. That first trip seemed to unlock something in her. I think she began to understand her unique role as a witness to, and survivor of, the Holocaust. She slowly started to speak about her experiences and eventually began a relationship with the Jewish Museum in Augsburg, resulting in her participation in November 2012 in the museum's *Lebenslinien* (Lifelines) program. During that trip, we were privileged to visit the Kriegshaber synagogue where renovations had just started. It was incredibly moving to listen to my mother describe the synagogue, pointing to where she had sat with her mother. She wasn't able to attend the 2017 Descendants Reunion but reveled in the fact that 23 Einstein family members gathered there, evidence that her parents' and uncles' appeals to their children to always stay in touch with each other had borne fruit. She was delighted at the creation of this newsletter; I am grateful that I was able to read the December issue to her while she was in the hospital.

Of all the groups to whom she spoke, she felt the most important were student groups. She wanted to be sure that younger generations understood that the Holocaust was not just an abstract event in a history book but something that had happened to real people. Not surprisingly, she typically closed her remarks by imploring the students to learn about their own families' stories and to ask questions while they can.

Coping with some of the most horrific events of the 20th century, my mother could have become embittered and cynical. Instead, she emerged a strong, resilient woman with a keen sense of morality, ethics, and generosity of spirit. This is her legacy to me, my son, our extended family, and the countless others with whom she shared her story. ☸



### We welcome your feedback!

Please send your comments, suggestions or corrections to the editor at [djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com). We may not be able to print all of them, but we will certainly try. We will definitely respond to you. **Thank you!**



There is no Food for Thought column in this issue. If you have an idea for a future “**Food for Thought**” topic, please email it to us at

[djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com).

Everyone’s input matters! Please let us know what you’d like to discuss. **THANK YOU!**



## Letters

**In response to the December 2019 article by Sheela Saneinejad, who shared the story of her trip to Augsburg with her grandfather, a former Augsburg resident, Peter Kraus, who is from Dallas, TX wrote:**

Dear Descendants of the Jewish Community of Augsburg:

My father was born in 1922 to a Catholic father and Jewish mom (Frieda Heymann) and was raised Catholic until the Nazis termed him a Jew. He applied and was accepted to Harvard in 1938 but could not get out of Germany before the war.

He instead started at the University in Munich, was drafted into the German army in 1942, but was thrown out after boot camp because he was Jewish, and then worked for a while in Augsburg. His mother was taken and sent to Theresienstadt in 1942 and my father was sent to a slave labor camp in Jena in northeast Germany in 1943, working in a factory as a slave laborer for Zeiss Optical. The plant they were working in was bombed and destroyed in the spring of 1945. He survived the bombing and escaped when the German guards abandoned the camp when the advancing Russians drew near.

He returned to Augsburg via train and hid out the last six weeks of the war until Germany surrendered. His older brother Max Kraus had emigrated to the United States in 1936, and fought for the U.S. Army, and reunited my father’s family, liberating his mother from Theresienstadt. My father, his mother, and sister emigrated to the United States in 1947. Harvard honored his 1938 acceptance and he went on to graduate from medical school there, and became a cardiologist. He met my mother as a doctor in the U.S. army in the mid 1950s, and ultimately took a position in Dallas where he raised his family. He passed away in 1994.

I am always interested in speaking with people who may have known my dad. He did not speak often about the war years, or the ugly period of increasing persecution right before the war. I read your father’s (Peter was writing to Sheela’s aunt, Rosemary Mark) story and was taken by how close they were in age and experience. Thanks again for reaching out.

Sincerely,  
Peter Kraus

**NEXT  
issue**

**Coming in Winter 2020...**

The theme for the December issue of

**CONNECTIONS** is:

**How has our heritage  
influenced your view of the world?**

How have our families’ experiences shaped our opinions and attitudes about the world in which we live? With so much happening in the world today, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the rise in anti-Semitism, the social unrest in the United States, Brexit, and the resurgence of hate groups throughout Europe, North America, and elsewhere, do you find your parents’ and grandparents’ words echoing in your ears? Do you believe that you are a more engaged citizen as a result of this history?

Please send your submission(s) to us at [djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com) to be received not later than October 15, 2020. **Thank you.** ☿