

# CONNECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DESCENDANTS OF  
THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF AUGSBURG



June 2021

Volume 4, Number 1



## Cherished Memories

The Theme of this issue of **Connections** is **"The Value of Sharing Family Memories and Stories."** We asked you: How do each of you keep the memories of your ancestors alive and pass them on to younger generations? Some of us tell family stories at holiday dinners. Others of us have written books. Some have made presentations in schools or in our respective communities. What is your family's approach? How do you keep these stories an integral part of your family history? Why is passing along these narratives important to you and your family? We are pleased to share your responses.

### "The Threads of Family History"

By Julia Rymer Brucker, who is the granddaughter of Richard Michael Untermayer (later Rymer) and great-granddaughter of Flora and Eugene Untermayer of Augsburg, Germany. She lives in Littleton, Colorado.

I find myself pulling at the threads of our family's story, trying to follow them back to the fabric of our history itself, to its beginning. I piece it together, through anecdotes and recollections told to the spouses and children of the family members that survived. And I go further, into the documents and objects that were smuggled out, telling of a history that climbs back deeper into time than I can comprehend, of a family with roots in Germany as early as the 1700s. And I mourn those who did not survive, the ones whose stories are lost to time.

As a descendent of survivors who escaped Augsburg for the United States in 1938, my ancestors loom large in my imagination. I trace my lineage to them, and their stories have become my stories, a record and an affirmation of who I am now.

Because my grandfather, Richard Michael Untermayer (later Rymer), died before I was born, I do not have any first-



Richard Untermayer Rymer, grandfather of Julia Rymer Brucker, pictured here in his U.S. Army uniform in 1942.

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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.

### Familie-Einstein-Strasse

**Langemarckstrasse in Kriegshaber has been renamed Familie-Einstein-Strasse in honor and memory of the Einstein Family**

By Diane Fischer Castiglione who lives in Gaithersburg, MD and is the daughter of Liese Fischer of the Einstein family of Kriegshaber

On November 18, 2020, I received an email from Mr. Thomas Weitzel in the office of the mayor of Augsburg that nearly knocked me off my chair. In it, he explained that the city would like to rename a street in Kriegshaber after my mother's family. This was the culmination of a years-long review of street names that have associations with National Socialism that was undertaken by city offices. He asked whether our family would agree to this proposal. It took me the better part of the day to digest all of the information he shared with me.

The process he described is similar to what is currently occurring in the United States with respect to street and place names that are associated with the Confederacy and with known racists and segregationists. In 2014, the Augsburg city council established a commission to review street names associated with National Socialism. They considered seven street names to be especially problematic, including Langemarckstrasse in Kriegshaber.

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

is published by the 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.jmaugsburg.de](http://www.jmaugsburg.de)  
and on Facebook at  
([https://www.facebook.com/  
juedischesmuseumaugsbuerg/](https://www.facebook.com/juedischesmuseumaugsbuerg/)).

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## A Message from our Co-Chairpersons

*Written by Diane Castiglione*

"What's new?" This question, said almost  
automatically when we greet each other,  
seemed more than a bit out of place this past  
year when we weren't going anywhere or  
doing much of anything. What could possibly  
be new? Well, we're pleased to say that  
there are some new things happening for  
DJCA!

Earlier this year, we asked you to respond to a survey about **Connections**. While  
your response was modest in terms of numbers (and thank you to those who did  
respond), we did receive some great ideas which we have been discussing. Some of  
these ideas may show up as the theme for a future newsletter. In addition, inspired by  
your thoughts, we are pleased to announce a new feature for the newsletter. "Ask the  
Historian", which debuts on page 11 of this issue, will appear periodically as a way to  
provide greater context to the history of Augsburg's Jewish community. It will focus on  
the 1800s and pre-World War II years. We will be working with the professional staff of  
the Jewish Museum Augsburg Swabia to respond to your questions so please feel  
free to submit them to us at any time at [djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com).

After attending any number of film screenings, webinars, and similar programs  
online over the last year, we began to wonder whether we could offer something  
similar to the DJCA community. The perfect opportunity arose with the release of the  
English language version of Miriam Friedmann's documentary, **Die Stille Schreit /  
It Was All Legal**. Approximately 31 people joined us on April 18 for a discussion with  
Miriam. Miriam shared her thoughts about her family's story and the role her film can  
play in furthering discussions about the Holocaust, racism, and antisemitism. While  
the film focuses on two families, it really tells the story of so many of us. We were glad  
to share this experience with you and hope to host similar events in the future.

So, what's new with you? We love to hear from you – whether you're shooting us a  
quick email or submitting an article for **Connections**. If you have a question,  
comment, or suggestion, please don't wait for us to send a survey to share your  
thoughts! ❧



*L-R: Diane Castiglione and Bettina Kaplan*

## From the Editor

**Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue!** The  
theme of **The Value of Sharing Family Memories and Stories**  
brought us many interesting and varied responses. Clearly, many  
of us feel it's important to keep the memories of our ancestors  
alive and to pass them on to future generations.

**We invite you to contribute to our December issue with  
the theme of *What experiences have you had or connections  
have you made by visiting Augsburg?* Please see Page 17  
for more information about the upcoming theme.**

Speaking of connecting the past to the future, at this particular juncture, I feel  
compelled to say something about the rise in antisemitism throughout the world. I  
have, for more than a few years now, felt the dread that our ancestors must have felt  
in the early 1930s in Germany. At first, I felt it might only be in America, but sadly, we  
now realize that it is on the rise in many other countries as well. It's the proverbial  
"elephant in the room," and I believe that we, of all people, who are the descendants  
of Nazi persecution, should be speaking out.

Last issue I left you with a quote from Deuteronomy 22:3: "**lo tukchal le'hitaleim**" -  
"**you must not remain indifferent.**" Reading this issue, and every single day, Martin  
Niemöller's quote is ringing in my ear. "**First they came for the socialists, and I did  
not speak out—because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade  
unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist. Then  
they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew.  
Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.**"

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



*Deborah Sturm Rausch*



## Letter from JMAS Director Staudinger

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

A year ago we thought that this Spring would be different from the last, but we were sadly mistaken. The Corona crisis continues to have a firm grip on Europe and Germany. The Jewish Museum was only able to open for two weeks before a new lockdown forced us to close our doors again. A grand opening of our new exhibition "Shalom Sisters\*! Jewish-feminist positions" was out of the question. We have therefore extended the exhibition until the end of October, so that there will still be enough time to visit all parts of the exhibition.

In the former Synagogue Kriegshaber we show artistic interpretations by Tamar Paley, Nina Paley, Ruth Schreiber, Andi Arnovitz and Julie Weitz, who deal with Jewish tradition and religious inequality, the splitting of tasks and the boundaries between men and women, as well as male and female stereotypes. At the State Textile and Industrial Museum (tim), Jewish women's rights activists and writers, social revolutionaries and gender theorists, sex therapists and designers, libbers and superheroes, wander through the permanent exhibition. In audio terminals and through artifacts, they comment on the exhibition and pose questions about working conditions, social balance, breeding, and obscenity from a Jewish perspective. In the display of the photo store Tezel in Ludwigstraße, the beginnings of the feminist movement in Augsburg are commemorated. At the end of the 19th century, the branch of the famous Munich photo studio "Atelier Elvira," founded by Anita Augspurg and Sophia Goudstikker, was located in that very place. Both women were to become key figures in the struggle for women's suffrage. The Augsburg artist Lisa Frühbeis has designed a streetcar with a women's demonstration that traveled through Augsburg from March to May. It is meant to remind us that women's rights have always had to be fought for in the streets - and it asks us what it is worth demonstrating for in the future. Because Jewish feminism - from orthodox to liberal - fights for a better, more equal world.

I'd like to welcome you to follow the exhibition via our newsletter, Facebook, Instagram, our museum blog, on our homepage, or our videos on our YouTube channel. Our new homepage has not only received good reviews, but was also recently recognized at the Indigo Design Awards. We are very excited about this recognition of our work!

Now we hope to reopen the museum soon - we have a lot of plans for this year, in celebration of 1700 years of Jewish life in Germany!

Yours,  
Barbara Staudinger

**Editor's Note:** As of this publication, the museum has reopened.



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## 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 Magdalena Paschke

**Introduction:** I am Magdalena Paschke. I was born in Nuremberg. At the neighboring Erlangen University, I studied history and German language and literature. My subjects of special interest were recent East European history, research on the Holocaust and anti-Semitism, modern German literature, German exile-literature, language abuse by the Nazis and the right-wing ecological movement in Bavaria. During my studies, I did an internship at the Fritz Bauer Institute in Frankfurt am Main and, after graduation, a traineeship at the Augsburg Jewish Museum. In 2020 I joined the Museum as part of the scientific staff, responsible for provenance research.



**What is your role at the museum?** "Provenance research" deals with investigating the origin of the exhibits the museum owns or is about to acquire. This concerns the questions: is it authentic and has it been rightfully handed down? In addition, I do guided tours of the museum and I conduct seminars at Augsburg University.

**What do you like best about your work?** I am fascinated by immersing myself in history. Provenance research is like reading a thriller: one new piece of the puzzle can change everything.

**How did you get interested in German Jewish history?** My father teaches history at the high school level. He has organized field trips to Auschwitz for his students. I was 14 when I went there the first time myself. Later, we managed the excursions together and, for that purpose, I even learned to speak Polish.

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

We have to be visible, we have to keep the discussion going, and we have to show that National Socialism did not manage to exterminate everything.

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

I am commuting from Nuremberg to Augsburg every day (90 miles one way) which is time consuming. I am politically active and I offer tutoring for students. All this does not leave me a lot of time for hobbies.

**What is your favorite food?** I love "fërgës" which is an Albanian stew with tomatoes and sheep cheese. (My husband has Albanian roots.)

**What is your favorite travel destination?** I am scared of flying, especially long-haul. So, I prefer European destinations, like Poland, France, or Albania. Since I speak many languages, it often feels like coming home.

**What superpower would you like to have?** Being a historian, I would love to be able to travel through time. ☞

The name of the street refers to a battle (also known as the Battle of Ypres) that took place near Langemarck, Belgium during World War I between hastily formed German reserve units and British and French forces. The German attack was not successful and they suffered heavy losses. However, misleading reports exaggerated the performance of the German troops and led to the creation of the “Langemarck myth” which portrays the battle as a symbolic victory and an example of German patriotism, heroism, and sacrifice, especially by German youth. The National Socialists built upon this myth and made it an important part of their propaganda efforts, building monuments to the battle and renaming many places after it, including renaming Habsburgerstrasse in Kriegshaber in 1939.

Because of this history, and because the name continues to resonate with right wing groups, the Augsburg City Council voted in April 2020 to rename the street. At this point, the City administration was asked to propose a new name. Mr. Weitzel thought it would be appropriate to choose a name that honored the former Jewish community of Kriegshaber. Drawing upon resources developed by the Jewish Museum Augsburg Swabia, he researched ideas, ultimately proposing that the street be named “Familie-Einstein-Strasse” in honor of the Einstein family and its contributions to both the religious and civic life of Kriegshaber.

The City Council approved the new name in February 2021. A public ceremony to officially rename the street



The extended Einstein family in Kriegshaber in 1919.

was scheduled for May 22, 2021 but, due to the Covid situation, could not take place as planned. Instead, Mayor Eva Weber delivered remarks as the new sign was unveiled. Her remarks, along with a video about the Einstein family done by Monika Müller of the Jewish Museum Augsburg Swabia, can be found at [www.augsburg.de/familie-einstein-strasse](https://www.augsburg.de/familie-einstein-strasse).

This proposal overwhelmed all of us in the Einstein family, generating a very emotional response from many of us. I don't think any of us would have ever imagined that our family would be honored in such a way. In fact, I understand that there are very few streets named for an entire family in all of Germany. Of those few that exist, most are similarly named in honor of a family who was a victim of the National Socialism period.

I've given a lot of thought to how my mother would feel about this. To say that she would be stunned would be an understatement! While she might have been

a bit embarrassed at its high profile, I do think the historical significance of this change would be very meaningful to her. I also think she would be pleased to see a name associated with falsehoods and hate replaced by one that represents the values of family, faith, and community. I hope that this is what the street will now represent to the people of Augsburg.

**Postscript:** Approximately one week before the official unveiling of the name, an act of vandalism damaged the sign which had already been put in place. It was distressing that this happened but does not detract from the City's commitment to remembrance. In fact, it was reassuring to me that the dedication took place as scheduled, and that the act was immediately condemned by the City of Augsburg. My cousin Louise Einstein Lipschitz captured my feelings perfectly. She posted on the JMAS Facebook page, “I have tears in my eyes but . . . I am so proud to be an Einstein.”

**Editor's Note:** A press release about the renaming ceremony can be found at

<https://www.augsburg.de/aktuelles-aus-der-stadt/detail/neuer-name-familie-einstein-strasse>. The

article covering the damage to the street sign can be found at

<https://www.br.de/nachrichten/bayern/strassenschild-demoliert-uedisches-leben-in-augsburg-verletzt,SXlv7xR> ❧



JÜDISCHES  
MUSEUM  
AUGSBURG  
SCHWABEN

### JMAS Monthly Newsletter in English

Did you know that JMAS' monthly newsletter is available in English? To subscribe to the Jewish Museum Augsburg Swabia (JMAS) newsletter, please send an email to [office@jmaugsburg.de](mailto:office@jmaugsburg.de) and indicate whether you would like to receive the newsletter in English or German.



hand accounts. Though my grandfather was a prolific letter-writer and photographer, we have little from his life prior to 1938. However, we have the accounts of his life in Germany as told to my grandmother and his wife, Claire Prager Rymer, and my father and two aunts throughout their childhoods.

The most legendary of the stories - the one that has touched me most - features my great-



Full view plus detail of "Counting the Omer/Counting the Quarantine," a mixed media fiber art piece by Julia Rymer Brucker. The detail shows a section with a silver spoon sewn into a handkerchief, a reference to the artist's great-grandmother, Flora Untermayer.

grandmother, Flora Untermayer, who, knowing the family would

need money when they arrived in the United States, together with fellow seamstresses, sewed silver cutlery into the hem of her skirt so that she could smuggle items of value out of Germany.

In recent years, I have tried to make the stories tangible, physical, material, so that they be something more than simply words told like a game of Telephone down the generations. I include references to family stories in my artwork, or scan

family records, documents and photographs, uploading them to "the cloud," trying to keep them from disappearing.

Why do we keep the stories, telling and re-telling them time and time again, sharing them with children, grandchildren, or, frankly, anyone who will ask? I think it is because the stories tell us of our legacy, our history. They are who we were and who we now are. We were not one of the six million - we survived - but the threads to our lives in Germany were cut, and we now trace them back to know who we once were.

And who are we now? We are survivors. I think of the strength of my grandfather, great aunts, and great-grandparents, and cannot be anything but in awe of them. ☿

## In Search of Lost Time

By Michael Bernheim. Michael lives in Augsburg.

I don't remember exactly when the idea arose to translate the biographies of Jewish Nazi victims filed in Augsburg's online Remembrance Book ([www.gedenkbuch-augsburg.de](http://www.gedenkbuch-augsburg.de)) into English. The purpose, though, seemed evident: to make them available to the descendants of the former Augsburg families who are spread all over the world.

When the Remembrance Workshop started the project, I volunteered as one of the translators. My intention was, first of all, to provide a service to the descendants' community and, as a side effect, I was hoping the translations would help keep my English alive after my retirement.



Richard Untermayer Rymer and Claire Prager Rymer, grandparents of Julia Rymer Brucker, pictured here at their engagement in 1949

But when I started with two biographies of members of the Kriegshaber Einstein family, I soon realized that there was a lot more value in doing this. Until then, I must admit, I had had very limited knowledge of the former Jewish families who had lived in Augsburg, apart from my own roots, of course, and the Friedmann and Oberdorfer families, based on Miriam Friedmann's research.

But now, the life and the fate of the Einsteins started taking shape before my eyes. When you seriously translate a text, you are forced to read it very carefully in order to understand its meaning and the author's intent. ("Nobody reads more attentively than the translator", I recently read in a book on translation.) You cannot skip or neglect anything, no matter how sad or cruel it may be. And you have to find adequate words in the target language which as authentically as possible express the meaning of the original text.

All this makes the content of the text, or, better, the story behind it, unforgettable to the translator. And it generates the wish to learn more, e.g., in this case, to visit the locations in Kriegshaber where the family had lived.

Cilli Hermann (née Stern), her husband Josef, and her daughters Margot and Trude, the next group of biographies assigned to me, lived right in my neighborhood, a three minutes' walk from my apartment. Also, the homes of Cilli's brothers Max and Isaak / Justin were a similar distance in different directions. In addition, the "Jews' house", into which Cilli and her family had to move after being forced to abandon their home, was located in the same quarter. All this I learned from reading their biographies. And seeing and writing down again, single word by single word, how this amiable family was socially, financially, and, finally, physically strangled - and all of this happening "right next to me" - was hard to bear. There was one point when I had to stop working on the translation and continue the next day. And I left my study to deliberately look at those addresses which I had walked by a thousand times before. The houses look more or less the same as they did a hundred years ago. This added strongly to the insight that what happened between 1933 and 1945 is not "history" in the sense that it is locked up in archives, but that it is still among us. It must make us vigilant and must influence our thinking and the way we look at and treat our fellow citizens, especially the disadvantaged.

This deep experience increased even more my respect for those who have searched the archives and written the biographies of Nazi victims - members of the Remembrance Workshop, high school teachers, and a significant number of high school students - a tribute to those who have perished and a warning for future generations. ☿



## Keeping stories

*By Miriam Landor, the granddaughter of Richard Landauer, who was born in Augsburg. Miriam lives in Orkney, Scotland.*

Fritz Landauer, the architect of the Augsburg Synagogue, was born in Augsburg on June 13, 1883. He is labelled as O2 on the Moses Samuel Landauer family tree. My paternal grandfather, Richard Landauer, was born on February 13, 1882, also in Augsburg. He is H3, Fritz's first cousin. I know this because my mother, Margaret, was our family's keeper and teller of our German heritage. As children we were told about the family's flight from Munich to London in 1938, and what happened to those left behind. After her death, we found the



Landauer cousins - (L-R) Richard (Miriam's grandfather), Otto, Fritz, and Ernst, 1896



Robert Landor and Margaret Kirkland's wedding photo, 1949

carefully boxed family tree. And yet Margaret Kirkland was a Landauer only by marriage. Her upbringing was very different from my father Robert's, the third child of a Munich art-book publisher. She was the only child of a small-town grocery shop assistant, and the first of her family to have a higher education. My parents met at a classical music concert. She was then at Leicester Training College for Teachers and he was on National Service at nearby Scraftoft PoW camp. My maternal grandfather had

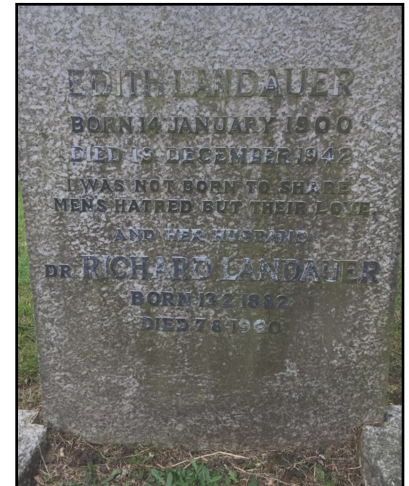
served the United Kingdom as a groom in the First World War. Richard, on the opposite side, served Germany as an officer and was decorated for valour. The first time my grandfathers met was at my parents' Quaker wedding.

Margaret found the Landauer family very romantic. Some of Robert's letters include hand-made cards for her, with quotations from Goethe and Schiller. He wrote to his brother in 1947, following a weekend stay with her parents: "If Mrs. Kirkland was rather surprised when I was up an hour before our prearranged time, and prepared a "birthday table" in our usual style, Margaret was still more so. Kirklands have not "celebrated" any birthday, or in fact taken much notice of them, since Margaret was about fourteen. I think that's one of the pleasant things in our family." In the immediate post-war years, my mother embraced my father's manifold relationships, with his siblings, their partners, their, by then, widowed father, and those elderly relatives who had also found refuge in London.

My mother became the custodian of Landauer cultural possessions, those few they had managed to

keep. We grew up alongside the relief bust of great-grandfather Sigmund Landauer, the Rosenthal dinner service, the mantelpiece chiming clock, and our aunt's never-needed trousseau of monogrammed fine linen. Margaret affixed all the Landauer family photos in an album, dating and labelling them as far as she could. I have inherited these artifacts, and I am now becoming the keeper and teller.

I am writing a book, to pass on the family memory. The interest and enthusiasm of my children and their cousins encourages me to believe in its worth. In addition, I am buoyed by the friendship of several Germans, who have filled in many gaps in my knowledge and have welcomed our family into their homes and hearts. The inscription on my grandmother's gravestone speaks for us:



### Edith Landauer 1900–1942

I was not born to share men's hatred but their love. ☸

## Finding The Family's Pandora's Box

*Richard Mayer is a writer and musician living in Monterey, California. He is the nephew of Ludwig Mayer.*

One fine spring afternoon in 1998, we were standing in front of the house where Uncle Ludi had lived from the time he had it built in 1954 until he died there in 1995. My wife, Norma, and I had come to Minneapolis to visit my parents and to take a nostalgic look at the various places and settings that had been the backdrop of my youth.

Down the street was an old coffee-colored shoe box of an apartment building, standing three stories high and so typical of inner-city Minneapolis in those days. This is where the Mayers initially settled in a top-floor suite of rooms when they regrouped after their separate escapes from Nazi Germany starting in 1937 and ending in 1941.

Ludi and his parents continued to live there until he bought an empty lot a block up the hill and commissioned their first American house in 1954 - that blond-bricked ranch house that seemed a bit incongruous among the old stucco behemoths on the curving streets of the hill in front of which we stood.

A year or so after he passed away, my Minneapolis relatives had already given most of Ludi's possessions to a consignment agency and said they had sold Ludi's house to a single fellow. And as we stood there that spring day, yes, there was a solitary man sitting on the long crumbling stairs going up to the front door from the street, a cockatoo perched on his shoulder.

We crossed over and approached him. "Hi, I'm the nephew of the person who used to live in this house, Ludwig Mayer. Are you the new owner?"

The trim man with short blonde hair and dressed in

*Continued on Page 7*



shorts and a t-shirt glanced up at us in that slightly wary way that Minnesotans have and the bird also gave us the eye. "I'm Kerry. And this is Vivian. Would you like to come in and take a look around?"

Later, as we were about to leave, Kerry asked if we would like to see some things in the basement that had been left in the house after the relatives cleaned it out. We were stunned at what we saw: several boxes filled with my grandparents' *Hutschenreuther* wedding china, an old WWI soldier's wooden campaign box belonging to my grandfather Samson Mayer, several more boxes with Ludi's scrapbooks and travelogues from his annual summer trips to Germany, and another box full of what appeared to be manuscripts and correspondence in folders and manila envelopes. When we said that it might be hard to take all of this back to our home in Austin, Texas, Kerry offered to have it shipped to us - which he did in a few weeks, at his own expense.

When I examined the contents of the boxes at home in Austin, I found that the one containing the folders and envelopes was a repository for Ludi's work on his book ***Umkaempfte Erde*** (The Embattled Ground – Jewish Stories and Legends) that he was to eventually first publish in Augsburg in 1985. There were various rough sketches, research notes, and manuscript drafts for the book, as well as letters to various German literary agents and publishers seeking their help. And there was also a folder containing both ends of his correspondence with Gernot Römer, which told an interesting story of their exchanges over a three-year period prior to the book's publication.

It was a long time – years, in fact – before I got around to reading everything contained in that box. What I finally read was fascinating, but also raised more and more questions about the genesis and exodus of the book.

Some years later, Kerry sold the house to a young couple and moved away. Before he left the house for good, he sent me a final box of Ludi's papers that he had recently found in the basement. As if by magic, the rest of the correspondence between Ludi and Gernot all the way to Ludi's last days in 1995 was neatly filed in this box, apart from a few mouse nibbles. It revealed many details of Ludi's struggle to find support for the publication of the book in Augsburg. Specifically, it documented his increasing dissatisfaction with the woman Gernot had hired to publicize and distribute that initial edition, eventually becoming open warfare with her and even going to court over it in Augsburg. Ludi's crotchety side was definitely on display here and this probably weighed on his relationship with Gernot at the same time. Nevertheless, Gernot remained fond of Ludi to the end, and Ludi of Gernot, judging by their letters. Gernot was probably Ludi's best friend besides his companion Marlis.

The new box also contained Ludi's correspondence with a German woman in the 1950s that caught me totally by surprise. I had never heard of her from him or anyone else and it appeared that they had met at least



*Richard Mayer holding his grandfather's WWI army chest*

once in Europe during their correspondence, shattering my theory that he had started his travels to Germany in the 1960s.

The correspondence appeared, from a sample or two, to be highly intimate and loving, to the extent that I felt like an intruder breaking into some secret and forbidden chamber. I shuffled through the letters until I finally came upon her name. Someday I might read through the pages and pages of these love letters that he saved, but for now I've put them in my own personal Ludi box, to be rediscovered again someday, even by someone else, perhaps. ✂

## Family Blessings

*By Rachel Wohlfeld. Rachel lives in New York City and is the granddaughter of Renee Mayer Wertheimer, great-granddaughter of Käte Ellinger Mayer, and great-great-granddaughter of Luise Arnold Ellinger of Augsburg.*

With the recent passing of my grandmother, Renee Mayer Wertheimer, I reflect on how we can continue to grow her legacy and share all her stories with generations to come. My brother, Joseph Wohlfeld, and his wife Vanessa recently gave birth to their son, Parker Hart Wohlfeld, on March 18, 2021. He is a healthy, beautiful baby boy.

As Parker begins to embark on the journey we call life, it is easy to forget the history his great-great-great grandmother, Luise Arnold Ellinger, from Augsburg, and great-great grandmother Käte Ellinger Mayer, had to live through to have had him here before us today. Käte overcame Nazi Germany and escaped for a better life. A better life for his great-grandmother, who then would raise his grandmother, (my mother Heidi), in the United States, who would then raise his father as a second generation American, who will now raise him.

As Parker continues to grow, I will be sure to instill in him some of my favorite memories that I had with my Nana. When he comes over, I will be sure to sing him *Hoppe, Hoppe, Reiter* while bouncing on my knees, just as she would sing to me. And if he is having a hard time going to sleep, I will sing him *Schlaf Kindlein Schlaf* and tickle his back to soothe him to slumber, just as she would whisper to me. And if he comes over cranky, I will feed him fresh baked goods



*Luise Arnold Ellinger with Renee Mayer and Wolf Mayer (twins)*



*Käte Ellinger Mayer and Dr. Karl Mayer wedding photo, 1928*

and treats, just as she would feed to me.

With each new generation joining the family, we must rejoice over the blessing that our family continues to live and thrive, all in part to our ancestors who came before us. While the hardship and experiences they carried must be shared, it is also our responsibility to share those everyday moments of



Joseph and Vanessa Wohlfeld with Parker Wohlfeld



Rachel Wohlfeld, Pam Wertheimer, Heidi Wertheimer Wohlfeld, Renee Wertheimer (née Mayer)

happiness that our ancestors brought us. It brings me such excitement to carry on my grandmother's legacy to my nephew through experiences we shared that I will now share with him. And although Parker and his great grandmother, Renee only missed meeting here earth-side by a few months, I know that she is with him always, just as she is with me. ❧

## The Tapestry of Life

By Deborah Sturm Rausch who is the daughter of Walter Sturm, and a descendant of Hugo and Lina Steinfeld and the Heilbronner/Steinfeld families of Augsburg.

It has always been a very natural thing for members of the Walter Sturm family to preserve our connection to our German roots. My father, and also my Opi (his father), probably were acting naturally, and perhaps didn't even realize that the family traditions, foods, songs, and other music that featured regularly in our lives were, in fact, keeping our German Jewish heritage very much part of who we are. My father, who was a survivor of Dachau, was able to somehow compartmentalize his memories and focused on the positive side of growing up in the beautiful city of Augsburg. We, his three children, learned German folk songs, ate German foods, and heard German stories, and these were just a normal part of our youth.

Music is an especially strong connector for my family. It features prominently in all we do and there are many links to it. For example, my father loved the song **Muss i den**, which he sang as a child when he hiked, camped, or was with the scouts. Its lilting melody was adopted as our "family song," and a simple whistle of the first line brings any of us running if it's heard in a store or out in the woods.

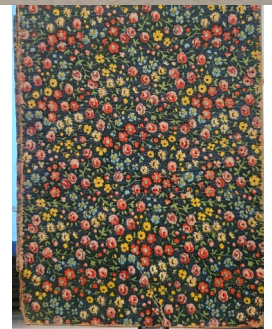
Then, there's opera and other classical music. It was constantly heard in our house. My Dad basically committed to memory every opera he heard or saw and his enthusiastic storytelling helped us to see the "magic" in the musical themes representing each of the characters in the stories told. His absolute adoration of the genre was contagious, and to this day, I can see his face lighting up as he told of foreshadowing that could be

felt in the music but was not yet apparent in the lyrics. One such opera, **Hansel and Gretel**, featured a most beautiful evening prayer sung by the two children. That prayer became the lullaby my father sang to me, and my sister and I sang to our children, and my children now sing to my grandchildren. It's an extremely meaningful connection to my Dad that I treasure.

Of course, there's the *tzvetchkendaatche* that was featured in the Recipe Corner of the June 2019 issue of **Connections**. This plum torte was a favorite of my great-grandmother Lina's and, though the recipe was lost with her death, my parents recreated it when I was a child, and then traditionally served it for the High Holidays in September when prune plums are in season. My mother taught me how to make it, I taught my daughters, and now I have also taught it to my two older grandsons who love to bake.

When my father left Germany after his release from Dachau, he packed very few things. Among them were the prayer book from his Bar Mitzvah, and a favorite book of his from his childhood entitled **Die Biene Maja und ihre Abenteuer**, (in English, *The Adventures of Maya the Bee*). He carried it out in a knapsack and preserved it. Though it was tattered and worn, when we were young children he told the stories in the book to us in English, translating from the German in his head so we could understand it. I have vivid memories of him telling us the Maja stories, his eyes twinkling and lighting up with each of her adventures. When my mother died this past March, I was going through her stuff and found the back cover of the book. It is textured, so that each flower can be felt. I ran my fingers over the flowers, and memories of him reading it to us flooded back. While I am grateful to have the back cover, sadly, the rest of the book is missing. The cover will be framed, and will hang in my home.

Die Biene Maja und ihre Abenteuer



For much of my adult life I have spoken publicly about my father's experience in Germany, recalling his German youth, his arrest and internment in Dachau, his service as an American soldier who was trained at Camp Ritchie and who served in the 106 Signal Intelligence Corps of the 3rd Infantry Division, and ultimately his life as an American citizen.



Walter Sturm in training at Camp Ritchie, MD.

In order to further solidify the connection my family has to Augsburg, I took my children to the 100th Anniversary Commemoration of the Augsburg Synagogue in June 2017. It was a powerful trip in many ways, and my children gained an appreciation for the

Continued on Page 9



city, as well as for what happened to our family at the hands of the Nazis. We made many of our own memories on that trip, and kept old memories and connections to family from fading away.

And, of course, it was there that I first met Bettina and Diane, the result of which is this newsletter, which we work very hard to issue twice a year. The connection we have fostered through this publication is tangible, strong, and important to each of us. It's our way of keeping alive the memories of the lives of generations that preceded us back in Germany. It's a labor of love.

So, why is all this important? These connections represent a very real part of the fabric of who we are as people. We and our families are tapestries of life, the threads of which are made up of the memories we have of those who have gone before us and who paved the way for our presence in this world today. As a first generation American, and despite all that happened that was bad when the Nazis came to power, I feel a strong connection to my German heritage. I attribute this to my father's attitude towards his hometown of Augsburg, which he loved. More importantly, I want my children and the generations that follow to be aware of who they are. What better way could there be to do that than keeping alive the memories of the past? ☸

## The Book of Rick

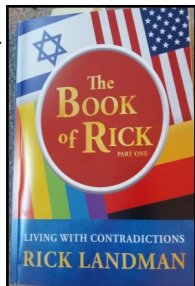
By Rick Landman of New York City, who is the son of Henry Landman (from Augsburg) and Lisa Landman (from Nuremberg).

Being a gay Baby Boomer, I knew that having children or grandchildren was probably not going to happen. So, I directed my life to repairing the world and remembering my parents' past. I would find ways to tell their stories in schools, shuls, and museums, work on archiving their artifacts, and use my website and memoir, called *The Book of Rick, Part One*, (which was recently released) to document their part of history.

In the 1980s I was my father's social secretary and assisted him in creating two reunions for the Holocaust Survivors from Augsburg in a Catskill resort. I also accompanied him to all of the speeches that he gave in Augsburg for Kristallnacht (November Pogrom) commemorations, helped to create the list of names (with Gernot Römer) for the Memorial to Augsburg Jewish Holocaust victims, and helped to place a memorial exhibit at the former Jewish Augsburg Sportsplatz. My father always thought it was important to tell his stories so he told them to a writer, but that book was never published. However, the manuscript, called *A Return Home*, is available at the United States Holocaust



Family members who attended the ceremony at the Goldener Saal (Golden Hall) in the Augsburg Town Hall. (L-R) Hilary, Harry, and Sam Felgran; Ruth Ceslanski; Steven Felgran, Debbie and Becca Rausch, Rachel and Jo Wisch.



Memorial Museum (USHMM).

In the 1990s, I created a website for the Second Generation Holocaust Survivors from Augsburg as well as created a group which grew into the International Association of Lesbian and Gay Children of Holocaust Survivors in 11 countries with over 150 members. The website is still on the internet at [www.infotruer.com](http://www.infotruer.com). It is also the platform I will use when anyone wants to purchase my memoir.

When the USHMM opened, I invited the Head Archivist to see my parents' basement. They had lived in the house for decades and the basement had (and still has) a huge trove of German Jewish artifacts and documents. That is when we started donating things.

Fifteen years ago, I brought a Torah (that my mother's father brought to America) back to Munich's Congregation Beth Shalom (where my father's father grew up) and I plan on giving other artifacts to Uffenheim, where my mother's father grew up. It was back then that I re-instated dual German citizenship and began speaking at various German forums. I didn't even know that I could speak German at that time.

In the future I plan on telling my parents' stories and visiting Germany. I would love to see how much the places have changed since we were there in 1985. So even though I have no biological children, I hope to keep my family's stories alive through my book, website, and talks and by working with the many organizations with which I am involved. ☸

## Poetic Remembrances

The following poems were submitted by Rachel Stern, wife of the author, Fred Stern (1924-2014). Fred Stern was born in Augsburg, Germany and died in Leonia, New Jersey. He was the son of Erna and Justin Stern and the brother of Henry Stern of Augsburg.

Fred Stern escaped Germany on the Kindertransport and was later joined by his parents and brother in England. The family came to New York in 1939. As a child, Fred used to visit his grandparents in a rural village near Augsburg. In the first poem he had been sent there to recuperate. His cousin in the poem was his beloved Trudi who died in the Holocaust. The second poem is a personal remembrance of his grandmother and others whom he loved who were lost in the Holocaust.



Fred Stern, 1960s

**NOTE:** The poems featured in this issue of **Connections** are printed with permission from Rachel Stern, wife of the late Fred Stern. The 1st poem is from his book *Corridors of Light*, 2007; the 2nd is from his book, *Touchstones*, 2012. Both were published by Vincian Press.

When Rachel Stern sent this article to **Connections**, she noted, "He wrote about visiting his grandparents, about his cousins who perished, etc, so there are happy memories but also some dark ones. His poems are one way Fred told his story to our children and grandchildren." We are grateful to Rachel for sharing this beautiful and poignant poetry with us.

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## REMEMBERED VISIONS

I see the faces of the departed  
Between the leaves of cedars  
Their eyes are pained by my silence  
What can I say beyond words  
What my thoughts bring forward  
And my mind's eye.

How it was that long ago  
In the courtyard at the farm  
In the hay cart going to the fields  
Picking berries from trees along the road  
Seeing the peasant women in their skirts  
Carting blueberry-filled buckets, and their men  
Raising their hats, wishing us good morning,  
Or the dog's great joy in seeing you  
Coming down the first time from your long bed  
The weeks of waiting to get better.

Your hair, my cousin, is still brown  
And your eyes speak as before.  
I too mourn silence, the unreachable  
The barrier behind which we all stand  
Extending our hands to painful shadows  
Close as our breath, immutable as time.

## MY MOTHER'S TABLECLOTH

You cannot see her now  
Straining to hear what the others are saying  
How jobs ended and careers failed to advance  
To have coffee and cake and to sit quietly  
Under the tick-tock clock in the living room  
Where the Gobelins showed tranquil scenes  
On far off Swiss lakes, the cows coming down  
To drink and graze at the lush-edged green.

We children could not go in there,  
Where fates were decided, where my mother learned  
What countries would issue visas  
Where money talked rescue, survival.

The furtive sounds of a piano  
From next door could not assure  
The still sweetness of Mendelsohn,  
The majestic strains of Bach.  
The classic books on our shelves  
Would no longer guide our thoughts  
Or promise the solidarity of chairs  
The friendliness of neighbors  
The long curtain rising at the opera.  
Mystified, we waited for our father  
To give us the violent news  
That greeted every evening, With its grief, its nightmares. ☘



Erna, Fred, Henry, and Justin Stern

## SHARING FAMILY MEMORIES WITH THE COMMUNITY

By Steven Anson – with literary assistance from his wife Hilary.  
Steven is the son of Beate “Pat” Anson (née Einstein) of Kriegshaber. He lives in Glasgow, Scotland.

Growing up in Glasgow, my brother Howard and I were well aware of my parents, Martin & Pat Anson's (Ansbacher) German Jewish history. We always felt a bit uncomfortable about discussing it with them. Maybe we felt it might bring back too many unhappy memories or maybe we weren't sure of how we would react to the trauma of the stories.

Howard immigrated to Edmonton in Canada in 1978 and, after watching the **Roots** TV film, asked my parents to document their story. So they did - and filled six audio cassette tapes with ten hours of their life stories. We have listened to these tapes on many occasions since their passing and always regret not asking enough questions and explanations when they were still alive.

So the tapes sat on a shelf in the bookcase they brought over from Germany and not much happened,

Then, in 2012, we were approached to join two other couples who were interviewing and recording the testimonies of survivors of Nazi persecution who came to settle in Scotland – most, but not all, of whom were Jewish. In due course we named ourselves Gathering the Voices (GTV).

What was unique about the GTV project was that we took the lead from our interviewees who had previously talked about their difficult journey to Scotland. Now retired and in the sunset years of their lives, they talked enthusiastically about the new lives they had built, their new careers, the families they created, how they put down new roots, and, equally importantly, showed what they had contributed to the country that gave them sanctuary.

We digitized my parents' and others' testimonies and placed them onto a new website in a partnership with the Glasgow Caledonian University's “Common Weal” (Common Good) project for everyone to access free of charge.

In November 2012, we travelled to Augsburg, Germany to join my mother's cousin Liese Fischer, (née Einstein), with her daughter Diane (Castiglione) and grandson Michael to participate in the *Lebenslinien* (Lifelines) presentation of the Liese Einstein family history. My mother Pat (Beate Einstein), with her parents Isak & Ida, lived in the same large apartment house with Liese Einstein and her parents Moriz and Lydia, who were on the floor below, and we realized it would a great opportunity to hear firsthand about their former lives in Germany.

We were fascinated by the way the Jewish Kulturmuseum, and people in the town of Augsburg were facing up to the crimes of their National Socialist (NS) past. We were interested in the methods they were using to teach today's German students about the rise of racial hatred in pre-war Germany and the resultant Holocaust.

We took their ideas on board and incorporated them into the visual and audio presentations about Martin and Pat's life stories which we were now giving to various school and adult groups in and around Glasgow as part of our GTV project.

Continued on Page 11



It's great working with young people in Scotland, some as young as 11 years old, who are receptive and open to learn and ask searching questions for which we have to be sure we know most of the answers.

We are continuing to develop and use new educational methods to enhance the students' learning experience. By bringing our family history into their classrooms, we are making Holocaust victims' names not numbers and help them come alive with our personal family stories. We are also using poetry, educational computer games, and comic strip story to assist the telling.

We present in many different locations including in socially deprived areas where we use the refugees' testimonies to show how these disadvantaged refugees, some with limited language, family, friends, work, and skills, were able to strive to overcome these great difficulties – and to stress if they could do it, so can you!

Our visit to a school for children with educational needs was particularly moving when the pupils brought up for discussion the subject of the NS program of euthanasia, which we had deliberately so far avoided. However, mentioning the Glasgow district where I grew up created an immediate link with them, as some of them also lived there. The pupils liked me saying "this is my Dad" when I related his stories and pointed to him on the screen.

On another occasion, we presented to a school with refugee children from 30 different countries and a similar amount of languages. We brought some of our refugees with us to recount their stories first hand to them. Many of the children had moved from country to country, had no sense of home or stability, and were not sure when they would be moved involuntarily again.

Our refugees explained that they had also been made homeless and had moved to Scotland which was now their new permanent home. Remarkably, the atmosphere in the room quickly changed to a deep sense of relief that maybe this is where the children could now be safely settling down and spending their lives.

Presenting Martin and Pat's life stories to 70-80 year-old age groups produces a different kind of reaction as, of course, many are old enough to remember events around World War II. To present Pat's story to a church/synagogue group is touching as they listen with interest and horror as we read Pat's last letters to and from her parents and the letters confirming that they, and other members of the family, were all murdered in Auschwitz.

Church groups find it hard to understand how it happened in Europe but after our presentations we have open and emotional discussions of their war experience. Pat's story seems to open people's hearts and feelings and they relate their stories.



Steven Anson (closest to display) and colleague Howard Singerman showing Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon around the GTV exhibition



## Ask the Historian

will appear periodically as a way to provide greater context to the history of Augsburg's Jewish community.

It will primarily focus on the 1800s and pre-World War II years. We will be working with the professional staff of the Jewish Museum Augsburg Swabia to respond to your questions about Augsburg's history, so please feel free to submit them to us at any time at [djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com)

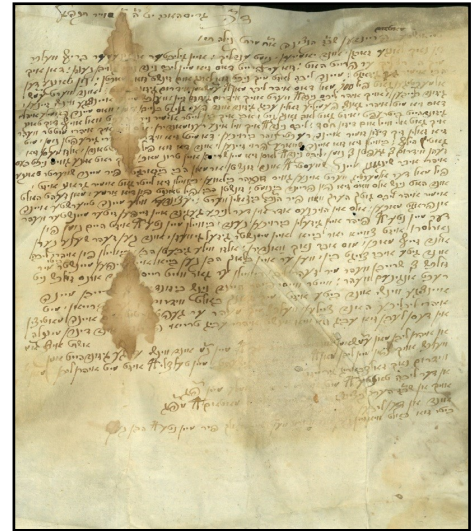
**Q - What language did members of the Jewish community of Augsburg and neighboring communities speak in the 1800s and early 1900s?**

**A -** Jews in the region spoke different languages in the 19th and early 20th centuries: Until 200 years ago, their everyday language was a Western Yiddish dialect; in ritual and in the synagogue they used Hebrew; with their non-Jewish business partners and Christian neighbors they spoke in the regional dialects of German. In the course of the 19th century, Yiddish was gradually replaced by standard German, which became the first language for most of them and even entered the synagogue.

The historical background for these developments is as follows: The 19th century was accompanied by processes of modernization and secularization for Jewish communities in the region and beyond. On the one hand, there were the long-lasting Jewish efforts for attaining equal rights (emancipation), that were only fully achieved towards the end of the 19th century. On the other hand, there was the attempt by the state to turn Jews into "useful" citizens according to its ideas.

One important change was the introduction of compulsory schooling for Jewish children, which took place in Swabia with the *Judenedikt*, the first Bavarian emancipation law, in 1813. Jewish communities were allowed to establish schools but these had to adhere to state curricula. The language of instruction was German, as Yiddish was now considered an obstacle to emancipation.

The training of Jewish religious teachers and rabbis was also placed under state supervision. For example, after graduating from the yeshiva in Fürth in 1820, Aaron Guggenheimer, along with other aspirants, had to pass an examination before authorities in Augsburg in order to be appointed as district rabbi in Kriegshaber. Together with other enlightened rabbis, Guggenheimer campaigned in the 1830s for the introduction of a



Letter from Minkle Obermayer in Kriegshaber to Klara Löwenberg in Hohenems, April 1822, Yiddish in Hebrew script (Jewish Museum Hohenems)

uniform synagogue order in Swabia, which provided for preaching in German.

In the second half of the 19th century, Jews in Bavaria received the long-awaited right to freedom of movement. Now they were able to settle in large cities such as Augsburg, where new professions and educational opportunities opened up for them. Urbanization continued to drive linguistic assimilation. Yiddish was only able to survive longer in a few niches in the countryside.

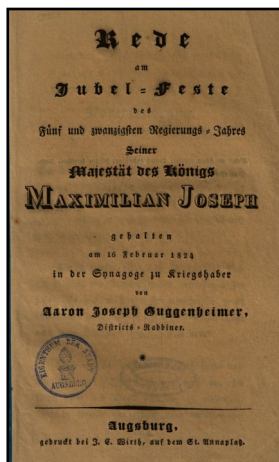
For example, in the 1920s, Jews in Ichenhausen spoke a German dialect that featured numerous Yiddish expressions and was therefore called "Iekouderisch" (from Yiddish: *loschn kejdesch*, meaning holy language) by the Christian locals. Until the Nazi period, Yiddish language elements also remained in the professional jargon of certain occupational groups, such as the cattle traders.

Knowledge of Hebrew also declined during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Like other liberal urban congregations, the Augsburg Jewish community implemented reforms in worship that shortened the traditional liturgy, translated prayers into German, and introduced choral singing and organ music. Congregation members who preferred a more traditional service thus gathered in the Kriegshaber synagogue, which employed its own prayer leader.

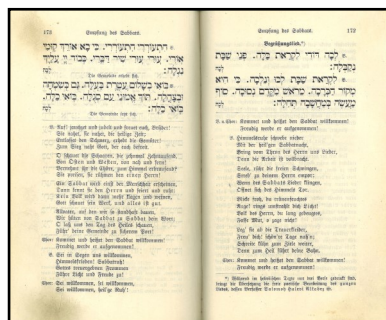
Until 1938, when Jewish pupils were excluded from public schools, the Augsburg Jewish community did not maintain its own elementary school; Hebrew instruction was limited to preparation for the bar mitzvah for boys and the confirmation ceremony for girls.

On the eve of the Shoah, German had long since become the first and most important language for Jews throughout Germany. As a result of their experiences of persecution, many survivors therefore also suffered a linguistic loss, so that - as the writer and Holocaust survivor Ruth Klüger once put it - they often no longer felt truly at home in any language.

*We are grateful to Souzaana Hazan for providing the response for this issue's "Ask the Historian" question. Souzaana Hazan is a Judaist and historian. Since 2009, she has worked in various capacities at the Jewish Museum Augsburg. Since 2015, she has been the curator responsible for the former Kriegshaber Synagogue. ✡*



*Title page of a ceremony delivered by district rabbi Aaron Guggenheimer on the occasion of the 25th year of the reign of Bavarian King Maximilian Joseph on February 16, 1824, in the Kriegshaber synagogue (Jewish Museum Augsburg Swabia)*



*Page from the German-Hebrew "Gebetbuch für israelitische Gemeinden," edited by Leopold Stein, 2nd edition by Rabbi Richard Grünfeld, 1st volume: For work, Sabbath, and feast days, Augsburg 1917 (Jewish Museum Augsburg Swabia)*

## NEWS BRIEFS

Another new addition to **Connections** is our **News Briefs** section. As per the standard definition, News Briefs are a condensed version of a story with the specific purpose of sharing newsworthy information in a quick and efficient manner. Please email us at [djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com) if you have a News Brief you'd like to share. Thanks!



## The Film *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit* Features Augsburg Synagogue

The Augsburg synagogue is in the movies! Astute eyes will notice that the Augsburg synagogue is featured in the award-winning film *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit* as a stand-in for a synagogue in Paris. The film, which is based on the semi-autobiographical best-selling book by Judith Kerr and is directed by Caroline Link, is the story of a Jewish family who flees Berlin in 1933. They initially settle in Zürich before moving to Paris (where the Augsburg Synagogue is shown), and finally, to London. Augsburg residents were used as extras in the scene. Currently available on DVD, the movie is due to be released for streaming on July 6, 2021.

## Awards Season

Elisabeth Kahn, a descendant of the Kahn family, was one of six recipients of an Obermayer Award which was presented to her on January 25, 2021 in Berlin. She was recognized for her work with students on projects that involve biographical historical research, various forms of artistic expression, and carefully produced theatrical performances. Through these projects, she honors the lives and suffering of the pre-war Jewish community while also bringing young people new perspectives on the past that illuminate current discrimination. The ceremony was conducted virtually and can be viewed at <https://widenthecircle.org/obermayer-awards/ceremony-2021/watch>. Further information about the awards and Elisabeth Kahn's work is available at <https://widenthecircle.org/obermayer-awards/ceremony-2021>.



## It's an Honor

Miriam Friedmann, a descendant of the Oberdorfer, Binswanger, Fromm, and Friedmann families, received the Medal of Merit from the Augsburg City Council in recognition of her service and work in the area of remembrance of the victims of the Nazi period. This award is given annually to a small group of individuals to thank citizens who have provided valued services to the local community. ✡



## DJCA participates in Augsburg's International Holocaust Remembrance Day

By Bettina Kaplan, granddaughter of Ellen Feldberg (née Arnold) and great granddaughter of Artur and Grete (Landauer) Arnold. She resides in Oakland, California.

In Germany for the past 25 years, January 27, which coincides with the liberation of Auschwitz, has been a national remembrance day of all victims of National Socialism. In Augsburg, the city has been organizing an event regularly in the city's special Golden Hall with speeches and readings of victims' biographies. As the pandemic continued to rage in fall 2020, Plan B was developed to commemorate the day as an outside walk to various remembrance sites in the city. In January, Germany was still in lockdown and even plan B would have been impossible. So, with just a little more than two weeks before the day, Plan C was conceived – a virtual ceremony video entitled “Niemanden vergessen – Gedenken an die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus” or in English, “Don't Forget Anyone - Commemoration of the Victims of National Socialism.” With this digital ceremony, there were more than 650 views, not enough for an Oscar nomination but clearly seen by many more people than in past years! The virtual ceremony can be watched at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHsDkQ6vOco>. It is in German but the English transcripts of the presentations were sent to the DJCA via email.

The City collaborated with a network of Augsburg remembrance groups and stakeholders including Augsburg's Remembrance Workshop (EWA) to gather the content. The committee was led by Inge Kroll, whose father was persecuted as a political prisoner in several concentration camps. Michael Bernheim, a local fellow descendant and member of EWA, insisted that the DJCA must be asked to contribute to the video and he subsequently contacted us. Diane Castiglione and I decided that a personal way to involve the descendants was to have them send a short video remembering their loved ones who perished during National Socialism. We felt it was an amazing opportunity for Augsburg to see and hear directly from relatives of their former citizens.

The DJCA was grateful to receive 14 submissions, all of which were included in the final video. Benigna Schoenhagen, former JMAS museum director and board member of the EWA wrote, “It was great and such an enrichment to the ceremony. Somehow (it is) incredible that it was the first time that the descendants participated.” Ms. Kroll said, “In Germany, many only think of Jews as uncountable anonymous victims, so it's a hopeful thought to build relationships and to connect with the survivors and their descendants.”



The Teusch Family photo for the video

The ceremony began with a heartfelt introduction by fellow descendant, Michael Bernheim. Mayor Eva Weber then gave a poignant speech. She spoke about not only the importance of remembering but also the importance of showing an interest in the different cultures and ways of life that belong to Germany today. There was a photo montage of various remembrance sites in Augsburg. Then, Marcella Reinhardt, a representative of the Roma and Sinti community, spoke after laying a wreath at “Halle 116”, a former satellite concentration camp near Augsburg in Pfersee. Two students from the Agnes Bernauer Girls School each respectively read the biography of Thekla Stoll, a Holocaust victim, and a poem she had written while in the Auschwitz concentration camp. The thoughtful ceremony was enhanced by two lovely musical performances. The beautiful lullaby, *Oyfn Pripetshik*, was sung by a member of Augsburg's Jewish community. The video concluded with the theme song from the movie, “Schindler's List” played by two young talented musicians.

Fellow descendant, Dr. Bernheim, praised the seamless cooperation of the various stakeholders who worked under the tight time constraints and without the possibility of meeting in person: “Nobody said it, but it was clear from the beginning that we just had to deliver because of the special dignity of this occasion. It was exemplary teamwork.”

The DJCA thanks everyone who was involved in making this year's virtual International Holocaust Remembrance Day so special. We would like to especially show appreciation to Mayor Weber, the Cultural Affairs Department, Inge Kroll, Michael Bernheim, and Frank Schillinger of the EWA.✂

## This is my story, your story, our story

By Miriam Friedmann MA, Augsburg  
Miriam is the daughter of Elisabeth (née Oberdorfer) and Friedrich Friedmann and the granddaughter of Emma (née Binswanger) and Eugen Oberdorfer and Selma (née Fromm) and Ludwig Friedmann, all from Augsburg.

On April 18, 2021 our Descendants community came together through the initiative of Bettina Kaplan and Diane Castiglione for the DJCA's first Zoom meeting to learn about the documentary film, *It Was All Legal*, written and produced by Josef Pröll in collaboration with Miriam Friedmann. During the five days before this, there was the opportunity to view the film via Vimeo.com, followed by a Q & A between Miriam, Diane, and the participants from all over the world.

Here is a brief summary of what for me and clearly for others was a moving and meaningful opportunity to learn more about and confront “our histories”.

The strength of the film lies therein that it is not merely a listing of theories, facts, and figures, but a deeply personal story, which could be that of any one of our families.



Continued on Page 14

The idea for the film originated from an image, which has remained since childhood in my mind and accompanied me throughout my life. It is that of my Augsburg grandparents, Emma Carolina and Eugen Oberdorfer, who had been persecuted by the Nazis as if they were vermin to be eradicated and thrown out like trash in a mass grave in Auschwitz. This goes as well for the vision of my grandparents, Selma and Ludwig Friedmann, who on the evening before their ordered deportation gathered together in their cramped quarters with their friends the Gugenheimers, Erlangers, and the Cohens and committed suicide.

After over four years of intensive research, the film depicts the lives and tragic fates of my grandparents, who stand representative for all those who shared a similar fate. The gripping documentary film uncovers and depicts in detail the complex structure of the Nazi Regime, which, step by step, infiltrated and controlled every detail of daily life, making life not only for Jews, but anyone who did not fit into the Nazi ideology, intolerable. Original locations and documents bring us close to the perfidious Nazi system of dehumanization, disfranchisement, and ultimately murder.

We uncovered endless disturbing facts that few of us – particularly the descendant generation – know. Were you aware that those members of our families who could not flee, had to pay 50 RM for their own one-way ticket to Auschwitz?

Though the film concentrates on Augsburg with original film clips and photos, it could be any German city. The film shows Nazi parades through Augsburg, buildings belonging to our families decorated with swastika flags, and how Augsburg looks today.

Without wagging a moralizing finger, the film illustrates “occurrences,” which to this day remain uncomfortable and all too often concealed.

“Aryanization” during the Nazi Era undoubtedly belongs to the greatest plundering of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, whereby it did not end with material objects, but the right-to-life of the victims. Here, not only the secret police were involved, but the entire German administrative apparatus (for example, the Department of Treasury). Many German citizens profited from this and became wealthy.

How was it possible that such inhumane murderous behavior could be accepted as everyday behavior and taken for granted? This should give the viewer food for thought. In other words, we should ask ourselves, how would we have behaved in such a situation? What can we learn from the past? How do we deal with one another today? What does it mean to be marginalized? AND how important for us is our democracy?

To quote Josef Pröll: “It is frightening and deeply disturbing to see what people are capable of doing to one another. There were times when I sat in front of my computer and could not continue. It is precisely for this reason that it is so important to pass this story on, which depicts what can result from blind hate and makes clear: This should never happen again.”

My hope is that through events like this one we, individually and collectively, can continue to a greater understanding of how the seeds of hate and prejudice are sewn. We cannot take our democracy for granted. It remains a work in progress.

If you are interested in streaming the film, please go to <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/itwasalllegal/49987346>. The trailer is in German but the film is in English. For more information about the film, please visit [www.itwasalllegal.com](http://www.itwasalllegal.com). ☼



**We welcome your feedback!**

Please send your comments, suggestions or corrections to the Editor at [djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com).

**We received such wonderful feedback on our December 2020 issue. It is with thanks that we post some of it here.**

**From: Dieter Müncker, Augsburg, Germany**

On December 21, 2020 - Gernot Römer asks me to send you his warmest greetings. He was overwhelmed by reading your articles. It couldn't have been a better Christmas present for him who is suffering being alone in this time. He asked me to transmit his best wishes for 2021 for all of you.

On February 2, 2021 - You are doing a great job. Yesterday I managed to visit Gernot. He had the Corona virus, but recovered like a wonder. I told him about your video for the Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27 in the City Hall, and spoke again with him about your wonderful "Tribute to Gernot Römer." It was like a medicine to him. It seemed that he grew up in his chair. He asked me to return all the nice greetings and wishes to you.

**From: Eva (Lamfrom) Labby, Oregon, United States**

Thank you for your most recent communication of your ever increasing activities. Although I haven't been in touch recently, I am always interested in the information you share about former and current Augsburgers....some of who have become friends long after my early childhood in Germany.

You are offering such valuable community and family memories not only for former “Augsburgers”, but also for their families and those who know almost nothing about the former community in Augsburg and the surrounding area. I'm learning so much from you, having emigrated shortly after my 8<sup>th</sup> birthday, at which time we tried to put everything about Germany behind us for many years.

My husband, daughters, and grandchildren are still learning more about Augsburg, most having visited already, and we have established an almost family relationship with the family that now lives in our former home...they think of us as family! There ARE good people everywhere in the world, if you just open your eyes, ears, and heart!!!!

**From: Barbara Wolf, Augsburg, Germany**

I read your newsletter with great interest every time and I look forward to every new issue.

**From: Dan Goldberg, California, United States**

Many German Jews who made it out of Germany in the 30s did not talk much about Germany and what happened. My grandfather Albert Binswanger, who was born in Augsburg, left Germany 17 days before the German invasion of Poland. He and my grandmother had sent their son and daughter (my mother) out earlier.

Because they didn't talk about life in Germany I am very naive about it.

What prompts this letter is the recipe in the December issue of Connections. It includes pork. I know that my family ate pork but was that common practice among German Jews at the time. I think that this subject would make an interesting article for **Connections** on how secular the Jews of Augsburg were. ☼



## CHICKEN FRICASSEE

Submitted by Michael Bernheim, Augsburg

A note about **Chicken Fricassee**: When my mother served chicken fricassee, my father used to speak enthusiastically about the fricassee he ate as a child at his grandparents' (Siegfried and Maria Bernheim) table. Unable to compare, I liked the one my mother made. Chicken fricassee is an old-fashioned dish. It takes time and some experience to prepare it, and it requires handling an entire animal. All this may not be popular nowadays. And it is old-fashioned in the sense that it used a raw material which today is almost classified as waste. Traditionally, the fricassee was not made with a young chicken, but with a hen which had spent its life laying eggs and whose meat was meanwhile dry and tough and thus not suitable for a tasty roast. But, when cooked in water, it delivered two fantastic dishes: the fricassee and a rich soup. At farmers markets, you may still be able to buy hens. Chicken fricassee, as in the recipe below, is not kosher. But it is a typical dish from the time when our parents and grandparents lived in Germany.

### Ingredients:

1 whole 3-pound chicken (or hen) without intestines

#### FOR THE BROTH:

1 onion, peeled  
1 clove  
1 2-ounce piece of celery root, peeled  
1 carrot, peeled  
Salt

#### FOR THE FRICASSEE:

2 tablespoons butter  
1 ounce (1/4 cup or 34 g.) flour  
3 fluid ounces (1/3 cup or 30 g.) cream  
3 ounces (85 g.) fresh mushrooms (farmed champignons; optional)  
Salt  
Pepper  
White wine  
Lemon juice



*Chicken fricassee, prepared on March 7, 2021. The napkin ring used to belong to my great-grandmother Maria.*

### Directions:

Put the entire chicken (or hen), but without intestines, into a sufficiently large saucepan and cover it with cold water. Add onion, clove, celery root, carrot, and salt. Bring the water to a soft boil and cook the chicken at a low heat at least for an hour. Longer will do no harm.

Let the contents of the saucepan cool down sufficiently for handling the chicken. Remove the chicken from the broth and cut it into pieces. Remove all bones and the skin and discard them. Pick the meat into little pieces.

At this point, the process can be interrupted. You can store the chicken meat and the broth in the refrigerator and continue a few hours later or the next day.

The next step is making a (blond) roux. Melt the butter in a saucepan (can be smaller than the one used for cooking the whole chicken) at a low to medium heat. It must not turn brownish. Turn heat down to a minimum and slowly add flour under constant stirring with a fork or an egg whisk. The mixture will become thicker; it does not matter if half solid. Remove saucepan from heat source altogether. Again, under constant stirring, ladle in small portions of hot chicken broth. At the beginning, the half-solid mass will grow bigger, then with more broth, it will gradually turn into a smooth creamy sauce. Add broth until it is neither too thick, nor too thin (approx. ½ pint). Turn heat back on and add chicken meat to the sauce, add cream and, optionally, sliced mushrooms sautéed in a little butter in a separate pan. Check the seasoning and add salt and pepper to taste. You may also add a dash of white wine and/or a few drops of lemon juice. Simmer for a final 5 minutes. Serve with rice. A dry Riesling (doesn't have to be German) fits nicely.

The remaining broth, probably quite a lot, is a valuable stock for soups or other dishes, like risotto. Sift off the vegetables and other solid parts and deep-freeze it in portions for future use. ☞

## MARBLE CAKE - recipe for children and adults

Submitted by Miriam Landor, the granddaughter of Richard Landauer, who was born in Augsburg. Miriam lives in Orkney, Scotland.

A note about this **Marble Cake**: When my parents wanted peace from a bored child on a Sunday afternoon, they dispatched me to the kitchen to make a marble cake for tea.

### Ingredients:

225 g. (1 cup) softened butter or margarine  
225 g. (1 cup) caster (or other white) sugar  
4 eggs  
225 g. (1 3/4 cups) self-rising flour  
3 Tbsp. milk  
1 tsp. vanilla essence  
1 Tbsp. cocoa powder

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 180° C (350° F). Grease a tin – 20cm (approximately 8") round, or loaf tin, bundt or ring pan.

You can blend all ingredients except the cocoa in a food processor or mixer. (Otherwise, beat butter and sugar together with wooden spoon. Beat eggs and add to mixture in small quantities alternately with sifted spoonfuls of flour until all is used up. Then stir in milk and vanilla essence.)

Put half this batter in a separate bowl, and add sifted cocoa powder to one half.

Alternate brown and white spoonfuls of each batter in the tin. Swirl a knife through all the layers, to give marbled effect.

Bake 45-55 minutes till skewer comes out clean. Carefully turn out onto cooling rack till cool, then cake can be stored in airtight container for three days, or frozen for up to 3 months.

**NOTE:** I recently made an adult version:

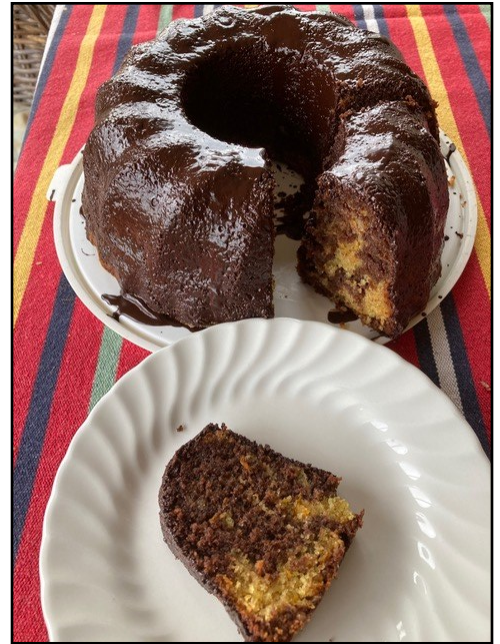
- I substituted 150 g. (1 cup) wholemeal (whole wheat) self-raising flour, 75 g. (3/4 cup) ground almonds and a level tsp baking powder for the recipe's self-raising flour – ground hazelnuts or walnuts would also be delicious.

- I added 1 tbsp grated orange zest – more would be good too.  
- Then I covered the cooled cake with dark chocolate, melted in the microwave with a knob of butter. ☼

**Editor's Note:** We have provided the equivalents in ounces for recipes sent to us using grams. We are also happy to provide this chart for your convenience. Please note that the conversions may not be exact, and should be calculated consistent with whether the ingredient is solid or liquid.

Grams To Ounces Conversion Table

Gram	Ounce	Gram	Ounce	Gram	Ounce	Gram	Ounce
1	0.0352739619	26	0.917123009	51	1.798972057	76	2.680821104
2	0.070547924	27	0.952396971	52	1.834246019	77	2.716095066
3	0.105821886	28	0.987670933	53	1.869519981	78	2.751369028
4	0.141095848	29	1.022944895	54	1.904793943	79	2.78664299
5	0.17636981	30	1.058218857	55	1.940067905	80	2.821916952
6	0.211643771	31	1.093492819	56	1.975341866	81	2.857190914
7	0.246917733	32	1.128766781	57	2.010615828	82	2.892464876
8	0.282191695	33	1.164040743	58	2.04588979	83	2.927738838
9	0.317465657	34	1.199314705	59	2.081163752	84	2.9630128
10	0.352739619	35	1.234588667	60	2.116437714	85	2.998286762
11	0.388013581	36	1.269862628	61	2.151711676	86	3.033560723
12	0.423287543	37	1.30513659	62	2.186985638	87	3.068834685
13	0.458561505	38	1.340410552	63	2.2222596	88	3.104108647
14	0.493835467	39	1.375684514	64	2.257533562	89	3.139382609
15	0.529109429	40	1.410958476	65	2.292807524	90	3.174656571
16	0.56438339	41	1.446232438	66	2.328081485	100	3.52739619
17	0.599657352	42	1.4815064	67	2.363355447	125	4.409245238
18	0.634931314	43	1.516780362	68	2.398629409	150	5.291094285
19	0.670205276	44	1.552054324	69	2.433903371	175	6.172943333
20	0.705479238	45	1.587328286	70	2.469177333	200	7.05479238
21	0.7407532	46	1.622602247	71	2.504451295	250	8.818490475
22	0.776027162	47	1.657876209	72	2.539725257	300	10.58218857
23	0.811301124	48	1.693150171	73	2.574999219	500	17.63698095
24	0.846575086	49	1.728424133	74	2.610273181	750	26.45547143
25	0.881849048	50	1.763698095	75	2.645547143	1000	35.2739619





We talk about Pat's amazing philosophy of "Just get on with it" from a low point in her life and always looking forward and on the positive.

At our Glasgow Reform Synagogue Ladies' Guild, we related Pat's life story, which few completely knew of what happened to her and her family before she came to Glasgow. Pat was an ordinary happy girl who was torn from her home, came to a new place, and made a new life. The warmth that she brought to them was reflected back to us twice fold. It was an affirmation of Pat's lovely memory. They knew her and loved her and only had fond memories of her.

Martin's life story, with his arrest at Kristallnacht (*Reichspogromnacht* as they call it more appropriately in Germany) and his time in Dachau, holds the attention of our viewers young and old into shock and silence.

Due to the COVID pandemic, we at GTV have been unable to visit schools, clubs, etc. This gave us the impetus to go digital. Using digital technology to make more videos of our refugee testimonies addresses some of our GTV issues of distancing, travel, accessibility, cost, and timing. We will do Zoom/Teams Q & A sessions after the students view a presentation to keep the personal touch and maintain interaction with our audience. Video presentations also address the issue of future-proofing our work and legacy planning. We are concerned that, as we grow older and can no longer physically visit places for presentations, we can at least give a video link to the stories.

When we come out from one of our successful presentations, we have a strange feeling of elation. We feel that we have made an educational contribution to the pupils, teachers, and staff at the schools and hopefully made a difference to the way the citizens of tomorrow look at history.

Our visits to Augsburg, taking part in the German Jewish History events, and visiting Martin's home towns of Leutershausen and Landshut, together with meeting and exploring our German Jewish history with them, have changed our lives and given us a greater understanding of the lives of our parents and relatives.

Our GTV project has given us an amazing channel to pass on the narrative of the lives of the Einstein and Ansbacher families and to personally illustrate the dangers of anti-Semitism and racism and where it can lead. ❧



Hilary Anson explaining the Gathering the Voices Exhibition to pupils at Calderwood Lodge School, Glasgow



## Reclaiming German Citizenship

Former German citizens who lost their German citizenship under the Nazi regime for political, racist, or religious reasons and who reside abroad can apply to have their German citizenship restored. Their children (and their descendants) may also be eligible to receive German citizenship. Generally speaking, if you would have become German had your parent(s) not lost their German citizenship, you may apply to the German government for citizenship.

Some people have chosen to pursue this; others haven't. There are compelling arguments to be made for both courses of action. Some people want to reclaim something that they feel was stolen from them and their family. Some see it as a way to reconnect with their heritage. In the last few years, some in the United States have seen it as a backup plan in case they no longer felt comfortable living there. For some, it is simply a very practical choice that gives them the opportunity to work or study in Europe more easily. Those who have not chosen to apply often feel a strong primary loyalty to their country of residence. For former residents of Germany, this is usually the country that gave them refuge and for descendants, this is usually their country of birth. If Germany wanted to strip their family of citizenship, they do not want to give Germany the satisfaction of having them return.

Needless to say, this topic can often elicit strong opinions and emotions. So, we were wondering - **Have you considered applying for German citizenship? Why or why not?**

Please send your thoughts to us at [djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com). If you have ideas for a future Food for Thought topic, please let us know. Thank you. ❧



## Coming in December 2021...

The theme for the December issue of **CONNECTIONS** is:

*What experiences have you had and Connections have you made by visiting Augsburg?*

Some of us have been lucky enough to visit Augsburg. Perhaps it was an independent trip, or perhaps it was as part of one of the reunions organized by the Jewish Museum of Augsburg Swabia. We would love to hear your experiences as a descendant visiting Augsburg. Did you reconnect with your family's former life while you were there? Did you meet people who knew your ancestors? How did the visit affect you/your life? What impact did the experience have on you, and on your family members whom you met or traveled with? Is this something you would recommend to others, and if so why?

We hope you'll share your ideas and experiences with us! Please submit your article(s) to us at [djcaugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:djcaugsburg@gmail.com) no later than October 15, 2021.

*Thank you. ❧*