

PERSPEKTIVEN Volume 8, No. 1

Winter 2008-2009

*Fröhliche Weihnachten und
einen guten Rutsch ins neue Jahr 2009*





GOETHE-
INSTITUT

PERSPEKTIVEN

Published Quarterly
by Goethe House
of Wisconsin
1120 N. Broadway
P.O. Box 510318
Milwaukee, WI
53202-3109

Phone (414) 276-7435

e-mail:

contact@

goethehousewis.com

Editor:

Daniel P. Hanley Jr.

Contributing Editor:

Helga Nikolic

Design:

Carl Ruppert

Partner Institute
Goethe Institut Chicago
150 N. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60601



Printed by Printfast,
West Allis

Goethe House of Wisconsin

Board of Directors

Honorable James A. Benz Vice President
Honorable Fred P. Kessler Vice President

Heiner Giese Secretary
Eileen Johannsen Treasurer

Manfred E. Beger
Jill Haas
Daniel P. Hanley Jr.
Dr. Sy Kreilein
Alexis LaJoie
Dr. Wolfgang A. Schmidt
Rabbi Barry Silberg
Daniel Sweeney
Kathy Schlitz Pederson
Carol L. Bruss
Marvin L. Fishman, Ph.D (h.c.)
Lorraine Lynn Hoffmann
Jerome H. Kringel
Dr. Ronald J. Ross
Frank Schmitz
Dorothy M. Smaglick
Fred J. Keller
Dr. John Pustejovsky

Honorary Board of Directors

Gabriele A. Eschweiler
Robert Krug
Leon Todd
Ken Pedersen
Harold Seemann
Gerhard Rauscher
Dr. William J. LaJoie

Academic Advisory Board

Dr. John Pustejovsky, Chairman, Marquette University
Dr. Gregory Baer, Carthage College
Dr. Albert Brugger, principal,
Milwaukee German Immersion School
Gerhardt Fischer, administrator, State Department of Public
Instruction
Dr. Herbert Flaig, Milwaukee Area Technical College
Dr. Patrick Hagen, University of Wisconsin-Platteville
Dr. Charles James, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Dr. Sylvester Kreilein, Marquette University High School
Dr. Doreen Krueger, Concordia University
Dr. Ronald J. Ross, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Dr. Larry Schmedeman, Milwaukee School of Engineering
Dr. Wolfgang Schmidt
Dorothy M. Smaglick, Deutscher Sprach-und Schulverein
Rabbi Barry Silberg

Goethe House of Wisconsin Mission

Goethe House of Wisconsin is a non-profit German-American cultural institute serving Wisconsin since 1958.

Our mission is to serve as a statewide resource for information about the past and present culture of all German-speaking people - especially those in the Federal Republic of Germany. Goethe House of Wisconsin invites the financial support of individuals, companies and organizations who share our mission and recognize the value of this important cultural exchange.

Goethe House of Wisconsin is a not-for-profit (501) (c) (3) organization. Donations are tax deductible as the law allows.

**Goethe House of Wisconsin
is now online.**

**Visit us at and send
your friends to:**

www.goethehousewis.com

Information available on Goethe House events, membership and other resources. Satisfy your need for German culture 24 hours a day. Use our web site or e-mail address to send Letters to the Editor:

Contact@goethehousewis.com

Milwaukee German Immersion School

A treasure-trove of free German language instruction for children



By Mary A. Buchert

One of the best-kept secrets in Milwaukee is the treasure-trove of free German language instruction for children available at Milwaukee German Immersion School.

Located on the northwest side of Milwaukee at 3778 North 82nd Street, Milwaukee German Immersion School (MGIS), is a K4-Grade 5 elementary school in Milwaukee Public Schools. Currently, nearly 600 children are given a total language immersion experience in German so that they become proficient in two languages, English and German.

Many parents ask what German Immersion means. It is not just teaching children the German language. Rather, it is teaching children IN German. Parents do not need to know German or have German ancestors for their children to succeed. Students are taught the same curriculum as at other American schools, but in German.

All children (except students with moderate/severe cognitive disabilities) receive reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies and science instruction in German from the first day of kindergarten through fifth grade.

For example, the fifth graders learn about the American Civil War as the Bürgerkrieg zwischen den Bundesstaaten. Textbooks from Germany are adapted and additional materials are translated and developed to provide the curriculum.

English instruction begins in second grade with the equivalent of 30 minutes daily, which is increased to one hour per day at third grade, and 90 minutes per day at fourth and fifth grade levels. German culture is introduced in conjunction with the curriculum as children make constant comparisons between what they see about life in Germany in their German textbooks and on the Internet, and what they experience living in the Milwaukee area.

MGIS also celebrates German cultural events and holds its own Laternennacht, Nikolaus Feier,

Kinderfasching, and Kinderfest. Many of the families also enjoy German Fest as volunteers or participants.

Brain research has shown that early exposure to a foreign language increases a child's brain development and intellectual growth. Students at MGIS are immersed in German for 5,200 hours by the time they complete the fifth grade. They learn to speak, read and write in German with ability approximating a native German and acquire a greater understanding and appreciation of other cultures.

Native German speakers comprise approximately 50 per cent of the faculty. Although most of the instruction is given in German, MGIS students consistently score very highly on standardized tests given in English.

These test results of fourth grade students are obtained from <http://data.dpi.state.wi.us>.

Although there is no pre-screening of children, University of Wisconsin-Madison research found that immersion students consistently achieve at or above their projected ability level. Research suggests that language immersion has a very positive effect on children's brain development and intellectual growth which results in stronger communication skills in English, more flexibility in thinking, a higher degree of creativity, and better listening skills.

MGIS is the only public total German Immersion School in an urban district in the USA. Its diverse student body of 593 students comes from all over the city of Milwaukee, as well as 10 per cent from the suburbs. At the end of the 2007-2008 school year, 31.6 per cent of students qualified for free or reduced lunch. Founded by Milwaukee Public Schools in 1977 as a magnet school, MGIS serves as a successful model and educational resource for other immersion programs around the world, including representatives from the Department of Defense, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Germany, and Japan.

Locally developed curriculum products are sold at cost and sent worldwide, some of which are available through an American Association of Teachers of German project. In April 2008 MGIS was the host for a conference for other German Immersion Programs from throughout the United States coordinated by Gert Wilhelm, the Fachberater von der Zentralstelle für Auslandsschulwesen.

[Please turn to German, Page 4]

MGIS: A treasure-trove of free German language instruction for children

[German, from Page 3]

Throughout the years, MGIS has received numerous awards and grants, including the most prestigious U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School Award. Most recently, MGIS was accepted as a member in the Schulen: Partner der Zukunft sponsored by Zentralstelle für Auslandschulen, a German government agency, promoting language studies abroad. With this recognition, MGIS will receive some funding to support the continuation of German language instruction.

In addition, with the generous support of the Wisconsin-Hessen Exchange Program and the Checkpoint Charlie Foundation, eight MGIS teachers were awarded a two-week professional development opportunity in Hessen and Berlin in the summers of 2009 and 2008 respectively to study the school and political systems of these areas of Germany.

A major contributing factor to the success of MGIS continues to be its high parent and community involvement. This is verified by thousands of hours of volunteer service by parents and community members during the school day in addition to the hundreds of hours people volunteer in the evenings, weekends and even summer.

MGIS has one of the largest, most active PTAs in the state with approximately 30 standing committees. They sponsor many after-school recreational sports and cultural activities for the whole family, including parent evening classes in beginning German.

MGIS parents also established a German Immersion Foundation in 2001 to raise funds to support overall excellence. Their major fund raiser is a Silent Auction Dinner open to the public which will be held on April 4, 2009 at Davian's in Menomonee Falls. Over the years, the proceeds from these events have provided funding for staff development, a new PC computer lab, and native German university students sponsored by the Amity Institute.

They serve to share their culture and language skills at MGIS and at Milwaukee School of Languages, which is the 6-12th grade site for Continuing German Immersion. Furthermore, MGIS has partnered with the

In 1910, a 12-year-old named Ruth Zoeller earned a grade of excellent in German in the Sixth Grade class at Trowbridge Street School, a Milwaukee Public School located in the city's Bay View neighborhood. She was my mother and I have her report card for that first half of the 1910-1911 school year. At that time German was a standard course for Trowbridge pupils just as were reading, writing, arithmetic and other subjects. She continued German classes until her graduation from MPS's South Division High School.

In 1889, the Wisconsin Legislature had passed what was called the Bennett Law that included a provision requiring all schools to teach "reading, writing, arithmetic and U.S. history in the English language." Germans were a leading force in a massive protest to the law made by immigrant families and religions such as Catholic and Lutheran. The law was quickly repealed. German in MPS as elsewhere fell out of favor as a result of World War I. - **Daniel P. Hanley Jr., editor, PERSPEKTIVEN**

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Goethe House in the sharing of resources.

As a Milwaukee Public School, there is no tuition, and in most cases, free bus transportation. Before and after school daycare is available at low cost. New students are accepted at the K4, K5 and Grade 1 levels through a computer lottery. Admission at Grades 2-5 is dependent upon the student's German/English skills and space availability. Students who are not selected are placed on a waiting list for the upcoming year. Students from suburban districts may apply through the Chapter 220 or Open Enrollment programs and parents should contact their local school district for more information. The sign-up period for 2009-2010 is January 12-30, 2009. Please call the school at 414-393-5600 for the exact dates of daytime tours that will be available in December and January. There will also be Evening Parent Tours on Wednesday, January 14, 2009 from 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

For more information, please contact Dr. Albert Brugger, Principal, or Mary Buchert, Program Implementor.





Berlin museum pays tribute to legacy of “good German” who helped Jews in WWII

Berlin, Germany - The “Silent Heroes” now have a voice. A new memorial center in Berlin pays tribute to the thousands of German gentiles who risked everything to save Jews from persecution by the Nazis and documents the stories of those who sometimes spent years in hiding.

The “Silent Heroes” memorial center opened to the public October 28 amid a new focus in recent years of the legacy of the “good German.” - those individuals who resisted Hitler and his policies, were labeled as traitors by the Nazis and were often shunned in decades after the war.

“Their accomplishments were totally forgotten, and this is an initiative to bring them back into our memory,” said Johannes Tuchel, director of the German Resistance Memorial Center Foundation, which is behind the new memorial.

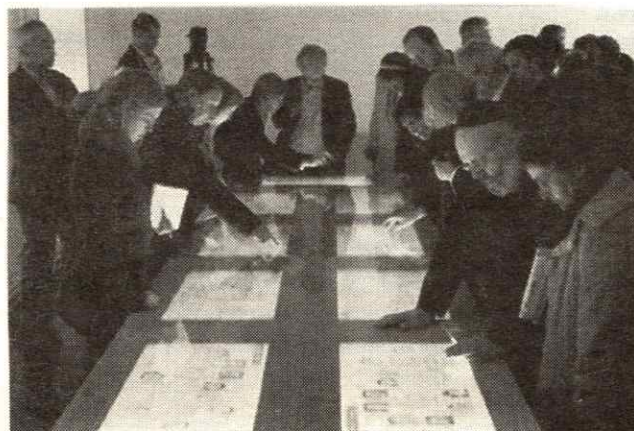
Some 5,000 Jews were able to survive the war hiding in Germany, but it is not clear how many people were involved in helping them, Tuchel said. Research suggests that for each person in hiding, around 10 people were involved in aiding them.

Peter Michalski, whose family went into hiding in 1944, said it was a long overdue tribute to the Germans who helped people like him escape almost certain death, even if it meant putting their own lives in jeopardy.

“Where would you be now if these people hadn't existed?” he asked contemplatively while looking at an exhibit focusing on his family's plight. “The answer is simple: We wouldn't be.”

The three-room exhibition relies heavily on multimedia displays in both English and German - audio accounts, touch-screen computers focusing on 18 aspects of survival, and computers with more detailed information on those in hiding and their rescuers. Original artifacts include personal photos, diaries and letters.

The best-known subject is Oskar Schindler, whose story was made famous by Steven Spielberg's 1993 Oscar-winning film “Schindler's List,” which chronicled the German businessman's efforts to shield more than



AP Photo

Visitors look at the “table of orientation” at the new memorial museum “Silent Heroes” in Berlin.

1,000 Jews from Nazi death camps by hiring them to work in his factories.

But some of the lesser known stories are just as moving.

Michalski looked slowly at the photos in the display case, picking out his parents - Lilli and Herbert Michalski - as well as himself and his brother Franz.

Lilli Michalski was born Jewish but converted to her husband's Catholicism. Because of that, she was able to initially escape deportation to a death camp even though the Nazis began rounding up many of her relatives in 1941.

But by 1944, the risks had become too great and the family went into hiding. Several Aryan Germans aided them, most prominently a colleague of Herbert's named Gerda Mez, who eventually helped get the family out of Germany.

Michalski said it was important that people like Mez are recognized through the exhibit, so others can see the sacrifices they made.

[Please turn to Museum, Page 10]

As the leaves begin to fall it's time to think about the bare trees outside the window and the ever greens that we bring inside to decorate our homes.

Jan Beger's



Spielplatz

Some of the earliest Christmas trees can be traced to the Miracle Plays of the 1500's. Since very few people could read, Miracle Plays were used to teach people Bible stories. The Miracle Play written for the story of Adam & Eve used an evergreen tree decorated with apples as a stage prop.

The oldest description of a Christmas tree in a home comes from written description of 1605. The writer described a fir tree hung with paper roses, apples, wafers and candies. An evergreen decorated with wafers or cookies that had religious designs became known as a Christbaum.

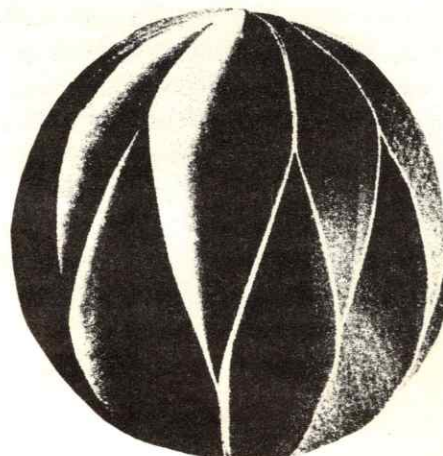
In parts of Austria and Germany, a tip of an evergreen tree was hung upside down in the corner & decorated with red paper, apples and gilded nuts. About the same time a triangular shaped wooden frame decorated with candles & pastry called a pyramid became popular. Pyramid & Christbaum existed side by side for many generations before the first candles were transferred to the branches of the tree.



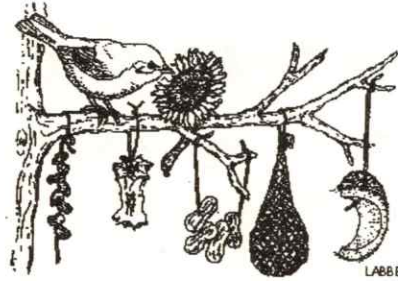
Trees in the 18th century decorated with gold leaf covered apples, gilded fruits & nuts, were called sugar trees. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe set up a sugar tree in Leipzig in 1769 for the children of a friend. On the evening of January 5, Twelfth Night, sugar trees were shaken and the sweets eaten.

Here is a simple paper ornament that might remind you of the apples that once hung on the first Christbaums. You will need: construction paper, scissors, thread, a stapler and glue. You can make the circles all one color or two or more colors.

- * Cut nine 4" diameter circles.
- * Fold each circle in half & crease them through the center.
- * Open up the circles & stack them together.
- * At the top and bottom of the crease, staple the stack together.
- * Alternating top & bottom, fasten together the outer edges of the circles with a dab of glue.



Jan Beger's



Spielplatz

*You can decorate the bare tree outside your window with treats for the birds.
Check out these websites for suggestions*

<http://www.osweb.com/kidzkorner/feeder.htm>

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/attracting/feeding>



Bemale den Baum grün ! Bemale die Kugeln rot. Bemale den Stern gelb !
Bemale den Topf schwarz ! Bemale die Schleife rot !

Sources: <http://www.labbe.de/zzebra>

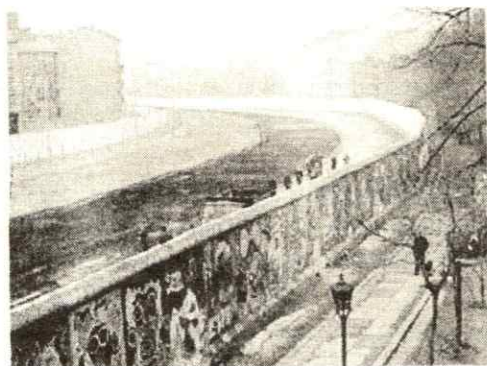
"Christmas Magic" by Margaret Perry

"The Christmas Tree Book" by Phillip V. Snyder



What's left of the Berlin Wall

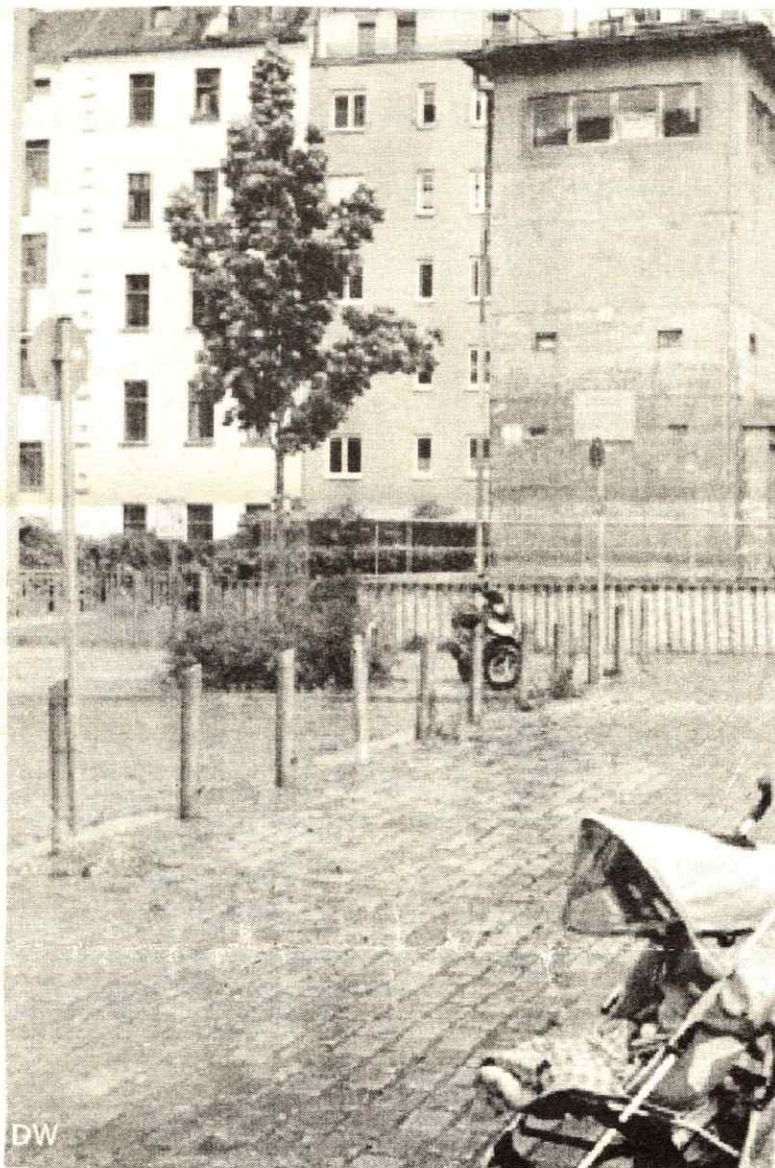
It had divided one city, one country, one people



**View of the Berlin Wall in 1986,
the West Side has the graffiti**

On August, 13, 1961, East German workers began erecting the infamous Berlin Wall, which would separate the city in two halves for more than 28 years. Many tourists flock to Berlin, Germany's capital, and increasingly so since it is here that the history of Germany from 1945 until the fall of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1989 manifests itself. But what is hard for many tourists to find is what remains of this era. Here's a look at what's left of the wall nearly two decades after its fall (pictures by Deutsche Welle).

Remains of the Wall



Neighborhood Watch: Surrounded by new, pink apartment buildings, this observation tower on Kieler Strasse is now named after Guenter Litfin, the first person to die while trying to escape across the wall on Aug. 24, 1961. His brother, Juergen, has turned the tower into a museum and still offers tours to visitors.

Auf Wiedersehen Goethe House

By Katharina Hren

Lately I've been hearing people talk about the importance of experience when taking on a leadership role. And yet I am utterly grateful that I was hired by the Goethe House 12 years ago when I had never been an executive director or manager before. I had been teaching all the German courses that Carroll College had to offer at the time, and I had been doing bookkeeping, so while I brought some helpful experiences with me, much of what I encountered at Goethe House was uncharted territory for me. I was told later that the hiring committee chose me because of my ideas and my enthusiasm. Perhaps I could have used more tools in my pack as I started the journey of the past 12 years, but having fresh eyes turned out to be a valuable asset for taking in the sights along the way.

My first project was the Kinder Camps, and we did 10 that first year, later deciding that less was more. I worked with some incredible teachers whose creativity gave me fuel for my own creative fire as I worked on the curriculum. Even now there are families whose names I know because they started a program with us before their children went on to German Immersion School or another German language learning experience. The Spielgruppe was an experience that is especially near and dear to my heart because of how organically it came together. I didn't want to just structure the group along the lines of what I might want for my own son, who participated in the Spielgruppe. I wanted the group to have a hand in creating something unique, for we came together with a common problem: finding the motivation to keep speaking German to children who responded in English. So we shared songs, Bastelideen, traditions, stories, and games with one another. We even did a Laternen night organized by one of our mothers, Isabelle Jensen, at a local senior home. Susanne Riess led our circle time with the little ones (no easy task given the short attention span), while our newest board member, Kathy Pederson worked with the older children on reading and writing. We had videos from Germany for the children during the snack time at the end so that we could chat amongst ourselves as adults. And everybody participated as I had decided this would be a family group, not just for the children.

Much time and energy were donated over the years by that early group. I remember thinking that my own child, who started the group before he turned 2,

Katharina Hren has resigned as executive director of Goethe House of Wisconsin. We thank her for her dedicated service and wish her well in future endeavors. -Goethe House board of directors

couldn't be learning very much German because we focused on simply "playing in German". But it wasn't long before I realized that German was no longer a "secret language" that I spoke with my mother. He understood quite a bit more than I realized. I had always said that I wouldn't make him go to the German Immersion School, afraid that he would become a surly teenager who accused me of making him to go just because I was a German teacher. I credit the Goethe House Spielgruppe - of which he considered himself to be a co-teacher - with his decision to want to go to the German Immersion School, where he is now thriving. He also met his closest friend at the Goethe House Puppentheater, a memorable event which came to us thanks to Mary Wyman. For a long time Gustav thought Goethe House was his home away from home.

And indeed it was. For at Goethe House I gained a valuable foundation for a career rooted in community service. I am also indebted to the Kultur Cafe, a conversation group that would meet once a month after the Spielgruppe. While it was a bit of a chaotic transition to go from Spielgruppe to adult conversation, I have to admit that I loved the overlapping of the new with the older. I especially loved it when the Omas would visit the Spielgruppe. I was the youngest of the Kultur Cafe group, privileged to hear stories of what it was like in the old days in Germany and what it was like to come to the States and raise families.

For me, Goethe House has been a bridge from the old into the new, a reminder that you cannot entirely turn on your back on what has happened in the past in order to move forward. I believe that honoring the past allows us to embrace the new that much more fully.

Thank you to all the people that are the Goethe House that I will carry with me in my heart. Working so closely with members has helped me to stay focused on community. I hope to work with Goethe House members on projects in the time to come.

Gratefully yours - mit vielen Dank

-Katharina

Berlin museum pays tribute to legacy of "Good German" who helped Jews in WWII

[Museum, from Page]

"It's extremely well done," Michalski said. "These people are no longer alive but their relatives still are."

Israel's Yad Vashem Memorial recognizes more than 22,000 gentiles across Europe who helped Jews escape the Holocaust as "Righteous among the Nations," among them more than 450 Germans.

It is also not known how many people were caught sheltering Jews, which could have meant execution or deportation to a concentration camp, because they were prosecuted for more general crimes such as "hindering the war effort," Tüchel said.

"I can't quantify it at this time, but everyone who helped put themselves at a very great risk," he said.

-David Rising, Associated Press writer

The following two accounts have been selected from the wealth of case histories recorded so far. They illustrate vividly the dramatic circumstances of Jews living in hiding and being helped to survive.

-German Resistance Memorial Center Foundation

Ilse Lewin and Greta Schellwort

Ilse Lewin was born in 1911 and grew up in Berlin. She had the chance to emigrate to England, but she did not want to leave her mother, Gretha Lewin, on her own. From September 1940 on Ilse Lewin had to work at a Siemens factory as a forced laborer.

After her mother was deported at the end of 1942, Ilse Lewin decided to evade her own impending deportation. Her friend Greta Schellwort warned her of the huge round-up planned for February 27, 1943, in which all the Jews in Berlin, especially those from armament factories, were to be arrested and deported. Greta Schellwort, who was a doctor in the police hospital, had heard rumors to this effect.

At first Ilse Lewin was taken in by acquaintances in Strausberg, but after that she had no permanent shelter

until mid-1944. She lived from food that Greta Schellwort slipped to her. She was able to earn some money as a cleaner in a tailor's shop until the tailor exploited her desperate situation to sexually harass her. Ilse Lewin's friend, Vera Freyer, gave her forged identity papers with which she was able to obtain a postal identity card in Vera Freyer's name. In the summer of 1944 another non-Jewish friend, Ilse Glondajewski, helped Ilse Lewin to find a hiding place in the Berlin district of Prenzlauer Berg, where she managed to stay until the end of the war.

Later she married an old friend, Günter Stillmann, who returned from Palestine in 1948. Ilse Stillmann worked from 1954 on at the Children's Books Publishing House in East Berlin, where she died in 1988.

Johanna Putzrath and Else and Hans Ackermann

Johanna Putzrath lived in Breslau with her family. They moved to Berlin in 1931. Her husband, Eduard Putzrath, and her two sons, Heinz and Alfred, were able to emigrate before 1939. In 1942, at the age of 53, Johanna Putzrath was compelled to work as a forced laborer in a firm in Tempelhof in Berlin. She knew that Else Ackermann and her brother Hans had offered help to another Jewish worker at the firm. When this woman was unexpectedly deported, Johanna Putzrath turned to the Ackermanns. Else Ackermann, a retired teacher, and her brother Hans, a former municipal civil servant, were devout Protestants and adherents of Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophic philosophy. Without hesitating, Hans Ackermann took the unknown Jewish woman into his two-roomed apartment in Tempelhof. His sister Else, who lived in Steglitz, joined him in helping the refugee Johanna Putzrath.

At the end of January 1943 Hans Ackermann also gave shelter for over a month to a married couple, Ines and Max Krakauer, until they found other places to stay in southern Germany. When the Ackermanns' apartments were destroyed by bombs in May 1944, they moved to 57 Alboinstrasse, where they continued hiding Johanna Putzrath. After almost two-and-a-half years, the three of them witnessed the end of the war together.

Johanna Putzrath emigrated to the USA and lived in New York until her death in 1975. Else Ackermann died in the 1940s in Berlin; her brother Hans died in 1959.



Goethe Words of Wisdom

In German
Geschichte schreiben ist eine
Art, sich das Vergangene vom
Halse zu schaffen.

In English
To write history is a way of
getting the past off one's

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe