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# THE AFJMH NEWSLETTER

Editor: Susan R. Shimer

## NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

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***A New Board of Governors for the Jewish Museum, Hohenems.*** To better insure that the Museum serves the community, the region and interested persons outside the area, including the descendants, a new governing body has been created. The new governing body, the Trägerverein Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, has an executive Board of Governors comprising representatives from the state and local governments (the chief sponsors) as well as from the Jewish Museum Association, the Verein zur Förderung des Jüdischen Museums Hohenems. The Board will be supported by an academic board of counselors who, in cooperation with the Museum itself, will be responsible for the programs and the research activities of the Museum.

The Board had its first meeting in the Museum on December 12, 2002. Main topics were the official implementation of the body, the transfer of Museum personnel from the city of Hohenems to the new governing body, the proceedings for the set up of the academic board of counselors and various administrative questions.

***A New Web Site.*** The Museum expects to have a new web site up and running by March 1, 2003. That site will have an interactive mail forum through which descendants and friends of the Museum will be able to communicate with one another. The new web site will also be available in English. The recent fund raising efforts of the American Friends resulted in a number of generous contributions by our members for which we are extremely grateful. After considerable discussion with the Museum staff, both by e-mail and in person, the Board has decided that it would be appropriate for AFJMH to contribute \$3,000.00 at this time to support the work required to enable an English version of the web site. Depending on progress and need, consideration will be given for further contributions toward the web site development and/or possibly other research related stipends.

***Exhibitions, Projects, Seminars and Meetings.*** The Museum staff has been working on a number of projects in cooperation with other institutions. An exhibit with the "Frauenmuseum" (Women's Museum) in Hittisau in the Bregenzer Wald, is entitled "Ways to Ravensbrück," which, as our readers know, was a concentration camp.

In connection with the Austrian project relating to National Socialism and the Holocaust, the Museum hosted several seminars attended by teachers and members of other institutions in Austria.

Also in December, Swiss postgraduate students studying Museumology visited the Museum for two days, to study the Museum as an example of a Museum actively at work.

**MARCH TO MAY 2003, PERMANENT EXHIBIT, REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS.** The permanent exhibit of the Museum documents the story of the Jewish community that existed in Hohenems from 1617 to 1938. In the ten years since the Museum opened

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its doors, the Museum has received from different sources, including descendants and Jewish families from all over the world, new objects, documents and information that provides fascinating new information about individuals and families. Also now available at the Museum are videos, books and databanks, which the visitor may use. The Museum will also display additional archival material, using a variety of media, to tell the history of Judaism in the region in much greater detail.

#### JUNE TO AUGUST, 2003.

Jewish and Christian bible Illustrations, mainly from the 19th century

***The Synagogue Restoration.*** The fire department of Hohenems has been moved from the former Synagogue to a new location. After much deliberation, the community of Hohenems has decided to renovate the Synagogue. Gerhard Lacha, a private investor, has obtained the right to the use of the building for a period of 50 years in exchange for the renovation, which should highlight the building's former life as a synagogue. Since there are no longer Jewish families living in Hohenems, the building will not be used as a synagogue. However, its former history as a synagogue will not be forgotten.

Plans have been prepared by the two architects, Ada and Reinhard Rinderer (Ada by the way is Jewish), who have done extensive research as to the history of the synagogue. The final reconstruction will be dependent upon what is found during the ongoing work. It is hoped that the reconstruction will be completed by April 2004. The details of the reconstruction will appear in future issues of *The AFJMH Newsletter*.

#### **THE MUSEUM'S LIBRARY**

By Susan R. Shimer

The library of the Jewish Museum Hohenems is a vast resource used by both the casual and scholarly researcher. The library's resources are also used by the Museum staff to answer questions from individuals unable to travel to Hohenems. One such inquiry came from Cheryl Blaylock. An article about her film appears elsewhere in this issue.

At present, the library contains over 8,000 volumes on many subjects. One area of considerable focus are books relating to Jewish presence in the region, including southern Germany and the Bodensee (Lake Constance) area. Additionally, the library houses a significant collection of books on Jewish history, religion and art. Of particular interest is its collection of rare rabbinical writing, a gift from the collection of Rabbi Schmelzer of St. Gallen.

#### **THE SMUGGLERS**

One subject upon which the Museum has some resources, and which I believe would interest many of us are accounts of the smugglers who assisted people in crossing to Switzerland during the 1938-1942 period. You probably recall reading in a past issue of our newsletter that Alfred Otto Munk, along with his sister, escaped from the grasp of the Nazis into Switzerland through the help of one such individual. Others did the same.

A favorite route was through Hohenems and into Diepoldsau. This passageway had been used to smuggle goods and people for years before the Nazi era. Perhaps history had something to do with the choice. Those who had smuggled goods across also smuggled people desiring to participate in the Spanish Civil War, and thus had the experience and connections to make such an escape possible.

One must not discount the impact that geography had on this choice. The Rhine River had been rerouted many years earlier leaving a small tributary, the same that we cross today en route from Hohenems to Diepoldsau. The bridge we see today was not there. Instead, in 1938 a covered bridge crossed the river



manned by armed guards and sealed with barbed wire. There were different routes used by the smugglers. One crossing was a little further to the north. A photograph of the place where people crossed (taken in 2002) is shown here. We are told that in the late 1930's this crossing was less formidable. The river was not as deep and people could walk across the river. However, guards were near this crossing too, both German and Swiss.

At first the Nazis wanted to push Jewish people out of the Third Reich. People in what was once Austria were given their freedom only if they would leave their property behind and depart the country. Some obtained such visas and fled. Others were unable to obtain visas but still desperately wanted to leave. At first, the Nazis at the

Hohenems border did not object to such a departure. There is at least one story of a group of young men who were sent back from Switzerland, and then directed by the German (i.e. former Austrian) border police to a more secure route. They escaped.

By August 19, 1938, five months after the Anschluss, the Swiss government decreed that only persons having visas to Switzerland or other countries could enter Switzerland. However, as much as this may have slowed the migration and ultimately resulted in tremendous loss of life (since people could no longer enter Switzerland as a safe haven in the absence of a visa), border crossings continued, particularly through the area near Hohenems.

The Police Chief of the Canton of St. Gallen, Paul Grüninger, assisted many who made the crossing successfully. Refugees who claimed, without documentation, to have visas for other countries were often allowed in with his acquiescence. Some simply stated that they expected visas, and were allowed into Switzerland. The documentation for entry dates for hundreds of refugees was feigned to be prior to the August 1938 cut-off, despite the fact that they probably entered thereafter. Some people who lived in Diepoldsau hid individuals. Swiss citizens swiftly brought other refugees to the Jewish community in St. Gallen. By August 19, 1938, the Jewish Community of St. Gallen reported that it had taken in 400 "flüchtlinge." Probably about 3,000 flüchtlingen entered Switzerland with help from locals. Of these it is estimated that the St. Gallen community supported 1,000. Some ultimately emigrated to other countries, including Palestine.

The Swiss government did not overlook what they saw as the transgressions of Swiss officials and individuals who assisted refugees in entering into Switzerland. The Police Chief of the Canton of St. Gallen, Paul Grüninger, was suspended from his duties in April 1939 and ultimately relieved of his duties and punished. For many years, he could only find occasional jobs. Those who should know have fervently denied claims that he accepted moneys or other favors for his good deeds. Even a claim that he was actually a Nazi has been made and rejected. Grüninger died in 1972. Long after his death, he was finally honored in his own country. In June 1996, a square in St Gallen was named after him. A book, in German, telling his story by Stefan Keller is *Grüningers Fall, Geschichten von Flucht und Hilfe*. It is available at the Museum both for perusal and sale.

Another individual who assisted in the movement of individuals across the border into Switzerland was Jakob Spirig. He continued to assist the refugees as late as 1942. An article about Mr. Spirig appeared in the Wall Street Journal in June 2001. It reported that Spirig, a Swiss native from Diepoldsau, was imprisoned in 1942 for smuggling Jews across the Austrian-Swiss border. The article states that "Spirig, who was 19 at the time, and several colleagues crafted an escape route beginning at the back of his parents' house. He would sneak through the forest, slip across the border and walk two miles to the Austrian village of Hohenems. There, he would meet small groups of refugees and return to the border."

Jakob Spirig has been interviewed by the Museum. Excerpts from that interview, which is in the Museum's library, follow:

He told us that many people from Diepoldsau and Schmitter in Switzerland had fields in Austria, which they could tend. One such farmer was Hans Weder. Spirig reported that he assisted in the transport of about 100 people until 1939. He himself had no connection with Austria; others made the connection. However, he took people across the border. He told the Museum staff that he collected the refugees at the Hohene Freschen or the Sonne in Altsch, and that the smugglers were often given five or ten marks. If someone did not have money, they could nevertheless come along. The job was to bring the flüchtlinge across the border and then they were told to proceed onward themselves.

After 1942, the transport stopped, but then he was asked to help several women cross the border. Smuggling young women was easier than old women. Spirig had been told that the women to be smuggled in 1942 were young, but in fact the women were old. One day in early May, Hans Weder sent a letter to the women who were in Altsch (adjacent to Hohenems) and told them to be ready at the garden of the Restaurant Landhaus in the evening. Spirig was to assist in the transport and for that he had been promised 150 franks, a considerable sum. He did not require money to live, since he was only 19 and lived at home with his parents who paid for all his needs. However, 150 franks could pay for a Velo, and he would need to work 14 days to earn that at his usual employment.

Two smugglers, five women--that was the plan, according to Spirig. They met the women at about 9:30 or 10:00 PM in the garden of the Landhaus, and told them that they were from the Swiss Fluchthelfer (Escape helper), and that they should depart immediately. The women had baggage which the other smuggler immediately threw into the canal. Then the seven walked across the bridge and into a field and over the field for about 20 meters before the border. All walked separately but at the same pace. At the spot just before the border, Spirig walked quietly forward and checked if all was in order. It was, and so they marched. They had made a hole in the fence and pushed two of the women through; a third woman's frock was caught in the fence, and they heard "Stop German border watch!" and shots rang out. The smugglers ran; what happened to the women they did not know. We have learned from other sources that one woman did make it through and away from the Nazis; she was held by the Swiss police, and remained in Switzerland during the war.

In 1997, the Museum held a dialogue discussing the border by Hohenems as the end point of the attempt to escape. This was the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attempt to cross the border by Gertrud Kantorowicz and Paula Hammerschlag, the sister of Margarete Susman who had arranged that escape attempt from Switzerland. According to Margarete Susman, three other Jewish women also sought to flee. The woman who made it through told Frau Susman, that after the border police stopped them, her sister Paula Hammerschlag died. Johannes Inama tells us that Paula Hammerschlag took an overdose of sleeping pills, and died three days later in the hospital in Hohenems. The other three women were first held in Bregenz, and then taken to Berlin. Gertrud Kantorowicz was transported to Theresienstadt, where she died in April 1945, only a few days before the camp was freed. Clara Kantorowicz died on February 2, 1943. Information about the third woman, Marie Winters, is incomplete. Presumably, she was deported to the East from Berlin, but where and what happened to her we could only guess.

## **IN VIENNA THEY PUT YOU IN JAIL**

A film is presently in production telling the story of Max Birnbach who, in August 1938, escaped from Austria with the help of a smuggler from Hohenems. The film entitled "In Vienna They Put You in Jail," is by Cheryl Blaylock, narrated by Gerry Birnbach, edited by Roger Acosta, and has music composed by Paul Jacobs. The Museum assisted by supplying information from its library to Ms. Blaylock who intends to give a copy of the film to the Museum when it is completed.

Central to the film is a narrative by Max Birnbach, who is now 90 years old and lives in Portland, Oregon. The film also has excerpts from letters and postcards to Max and his brother Erich from their parents, Julie and Jakob Birnbach, written after the brothers fled Vienna. The postcards continued even after the parents were

deported to the east. They tell of their parents' deprivations and quest for help to escape from Hitler's domain. The necessary exit permits and visas never came and both perished.

Max Birnbach, after being thrust in jail in Vienna on May 15, 1938, escaped on August 12, 1938 with the help of his father and brother. Max and Erich took a train to Innsbruck and then traveled further by train to Hohenems; Max still has the train tickets. In Hohenems, the brothers went to a local Inn, quite possibly the "Gasthaus zur Frohen Aussicht", in the middle of the Jewish Quarter. If they went to that particular Gasthaus, they arrived just in time. The innkeeper, an uncle of Kurt Bollag, Wirt Iwan Landauer, known to help Jews cross the border, fled to Switzerland later the same month.

The innkeeper's son led them towards the river. Fifty yards from the river, he told them the guards passed by every 15 minutes and that once the guards passed they should move on, cross the river without him, and they would be in Switzerland. Max Birnbach reported that the river was 200 feet wide and that he could not swim. That was not important until he fell into a hole in the river. The splash alerted the guard and shooting began. He was dragged under the water by his brother, and soon found himself ashore--facing guards that looked just like the German guards he feared. However, these guards had red crosses on their helmets--they were Swiss.

With the help of the Rabbi from St. Gallen, the brothers were given permission to stay in Switzerland briefly; that stay was at first extended to six months, and then for longer. They, together with many other refugees lived in a refugee camp at the Hotel Krone in Schonengrund, formerly a summer camp. Through the war years, both Max and Erich Birnbach were able to remain in Switzerland. In the meantime, their father was deported in 1939 to the Ukraine. The last successful communication from him to either of his sons was dated October 29, 1941. A package sent to their father was returned in July 1942. Their mother was first forced to move to another location in Vienna and then, on February 15, 1941, deported to Opole, in the Lublinland "Jewish reserve" area of Poland. The last postcard her sons received from their mother was dated March 5, 1942.

In 1947, Max Birnbach was working at a hotel in Biel/Bienne Switzerland, where he met a wealthy man, Mr. Arde Bulova, of the Bulova Watch Company. Mr. Bulova supported Max's application for an American visa and a visa was granted on June 6, 1947. In September 1947, Max Birnbach came to America. By that year, his brother Erich was also living in Zurich. Eventually Erich and his wife moved to Brussels, where his widow and son still live today.

## **A REPORT FROM ERIC BILLES**

We recently returned from our annual visit to Austria and visited the museum again. We were so impressed by the Rosenthal collage that we purchased the book, to contribute to our Holocaust Memorial Center in West Bloomfield, Michigan.

While in Austria we visited many Jewish sites that are little known to Americans. For example, there is a synagogue in downtown Innsbruck, as well as a Jewish cemetery. At the Innsbruck synagogue, passing "Fiaker" drivers quite audibly mentioned the location of the synagogue to their riders. In Graz, in addition to an excellently maintained cemetery and a new cemetery ceremonial hall, there is a gorgeous new synagogue (worth a visit there), built in 2000, out of old bricks from the synagogue destroyed during Kristallnacht, but otherwise strikingly modern, with a fantastic glass cupola inscribed in Hebrew (visit their web site by typing [www.ikg-graz.at](http://www.ikg-graz.at)). The piece-de-resistance is a newly published gorgeous hardcover book on the history of Graz Jewry and its synagogue in German and English. It is full of beautiful and sad color pictures, certainly a worthwhile addition to any Judaica collection at a library or one's home.

In Salzburg, an exhibition ran through January 12 at the Museum Caroline Augusteum of "Juden in Salzburg", that was certainly worth seeing. For the exhibition there is a thick, specially prepared paperback publication on the history of the Jews of Salzburg, in German and English. In Klagenfurt there is also a well-maintained

cemetery and a simple sad memorial to where the synagogue had stood. There is a lovely small synagogue and a Jewish cemetery in Linz. One is struck by the sad loneliness of these sites, as the number of visitors is minuscule.

Of course, the new Jewish Museum in Vienna's Judenplatz is a "must" on anyone's list. In Vienna's Zentral-Friedhof, Tor 1 (the Christian-Jewish section), there is a very visible sign at the entrance encouraging non-Jews to contribute to a fund to maintain the neglected Jewish graves there, as well as a container of stones explaining the Jewish custom of placing stones at grave sites, and encouraging visitors to do so. Indeed, much work is needed. Many of the stones have fallen over, and some sections have only heaps of rubble, where stones are piled up from bombing raids during the war. At Tor 4, the Jewish section, conditions vary from year to year. Some sections are maintained while many of the older sections are over-grown and in need of care. The Tor 1 section has a smaller Jewish section within the large Christian section. You can reach the cemetery via the # 71 streetcar line, from Schwarzenberg Platz, which takes you to all 4 gates. The cemetery is so large that a car, if available, makes visiting a lot easier. Otherwise, as you know, it may take a long walk to see certain parts. Have 1 or 2 Euros ready at the entry gate for the car. If you must go to the administrative office for information, be prepared to be met by a closed office, so it may be better to get info beforehand from the Israelitische Kultus-Gemeinde - Wien (on the web at [www.ikg-wien.at](http://www.ikg-wien.at)) regarding grave locations.

In Burgenland, where we annually visit our "righteous Christian" friends, there are multiple sites of cemeteries and memorials in Güssing, Mattersburg, Stadt Schlaining, etc. etc. In St. Pölten there is a synagogue (non-functioning) and a cemetery. Baden, Mödling, Leoben, Salzburg all have cemeteries and/or synagogues. Of course, Mauthausen is most remarkable and not to be missed. This year we visited a Mauthausen sub-camp at Ebensee (near Bad Ischl), with its cemetery and "Stollen" for the production of rockets. We encourage others to make a pilgrimage of Jewish sites, to remember and to leave stones on the graves.

Should you want to visit the synagogues and cemeteries, other than those in Vienna, a car is a must. Lists of synagogues and Jewish cemeteries are easily obtained on the web. A good beginning is "Jewish Vienna and Austria", a nice booklet put out by the Austrian National Tourist Office. If anyone is further interested they can e-mail me at [edbill@webtv.net](mailto:edbill@webtv.net) or phone me at 248-626-6244.

## FAMILY CHRONICLES

*Excerpt from a Family History In Progress, with focus on Buchau, Laupheim, and Hohenems, the latter being unusually well documented (Partial bibliography included.)*  
 By George Arnstein, Washington, DC

Most Jews—I am confining myself to a specific area in or near Swabia—did not have family names until they were mandated, in Austria in 1787, in Bavaria in 1813, and in other places around the turn of the century. For a thorough exploration of onomastics relevant to the area, there is *Die Familiennamen der Juden* by Erwin Manuel Dreifuss (1927). He and others explore the custom of patronymics and informal names, often pointing to the place or area of origin.

Typical toponyms are the well-documented Oppenheim(er)s in Frankfurt, Heidelberg and Worms, whose roots probably go to Oppenheim on the Rhine where there was a well-known Jewish community. Similarly the Guggenheims, encountered from Buchau to Gailingen but especially in Emdingen and Lengnau in Switzerland, probably came south from Jugenheim on the Rhine. Guggenheim(er)s show up several times in Appendix I. Heilbronn and Ulm are just two examples of imperial cities which expelled their Jewish residents in the Middle Ages. Families known as Heilbronner, Halperin, Ulmer, and Ullman [plus variations in spelling] even today echo this distant origin, often so distant that it offers no genealogical clues worth pursuing.

Spelling was uncertain and there seems to have been little distinction between Heilbronn and Heilbronner, Guggenheim and Guggenheimer, or Binswang and Binswanger. I found a Neuburger ancestor in Buchau listed as Neiburger, and Albert Einstein's ancestors almost certainly go back to a Moises Ainstein shown on the same Buchau 1693 tax list. [Taenzer mentions Rabbi Ainstein in Hohenems]. Adler [see Bibliography] says Moises arrived about 1683 from Gundelfingen which is near Burgau; Sauer [Gemeinden, p.31] shows Baruch Moses Ainstein [presumably Moises' father] as having been admitted in 1665, coming from Wangen am Untersee [Lower Lake Constance] whose migrants, in turn, also came partly from the Burgau area<sup>1</sup>.

Because some records have survived and sometimes have been published, it is possible to illustrate how names changed and became more formalized, more "modern," and also to look at some of the migratory patterns. Patronymics are common to supplement the prevailing use of first names. Also attached were cognomens—descriptive nicknames that can be very helpful, especially as indicators of geographic origin. The addition of "jud" [Jew] could be pejorative or distinctive, as was the reference to physical characteristics. Rather typical is an enumeration of settlers in Hohenems in 1617, as given by Taenzer [p.15]:

1. Jakob jud [jew] from Pfersche [Pferrsee]
- 2.3. Josef and Moyses, brothers, Jakoben's sons from Pferrsee [today part of Augsburg]
- 4.5. Isak Dillkomm and his son Aaron from Immenstadt [west of Hohenems].
- 6.7. Esaias and his brother David from Binswang[en] [NW of Burgau]
8. Schevtle, son of Lazarus from Binswangen.
9. David Natis from Stockach [west end of Lake Constance], and a bit later, four others from the Count of Burgau's domain.

For Buchau we can show similar data; there is Moses, born in 1807 of Basilika Einstein from Huerben and an unknown father from Frankfurt. Since he could not be identified as Moses, son of any father, he was listed in the family register [Folio 47] as Moses Frankfurter, and so are his children.

Family names in Buchau were quite prevalent<sup>4</sup>, often adopted before they were mandated in 1828, sometimes with obvious origins. There is the Schmal family, listed as Oberdorfer but this was crossed out and replaced with Schmal; they were from Oberdorf, a tiny village near Buchau with visible ties to some families named Schmal in Laupheim. They could have come from another Oberdorf am lpf in the Ries (with Noerdlingen as capital). Various Riesers in Buchau originated in the Ries, thus almost certainly were named Rieser to differentiate them from neighbors who had the same or similar first names and often overlapping patronymics. And, to give one more documented example: Maier was a common first name which devolved into a family name under various spellings.

Spelling was inconsistent, complicated by changes, often modernizations or embellishments. For example, Voegle became Veronica or Veronika. Likewise, Sophie became Sofie, Karoline became Caroline then Lina or Line and Fanyevolved as Fanni and Fanny from Franziska. Veit could be spelled Faid or modernized as Wilhelm. But the Bernheims were consistent; in Buchau they were Bernheim; in Hohenems they were Bernheimer, and there is at least one documented marriage between the two. Still, when consulting the name index at the end of Appendix I, there are many entries between Maier and Meyer, even though they sometimes are related.

Shown below are several short lists that include ancestors and also illustrate changes in first and last names, especially the use of sobriquets. To illustrate the nomenclature of the 17th century, here are "59 Stueck" [pieces] who were allowed to return to Hohenems in 1688, as listed by Taenzer [p. 47]:

1. Levi Levit, his wife, five sons, four daughters -11
2. Wolf Levit the younger, his wife and daughter.- 3
3. Laemle Weyl, his wife & four daughters.- 6
4. Jakob Isak, his wife and three sons.- 5

5. Moose Hayum Gumper the elder, Blimle or Fany, 4 boys, two girls.- 8
6. Hayum Moos and Dolce or Katharina, 2 sons, 1 daughter, 1 orphan.- 6
7. Hirschle Levit and Rosle or Rosine, 2 sons, 2 daughters. -6
8. Mayer Isak and Guetle, one son, one daughter.- 4
9. Isak Ullman and Springle, 1 son, 1 daughter.-4
10. Mayer Moos and Hindle (pregnant).- 2 or 3
11. Salomon Isak Loeb, born in Eisenstadt, Austria, & Jetele (pregnant)- 2/3

For 1744 there is another list [Taenzer p.63] of 20 "protected Jews" in Hohenems. Descendants of two brothers, Moses=Kauschele, and Jakob=Jaeckeli, were known by the sobriquets of Kauscheles and Jaeckeles respectively. (Maria Koschel Moos married Veit Neuburger in Buchau.)

1. Jonathan Uffenheimer [Uffenheim is between Nuremberg and Wuerzburg]
2. Maier Jonathan Uffenheimer
3. Kauschele Moos [cognomen, real first name was Moses]
4. Maier Moos, son of the preceding
5. Urban Levi
6. Josef Urban Levi (son of Ammann)
7. Wolf Hirsch Levi
8. Josef Wolf Levi
9. David Moos, Gumpers' son
10. Wolf Moos
11. Isak Levi at the Saege ["the saw[mill]," refers to a mill in Hohenems]
12. Jozle Levi
13. Veit Levi
14. Leb Ullmann
15. Jakob Uffenheimer
16. Salamon Mayer
17. Abraham Landauer
18. Mayer Moos Jaeckelis
19. Jozle Isak Levi
20. Moyses Ullmann

Official additions were:

21. Josef Levi, son of Hirschle
22. Jakob Uffenheimer, also a son of Jonathan
23. Salamon Moos

To be added to this list in 1748 are a group of Jews that had been expelled from Sulz; they petitioned Count Franz Rudolf of Hohenems for readmission; the overlap of the names is visible:

- Emanuel Wolf
- Baruch Wolf
- Levi Weil
- Wolf Wolf, son of Emanuel
- Jakob Levi
- Wolf Levi, son of Josle
- Moyses Levi
- Leb Levi
- o Heirs of Salamon Levi.



The names gradually became a little bit more precise. Here is another sampling from a 1779 Hohenems tax list, including families that had been evicted from Sulz and sought refuge in Hohenems. Note how four different Wolf Levis\* are identified:

- Maier Uffenheimer
- Loeb Moos
- Hirsch Levi
- \*Wolf Levi, son of Veit
- Salamon Mayer at the Gate
- Josef Mayer
- \*Wolf Levi's (Josli's son) Widow
- Gerstle Moos
- \*Wolf Levi, Samuel's son
- Wolf Wolf, Jakob's son
- Wolf Wolf, Borich's son
- \*Wolf Levi, horse trader

This is a rather spectacular example of the overlap in names, the adoption of informal identifiers, and an informal preview of how some family names came to be chosen, sometimes before they were mandated. There were a large number of Levis, who had sought refuge in nearby Sulz during the 17th century, including Josle Levi (my distant ancestor).

What emerges are reliances on patronymics and strong indicators of where the family may have come from, clues where to research next although it may well lead to a dead end.

Taenzer [pp.193-4] prepared a table showing old and new names, sometimes including changes in first names in Hohenems in 1813 when the Bavarian mandate took effect:

- Benedikt, Abraham, Simon, Markus and Salomon Bernheimer had been known as the Brothers Levi Levi.
- Michael Bickart and Heinrich Bickart, no change.
- Benjamin Burgauer, no change. [Taenzer notes that he immigrated from Burgau.]
- Ephraim Gutmann was Ephraim Levi, oldest son of Josef Wolf Levi and his spouse Maria Moos. Their 4 sons and 3 daughters: 9+6 Hirsch (who died in 1792) had descendants named Hirschfeld.
- +Michael moved to Randegg and became Neumann.
- +Lazarus (d. 1806) had descendants named Loewenberg.
- +Wolf became Loewengard; his son left Hohenems, became Hohenemser.
- Moses Wolf Levi, no change.
- Josef Mendelsohn, son of Mendel from Sulz, had been Josef Emanuel Levi.
- Babette Menz was formerly Widow [of] Michael Moos whose ancestors had used the descriptive signature "from Menz."
- Abraham Reichenbach was Abraham Moos.
- Markus Reichenbach was Mayer Moos.
- Lazarus and Kilian Reichenbach changed from Moos.
- Bertha Reichenbach was known as the Widow Loew Moos
- Moses and Martin Reichenbach were known as her sons.
- Benedikt Schweizer migrated from Switzerland [Schweiz]. He had been Benedikt Guggenheim.
- Simon Steinach had a house in the "Steinach" area of Hohenems; he had been Simon Ullmann, but since Samuel Ullmann was the local rabbi, Simon chose Steinach to reduce confusion. Ullmann sometimes had been Ulmer.

- Josef Sulzer was Josef Jakob Levi. Since his grandfather Josle Levi was among those who moved from Sulz to Hohenems, this family had been known as the Sulzer Levis to distinguish it from the many other Levis.
- Lazar Waelsch was Lazar Levi, teacher, suggesting ties to "Welschland," not Wales but argot for Italian [or French] speaking areas.
- Josef Weiler, lived in the "Weiler;" he had been Josle Wolf Levi.
- Jakob Weiler was Jakob Samuel Levi.

Names can be informative as to geographic origin; in Hohenems the great number of Levis tends toward confusion with little latent geographic content.

### FIRST NAMES

The records emphasize men and emphasize their lineage, usually a reference as son of some father. Even this requires care because some names were translated into the local language. Naphtali thus also was known as Hirsch in German; in adjacent Alsace, under French influence as Cerf; and in some English-speaking areas the same animal name became Hart.

In the Rhine-Danube area here under discussion, the endings tended to reflect local dialects, thus Florence Guggenheim-Gruenberg, the Swiss genealogist, gives these examples for Eendingen and Lengnau. (Eendingen and Oberendingen have merged, merely reflect a change of name.) With Lengnau they were the first two Swiss villages which gave residence to Jews<sup>7</sup>. The villages are north of the town of Baden, almost on the Rhine, in Argau; they have marital ties to Buchau and Hohenems.)

Loeb=Jehuda=Judel, but not the same as Loebel=Leipel=Lipman=Arje  
 Salomon=Meschullam=Schmuli  
 Hitzig=Aron  
 Gumpert=Ephraim  
 Morkel=Mordechai=Marx=Marum=Meyer.  
 Her female examples are fewer: Haefele=Eva, and Kela=Karoline.

My own observations show:

Voegle [little bird] =Fanny=Veronika;  
 Breinle=Brigitte;  
 Saraline=Zaezilia, Caecilia;  
 Hindel= Hendle=Helene=Eleanora

### FEMALE NAMES

Before family names were firmly attached, women sometimes were named after their husbands. In the present account there are women named: Binswangerin, either from Binswangen or married to somebody from there; Uhlmaennin married to Uhlmann; and Naumarikin married to Naumark (or Naumarik). And there are translations. The German Johanna shortened to Hanna, changed to or from the French Jeanette, sometimes spelled Schannet, and changed to or from Jette which in turn may come from Gindel. Also Blume [flower] or Blimle [little flower] = Flora from the Latin. There was a fashion for women named Theresia, probably reflecting the influence of Empress Maria Theresia of Austria, as well as a modernizing trend: Various women named Bessle or Baisle are listed in Buchau as Basilika, Kresenz and Crescentia.

### MALE EXAMPLES

As first names became increasingly secular, there were dual names. One practice seems to have been to favor the use of the same initial, like my great-grandfather Leopold Weil whom I almost overlooked when I found him as Loew Weil in the records of his native Baisingen.<sup>8</sup> The tendency was to keep the same first initial, sometimes phonetically, thus Veit= Faid=Wilhelm; Marx=Max=Martin. Lehmann=Leopold. Levi=Ludwig.

Benedict and the Latinized Bonifatius, eventually followed by the patriotic and modern Otto, Siegfried, and Wilhelm. Before the Nazis formulated their Final Solution, they mandated on 17 August 1938 that all Jewish men had to add Israel as a second first name, while all women had to add Sara. For genealogists this is useful because it indicates who was still alive or who emigrated before that date.

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***The Descendants of Philip Rosenthal (1807 - 1859)<sup>1</sup> by Felix Jaffé Brunner, Jerusalem (jaffe\_nm@netvision.net.il)***

*And he (The Lord) brought him (Abram) forth abroad and said, Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them, and he said unto him. So shall thy seed be. Genesis 15:5*

In the 19th century, well-known Hohenems industrialists Philip and his brother Joseph Rosenthal (Gebrüder Rosenthal) founded and managed an important textile factory in Hohenems, as well as similar factories in Dornbirn and Liechtenstein (Burmeister, 1988; Taenzer, 1905). During their lifetime, and well after, the Hohenems factory at the outskirts of town, which at one time employed over 1000 workers, contributed significantly to the economic development of the town.

In the 20th century, its ownership changed several times, and went finally to the Otten family (Otten, 2001). Unfortunately the factory was closed in 2002, due to adverse economic conditions and the increasing competition in the textile industry from third world countries. The business continues however, handling specialty textile products.

Philip Rosenthal married Regina Bernheimer, (1808 – 1871), possibly not only by chance. They came from a similar background, as both were descendants of the small group of Jews – not more than 10 families - who moved from Hohenems to the nearby village of Sulz where they lived for over a century. The Sulz families returned to Hohenems after they had been expelled in a program (Purin, 1981)

The Bernheimer, Brunner, Rosenthal, Sulzer and Wohlgennant families belong to this group. Philip Rosenthal and Regina Bernheimer can be traced back to their common ancestor Josele Levi (1610 – 1685) (Taenzer, 1905). In 21 years they had 14 children, 4 of whom died in childhood. They are buried in the same grave in the quaint Jewish cemetery of Hohenems, overlooking, at a distance, the Rhine valley (Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, 1992 and 1999; Peter, 1988). The grave was restored recently by a group of descendants.

In a period in which arranged marriages were the general rule, one may assume that consolidation of wealth and family assets were among the meaningful factors not to be easily overlooked. But in families of generally rather “bourgeois” and even conservative background partners were also selected carefully and as much as possible in the same “milieu” In their generally long marriage - divorces were almost unheard of - they could share common traditions, religious beliefs and ideals, encouraging them to practice and perpetuate the way of life they had learned in their parents homes. Such choices were often guided by considerations which are eloquently defined in the Italian proverb: “Moglie e buoi, paesi tuoi” (Grabherr, 2001). Finally, the “export” of daughters was frequently practiced, keeping well in mind the importance of a similar background, possibly combined with plans for a larger international business expansion

How were these general principles applied in Philip Rosenthal’s family? Three children, Mathilde, Ludwig and Anton, were married to Hohenems Rosenthal cousins, the children of Joseph Rosenthal, Philip’s brother and his wife, Klara Löwenberg. Two other children, Karoline and Iwan, were married to the Brunner and Bretttauer Hohenems families. Three were married to Viennese families: Julius and Julie married into the same Trebitsch family, and Henriette was married into the Moor family. Finally Sophie married David Bles in Manchester and Jeanette married Abraham Polak in Rotterdam.

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<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from: Jüdisches Museum Hohenems (Ed.), 2003, Rosenthals /Collage einer Familiengeschichte, Materialien zum Ausstellungsprojekt, Band 2.

Unfortunately, it is not possible for the time being to determine the exact number of Philip Rosenthal's descendants with a satisfactory degree of precision, as insufficient or, in some instances, no information is available.

For Julius Rosenthal, Henriette Moor, Juliette Trebitsch, Sophie Bles, as well as Jeanette Polak the information available generally stops with frequently incomplete mention of their children in Taenzer's book. By now such data is practically over 100 years old.

A further element in the approximation of the counting is due to the fact that in the case of descendants with well-compiled family trees, recent births and deaths could not be always actualized.

A tentative total figure is obtained using the information available for the descendants of the married children of Philip Rosenthal, listed by their decreasing birth date.

Julie (born 1832) married Siegmund Trebitsch in Vienna. No information on descendants is available.

Karoline (born 1833) married Karl Brunner in Hohenems, also a descendant from a Sulz family. 70 deceased, 140 living descendants.

Karl and Karoline Brunner emigrated to Trieste, at that time the only harbor of the Austro Hungarian Empire. They had 5 children. 2 No descendants live in Austria anymore, but they can be found in Australia, Belgium, England, France, Israel, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States (East Coast, West Coast and Hawaii). The largest group of descendants lives in several Italian cities (Firenze, Milano, Rome, Torino, and Trieste).

Mathilde Rosenthal (born 1834) married Robert Rosenthal in Hohenems. 6 deceased, 12 living descendants, all in the United States. Two of their descendants, a son and a grandson perished in the Holocaust.

Ludwig married Amalia Rosenthal in Hohenems. 5 deceased descendants, living descendants unknown. At least 4 of Ludwig's 5 children perished in the Holocaust, all except Philip, who was married to Olga Weisz

Julius married Cecilia Trebitsch in Vienna. 7 deceased, living descendants unknown.

Anton Rosenthal married Charlotte Rosenthal. 4 deceased, 8 living descendants, all in Belgium. Anton built a large villa for his daughter Clara Heymann, from where as an elderly lady she was deported to Theresienstadt and murdered there by the Nazis. (Grabherr, 1996; Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, 2002). The villa now houses the Jewish Museum.

Sophie married David Bles in Manchester 7 deceased, living descendants unknown.

Ivan married Franzisca Brettauer. No descendants.

Ivan lived with his wife in Hohenems in the beautiful Villa Rosenthal, an extraordinary mansion (Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, 1997). It is still in existence with its original elegant fin-du-siècle furniture, but unfortunately in a state of advanced decay.

Jeanette married Abraham Polak in Rotterdam. 7 deceased, living descendants unknown. Henriette (born 1854) married Salomon Moor in Vienna. 1 deceased, living descendants unknown.

Taking into account the lack of sufficient up-to-date information, an approximate preliminary figure of Philip Rosenthal's known descendants stretching over 6 generations, is 274, of which 107 are deceased and 167 are living.

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<sup>2</sup> Not only Karl, but also his two brothers, Jakob and Mark, and a sister, Rosine, as well as some of their cousins emigrated to Trieste, where most of them founded relatively large families. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and at least until World War 2, the largest concentration of Hohenems descendants could probably be found in this city, taking also into account the presence of the Menz and the Brettauer families.

At least 7 descendants perished in the Holocaust. This total figure could be arrived at mainly because the descendants of at least four families mentioned above are in possession of privately compiled, fairly accurate and up-to-date family trees. Thus the importance of the establishment of further family trees cannot be stressed sufficiently.

It can be noticed that the majority of the known descendants of Philip Rosenthal appear to belong to the Brunner family. The exact significance of this "statistical anomaly" is difficult to establish. Probably the picture would change significantly once all the descendants of the remaining 6 children can be found and counted.

Obviously this significant lack of information cannot be considered as satisfactory. It is believed that it could be improved significantly by more genealogical research, starting with the study of archives for at least the last 100 years in Vienna, Rotterdam and Manchester. It has been suggested repeatedly to the Hohenems Jewish Museum to entrust as soon as possible an appropriate organization with such a project. Until now, this proposal has not borne fruit, because of lack of time and adequate funds.

For the time being it may be thus preferable to leave it to the reader to ponder whether any correlation could be established between Philip Rosenthal's numerous, albeit incomplete descendants and the divine promise quoted at the beginning of this article.

The author welcomes any further information on the subject that the reader could provide.

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## BRUNNER FAMILY REUNION

The Brunner family will have a reunion in Rome from June 26 - 29, 2003.

Other families are encouraged to arrange reunions and of course feel free to publicize the reunions in our newsletter.

