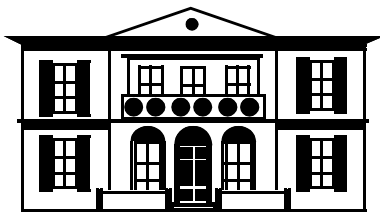


# IN TOUCH

JULY 2005



Stephan Rollin  
*Founder*

Claude Rollin, Esq.  
*President*

Mark Brunner  
*Vice President*

Uri Taenzer, Esq.  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

#### *Trustees*

Dr. Robert Amler

Ronald Bernell

Doris Billes

Nadia Follman

Harvey Gutman

James Hirschfeld

Francesca Brunner Kennedy

Hon. Susan Shimer

Monica Wollner

*In Touch* Editor:  
Susan Shimer

Please send your *In Touch*  
articles to our editor  
Susan Shimer  
16 Pond Lane  
Armonk, NY 10504  
[sshimer@optonline.net](mailto:sshimer@optonline.net)

or

Uri Taenzer, Esq.  
123 N. Church St.,  
Moorestown, N.J. 08057  
Phone: 856-235-1172  
Fax: 856-235-1911  
[taenzeru@juno.com](mailto:taenzeru@juno.com)

## A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

CLAUDE ROLLIN, ESQ.



Dear Friends,

It seems most appropriate that I am writing this letter on Father's Day since my father was a founder and enthusiastic supporter of the American Friends until his death last year. Since I can no longer speak to him, I'll speak to you about a

subject he felt so passionately about, namely, supporting the Jewish Museum in Hohenems.

The Jewish Museum in Hohenems is one of only three Jewish museums in all of Austria. One of its most important functions is to educate people, young and old, Jewish and non-Jewish, about the events of the past and how those events may influence our future. In my judgment, the museum staff, ably led by Dr. Hanno Loewy, has done an out-

standing job creating interesting programs and exhibits, giving countless tours and responding to numerous requests for information and assistance. Thanks to their tireless efforts, many thousands of people from around the world have been able to see, hear (and hopefully understand), the rich history of the Jews who once lived in Hohenems.

The heart of the museum is its permanent exhibition,  
*(Continued on page 2)*

## NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

DR. HANNO LOEWY

### THE TÄNZER-SCHNELL EXHIBITION

On March 8, 2005, the Museum opened a double feature exhibition, one that presented two impressive personalities who made significant contributions to Hohenems history. These personalities, *Aron Tänzer and Bartolomäus Schnell*, were two exciting and very different characters.

The show, *Aron Tänzer, Rabbi, Researcher, Collector and Loving Pedant*, was organized on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his masterpiece: "The History of the Jews of Hohenems," first published in 1905.

The exhibition about this great German-Jewish liberal rabbi and reformer was curated by Eva-Maria Hesche and Patrick Gleffe of the Museum Staff, with support by Göppingen Archive director, Dr. Karl-Heinz Ruess. The exhibition included documents in the archives in Göppingen (near Stuttgart), where Tänzer served as the community's rabbi from 1907 until his death in 1937, as well as newly found documents that could be shown thanks to the generous support of this project by the Tänzer family in New Jersey, Erwin Tänzer and Uri Tänzer. This made it possible to present Aron Tänzer's

personality in a profound and intimate way that touched a lot of visitors.

The exhibition presented Aron Tänzer's various attempts to create order and harmony in the world and to understand Jewish history in the context of assimilation. Tänzer's own illusions about the German-Jewish "symbiosis" became the source of much anguish at the end of his life, as is evidenced by his will in which he declared that no German language prayer should be spoken at his funeral.

The Tänzer exhibition is now on display in Göppingen,  
*(Continued on page 2)*

## A LETTER...

(Continued from page 1)

which includes a lot of interesting artifacts and historical documents that help bring to life our remarkable family histories.

Next year, the Museum staff plans to completely redo the permanent exhibit, which has not been updated since the museum first opened in 1991. The staff is just starting to develop ideas for this major redesign project. You can read some of their preliminary thoughts in the article entitled "The New Permanent Exhibition Vision of the Past – Vision for Tomorrow," which appears on page 5 of *In Touch*. As their plans are further developed and begin to crystallize, we will provide more details in future editions of this newsletter.

Over the years, the American Friends and some of its individual members have contributed to the museum in many important ways, including providing donations to support specific projects. We will undoubtedly be asked to contribute to the overhaul of the permanent exhibition since it will be a major undertaking requiring significant financial support from numerous public and private sources. In the next few months, I will confer with the trustees of the AFJMH to discuss how we might best support this project. Perhaps we can establish a special fund and find a way to get matching funds for it to increase our resources. We will certainly keep you informed about our discussions.

I hope everybody is enjoying the summertime! Thanks for your continued support of the American Friends.

All the best,

*Claude Rollin*

## NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

(Continued from page 1)

presented by the Municipal Archives, which also has a significant permanent exhibition about the history of the Jewish community.

At the opening of the exhibition, Uri Tänzler himself participated in a conference of historians, organized by the Museum and the *Alemannia Judaica Association* on March 12-13, 2005. That conference brought approximately 45 historians and representatives of local museums, memorial sites, archives and initiatives from the region between Freiburg and Ulm, Basel and Hohenems to the Museum. Uri Taenzer's article on his visit appears on page 10 in this issue of *In Touch*.



*Uri Taenzer presenting at the Alemannia Judaica Conference.*



*The Taenzer Exhibit.*

Parallel to the great show on Aron Tänzler, the Museum, together with the Vorarlberg State Library, presented an exhibition on *Bartolomäus Schnell. Rowdy, Free Artist and Pioneer of the Art of Printing in Vorarlberg*. The exhibition project, put on track years ago by the Jewish scholar, the late Erik Weltsch, while working with the State Library of Vorarlberg, enabled the Museum to present precious prints from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, produced by the first printing shop in Vorarlberg.

Schnell's printing factory was installed in 1616 by the Count of Hohenems, to foster his political ambitions and to create resources for the cultural and political life of his territory. The year 1616 was just a year before the Count decided to encourage the settlement of Jews in Hohenems in order to foster its economic future. The exhibition included the greatest masterpiece of book printing in Vorarlberg (as Aron Tänzler put it in 1900), the Ems

Chronicle of 1616, as well as many other prints, such as newspapers, bath books, theater plays, political pamphlets and necrologies from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It also included the study Aron Tänzler wrote about Schnell in 1900, the first text ever written about the history of printing in Vorarlberg. The exhibition also covers another project of Schnell and Wolf, the "first Jew of Hohenems", who planned on printing a Hebrew prayer book in the 1620s. That project came to a halt when Wolf was killed (under circumstances never established) in 1624, and it finally ended with a legal conflict between Schnell and Wolf's heirs. Thus, Hohenems never became the center of Hebrew printing as it might have become under more fortunate circumstances.

The exhibition also presented documents related to the history of the Jewish Hohenems Reading Society, founded in 1813, and reestablished (naturally not as a purely Jewish enterprise) in 2004.

During the period that the exhibition was in place, the Museum, in collaboration with the Printing Museum Dornbirn, installed a printing workshop in the basement, where children, as well as adults, had the opportunity to experience old time printing technologies themselves.

(Continued on page 3)

## NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

*(Continued from page 2)*

### THE CURRENT EXHIBITION

#### **Jewish "Kitsch" And Other Secret Obsessions**

Identity Shopping, God In Detail And The Desire for the Objects of Luck Jewish Kitsch@Hohenems – Why?

The world of Jewish Kitsch today is best explored on the Internet and in souvenir shops. Jewish objects promise identity in a Diaspora that did not cease to flourish after the rise of the State of Israel. Kitsch seems to be a promise of luck that maybe doesn't come to us in this world, but at least can be represented. The kitsch of the Diaspora represents our bonds to a tradition that has become a secular, cultural one for many of us, but is still based on the religious laws and the history of a people. And it represents our relation to the utopia that is called Jerusalem. "Next year in Jerusalem" one says every year on Pessach. This Jerusalem does not exist in the Near East of today, but it does in our dreams. Particularly in the U.S., a market for Jewish products emerged on the scene about a hundred years ago, a market that offers all kinds of ritual objects and educational toys, ironic and kitschy keepsakes, and the every day equipment for a more or less kosher way of life.

After the catastrophe of the Shoah, the crime of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Jewish tradition has become the subject of nostalgia, not only by Jews. And the longing for identity moves everybody in a mod-

ern world of mobility and migration, of global exchange and the search for "authenticity," that again and again leads into conflicts and wars.

The Jewish culture is rich in rituals and its objects, performed mostly at home. This has created an abundance of identity objects that can be found in nearly every Jewish household, be it religious or not. Only a minority adheres to the laws of Kashrut and religious tradition in a literal sense. Nonetheless, the material heritage representing these traditions is still meaningful to most of us.

Thus, the field of contemporary Jewish objects is a world in which to explore the productive process between religious traditions and secular culture, and the ironic twist that make some of them a provocative comment about the contradictions of Jewish life today, between old myths and new challenges.



*A troll figure from the Kitsch Exhibit.*

On May 29, the Jewish Museum opened its great summer show Jewish Kitsch And Other Secret Obsessions. More than 200 guests and journalists from Austria and abroad attended a most joyful event with many surprises. Extensive press coverage from the great newspapers in Austria, Switzerland and Germany signals a growing interest in the Museum's activities.

At the opening, the Museum's staff handed the microphone for the "keynote lecture" to Thiemo Dalpra, a local pantomime artist, who interpreted the collection presented at the

*(Continued on page 4)*



*Opening Kitsch exhibition with Clown Thiemo Dalpra and Mayor Richard Amann.*

## WE ARE PLEASED TO WELCOME THE NEW ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR



In March 2005, the Museum hired Birgit Sohler as the assistant to the director.

Birgit Sohler brings to the Museum her experience running a bookstore. She also worked for several years as assistant to the manager of a design bureau. Ms. Sohler has been active in different cultural institutions in Vorarlberg, organizing literature festivals and film programs.

In the three months since her start at the Museum, Birgit Sohler has enabled the Museum to make great progress in professional project management and public relations.

The Museum staff is delighted that she has joined them and look forward with confidence to her future endeavors on the Museum's behalf. ❖

## NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

(Continued from page 3)

Museum by his own means.

Michael Wuliger, one of the editors of the Berlin Jewish weekly, *Jüdische Allgemeine*, introduced the audience into the world of Jewish Kitsch with a humorous speech that touched everyone's heart.

Since 2001, Michael Wuliger has presented his Shlock Shop in the *Jüdische Allgemeine* weekly in Berlin. In these articles, he has presented ironic statements about Jewish Kitsch and commodities found on the Internet. I and others joined Mr. Wuliger in surfing the World Wide Web, shopping in duty free shops and souvenir stands. The exhibition and its catalog present their choice of Jewish contemporary objects, between secular dreams and ritual tradition, searching for God and identity. The catalogue of the exhibition, *Shlock Shop. Die wunderbare Welt des jüdischen Kitschs* (edited by Hanno Loewy and Michael Wuliger), has 144 pages, and 48 color images, and is available through the Jewish Museum Hohenems (12,10€ plus shipping and handling).

### In the Museum's Parlor - Feinkost Adam (Adam's delicatessen)

The Berlin based Jewish artist Anna Adam attacks prejudices and clichés about Jews, with an ironic slant and a lot of good and sometimes vicious humor.

The satirical project Feinkost Adam™ requires all your senses: you can see it, you can smell it, you can touch it, you can hear it, you can taste it. For the Jewish Museum Hohenems, Feinkost Adam has prepared new offerings which you can enjoy in the Museum shop.

Anna Adam, born in 1963 in Germany, studied art and education in Düsseldorf and is a member of the diasporic artists group *meshulash* in Berlin. She has had a number of exhibitions in Germany and abroad. Her controversial project Feinkost Adam™ first appeared in the Jewish Museum of Fürth a number of years ago, and has made her one of the best known Jewish artists in Germany.

### Jüdisches (Jewish things)

The Frankfurt based photographer Peter Loewy has portrayed Jewish things, ritual objects and keepsakes, artifacts and objects of memory, little collections and arrangements.

Thanks to the confidence with which he was welcomed, he could readily move through the private world of the homes of Jews living in Frankfurt today – and to explore what they display on their shelves and tables, in boards and show cases, on walls and doors. What we see are the markers of identity, still life and little paradise, kitschy and ironic, nostalgic and melancholic. Like a child, we search for the “Jewish” things in the puz-

zle of every day life in all kinds of objects and sentiments: Jewish things in a magic landscape of privacy.

Peter Loewy, born in 1951 in Israel, has turned to the objects of wishes and dreams, the world of Kitsch, food culture and commodities, and of material self representation, in many of his photographic projects. A number of his projects have been published. For example, his Bagel book and his project about window shopping in Paris. He is currently working on a project on artist's studios. His book *Jewishness* (Kehayoff Publishers, Munich 1997) is available in bookstores in the US too (ISBN No: 3929078473).

### ...and other secret obsessions

Hidden in the drawers of the Museum's permanent exhibition showcases are some of the collections of friends of the Museum: fetishes and talismans, smoking pipes and art, Judaica and Islamic postcards, historical documents and the chaos in kitchen drawers, all kinds of collecting activity human beings perform in their every day life.

The Exhibition will continue until October 8, 2005.



### FORTHCOMING EXHIBITION

#### *Anti-Jewish knick-knack and popular images of Jews, The Finkelstein collection and its context*

In the fall 2005, the Jewish Museum will confront a delicate subject: the material heritage of centuries of anti-Jewish fantasies and popular images of Jews. The exhibition will be based on about 400 mainly anti-Semitic objects from the collection of Gideon Finkelstein (Belgium), as well as current phenomena of anti-Semitism, philo-Semitism and conspiracy theories.

The stigmatisation of “the Jews” and “Jewishness” in Europe was traditionally characterized from the perspective of European confrontation with the “Orient,” as well as Christianity's desire to purge its own past – an ambivalent attempt to eliminate and to assimilate the oriental and Jewish heritage of Europe. We now encounter the same phenomenon in the context of a post-colonial world. Jews are now, from a self-conscious “oriental” perspective and in the frame of new anti-Jewish conspiracy theories, the “western” intruders and a challenge to a self-centered, Oriental (“Islamic”, “Arabic” etc.) ideology of “culture”, that seem to be – at the same time - attractive to political movements like the no globals in Europe and the Americas today.

(Continued on page 5)

## NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

*(Continued from page 4)*

Interestingly enough the images and objects that express these ideologies are strikingly inter-cultural. The success for instance of the Egyptian television special on the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion", a Czarist Russian propaganda piece, was meant to establish "anti-western" cultural identity, by copying one of the most powerful cultural myths of Europe.

On the other hand, the traditional Christian motivated fascination by everything "Jewish" has experienced a kind of renaissance in the West. This is now expressed in the form of philo-Semitic (even philo-Zionist) modes and fashions as much as by anti-Semitic (and anti-Zionist) ideologies. To confront anti-Semitism in a globalized world seems to be a task no easier than before. To examine its repertoire is a necessary element of this effort. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue and a volume of essays.



### THE NEW PERMANENT EXHIBITION

#### *Vision Of The Past - Vision For Tomorrow*

The permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum dates back to 1991. It has been fifteen years since a marvellous team created this remarkable

presentation of Hohenems' Jewish history. Since that time, Hohenems and its Museum have become the focus of vivid, thought provoking remembrances – and a meeting point for locals, descendants, Jewish tourists and academics from Europe and the world.

Not the history of the Jews of Hohenems, but a lot has changed since the Museum opened its doors in 1991. The world around us is different, as are the questions our visitors ask.

Museums are backbones of our culture – and a medium for dialogue about cultures in a global world. Migration has become a decisive part of everyday lives in Europe, and Jewish history has become a focus of interest with increasing significance even for a non-Jewish audience.

For many years now, the descendants of Hohenems Jewry have contributed significantly to the life of the Museum – and its archives and collections. The reunion of 1998 made a change: being founded as a Jewish Museum by non-Jews for a non-Jewish audience, the Hohenems Museum has now become part of a dialogue that involves many different perspectives.

The Museum is a living community today of Jews

and non-Jews alike, connected by a mutual interest in the heritage of Hohenems and its impact on our world. The descendants can make a difference in the Museum's well being at a crucial moment of its existence.

In 2006, the Museum's team will concentrate on the relaunch of its permanent exhibition. The tasks for which it is taking responsibility are a great challenge:

–To tell the rich and meaningful story of Hohenems Jewry in a modern and attractive way, addressing different audiences who have a renewed interest in Jewish life and an understanding that is informed by contemporary problems of migration, globalization and the new composition of cultural identities;

–To present biographies and personal stories, regarding newly acquired objects and documents that are the fruit of continuing communication with descendants living all over the world;

–To develop the Museum's story showing the manifold connections Jewish life in Hohenems has had with the world around- with Switzerland, Tyrol, and Vienna, Italy and Germany, Israel and the US, even South America and Australia. In February 2007, the Museum wants to open

the new permanent exhibit, and a year later we want to celebrate it together with the descendants in a reunion in the summer of 2008, ten years after the unforgettable event of 1998.

The Museum looks forward to the preparation of the new permanent exhibit with much excitement and looks forward to expending much energy in making it happen. It will be looking for funds from many sources, including its present generous public and private sponsors, the municipality of Hohenems and the State of Vorarlberg, the federal government in Vienna and the Association of the Museum. It also will include corporations, foundations and personalities in Austria, Switzerland and Germany in formulating its plans this fall. We, The Museum, would be particularly grateful for the generous support of the American Friends of the Jewish Museum Hohenems, continuing our terrific cooperation. ❖

ARTICLE FOR  
STUDIA  
ROSENTHALIANA  
BY EVA  
GRABHERR

Dr. Eva Grabherr, the first Director of the Museum, has published an article in the *Studia Rosenthaliana*, Volume 36, entitled "Multilingualism Among the Jews of Hohenems: A Micro-Historical Study."

This is a fascinating article derived, in part, from her doctoral work on the Löwenberg letters found in Hohenems. Dr. Grabherr's article discusses the educational systems for Jewish students in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and the extent to which they were proficient in both Hebrew (or Yiddish) and the national language and compares the experience of Hohenemers to the experience in other areas, such as Pressburg (Bratislava) where Yiddish remained the language of learning and teaching at the Yeshiva until the Yeshiva was closed down.

Dr. Grabherr, notes the importance of multilingualism for pre-modern Jewry as a means of engaging in commercial transactions with non Jews. She also points out that during this period literacy was not that wide spread and that scribes were important both for Jews and Christians. ❖

*The entire article can be viewed on the internet at [http://poj.peeters-leuven.be/content.php?url=issue&journal\\_code=SR&issue=0&vol=36](http://poj.peeters-leuven.be/content.php?url=issue&journal_code=SR&issue=0&vol=36)*

## MUSEUM'S CAFÉ AND THE READING SOCIETY



In March 2005, the new Museum's café opened its doors for visitors.

The foyer of the Museum has been turned into a friendly lounge that welcomes the guest with comfortable seats for getting together, reading and enjoying cappuccino, kosher Italian Wine and little snacks, such as bagels with cream cheese and lox or the Museum's café's specialty: the

Jewish wedding cake, following the recipe included in a Yiddish love letter written in Hohenems in 1670, and included in the Museum's permanent exhibition.

The walls of the room remain decorated with images of the Hohenems Reading Society of 1813. On February 1, 1813 Hohenems Jews founded a private society. Its purpose: "informal gatherings of the members, finding diversion in discourse and the reading of most remarkable passages of periodicals and books". The reading society soon had about 30 - predominantly young - Jewish members, among them teachers, clerks and secretaries employed by Hohenems' merchants. Although the society existed only for a few years, it was the

first sign of the emerging tendencies of reform and enlightenment within the Jewish community. Judging by a list of books found in the Löwenberg-house (Schweizer Str. 4), the citizens of Jewish Hohenems of those times were familiar with the major works of the Enlightenment and contemporary drama.

In 2004, the Hohenems Reading Society was newly founded, reestablishing a culture of literature and discourse, once flourishing in Hohenems, by public readings and discussions about literature in the café. This has encouraged new visitors to come to the Museum and broadened its appeal to the public. ❖

## HOHENEMS-MERAN-ST. GALLEN

GERHARD SALINGER

The best historical source for a study of the Jews of Hohenems is Aron Tänzer's "Die Geschichte des Juden in Hohenems," published originally in 1905. Dr Tänzer served as rabbi in Hohenems from 1896 to 1905.

The history of the Jewish community in Hohenems can be traced to 1617. Some years before this time, the local ruler (Landherr) Reichsgraf (count) Kasper von Hohenems invited Jews to settle there to improve the economic conditions of this little market town (Marktflecken). He had houses built for them, permitted the building of a Jewish school and provided the land for a Jewish cemetery. Some years later,

some of the Jewish families were well enough established to build elegant mansions.

Up to the 1850s the Jewish population was growing constantly. The numbers were 274 in 1792, 493 in 1820 and between 500 and 541 during the years 1830 to 1849. When Jews were gradually permitted to settle elsewhere, a number of Jewish families left Hohenems. The Jewish population in 1860 was still 490, 1866 465, 1868 271, and 1878 165.<sup>1</sup> This indicates that between the 1850's and 1878, two thirds of all Jewish residents had left Hohenems. After this time there was a further exodus of Jewish families.

Southern Tyrol was up to 1918 part of Austria; in 1919 it became part of Italy. This region included Bozen (it. Bolzano), where Jews already lived in medieval times. After the blood libel accusations in Trient (Trent, it. Trento) in 1475, when several Jews were murdered and the rest expelled, the rabbis placed a Cherem (Herem, Ban) on the area and Jews were either not permitted to resettle there or avoided this area.<sup>2</sup>

The reestablished Bozen (Bolzano) Jewish community during the 19<sup>th</sup> century to about 1940 numbered barely hundred persons. Meran (Merano) was avoided by Jews until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when several Jewish

*(Continued on page 7)*

## HOHENEMS-MERAN-ST. GALLEN

(Continued from page 6)  
families settled there. Meran was a well-known spa (Kurort) and a synagogue was built there in 1901. Only in 1905 was an official Jewish community established there.<sup>3</sup> At that time, the rabbinate for Tyrol and Vorarlberg was moved to Meran and Dr. Aron Tänzer became the first rabbi. He remained there two years-until 1907 and accepted then the rabbinate in Göppingen in Württemberg.

In later years Meran had 780 Jewish inhabitants, mostly foreign citizens. In 1945, the number was only 64 and 1970 30. Between 1990 and 2000, only 38 Jews lived in the former region of South Tyrol.

Vorarlberg was the least populated land of Austria. It had in 1923 only about 139,200 inhabitants, which was less than the Jewish population of Vienna at that time. The Jewish community then consisted of 24 persons and was concentrated in Hohenems.<sup>4</sup> The president of the community was Ivan Landauer; board members were Harry Weil and Bernhard Schwarz. Jacob Weil officiated as cantor. Dr. Link, the rabbi of Innsbruck, was at that time in charge of rabbinical matters in Tyrol and Vorarlberg. The Jewish school in Hohenems was no longer used for Jewish education and Cantor Weil resided at that time in the former rabbi's house.<sup>5</sup> During the following years both Tyrol and Vorarlberg came under the administrative control of the Innsbruck Jewish community. During the Nazi years, about the time of the deportations in 1942, the remaining Jews still living there had to move to Vienna where they shared the fate of the other Jews still living there.

The Jewish cemetery in Hohenems was not destroyed by the Nazis, but gradually became neglected due to lack of maintenance. After the war, in 1945, the small Jewish community of Innsbruck was financially unable to maintain the cemetery.

Since a number of Jewish families had previously moved from Hohenems to St. Gallen, they or their descendants established the "Verein zur Erhaltung des Jüdischen Friedhofs in Hohenems" (Organization for the Maintenance of the Jewish Cemetery in Hohenems). Three hundred and fifty years after the establishment of the cemetery, this group came together on September 3, 1967 to commemorate this event. The speaker was Dr. Lothar Rothschild, then rabbi in St. Gallen.<sup>6</sup>

[A newspaper report from the year 1970 mentions the funeral of Harry Weil, who emigrated to the United States. At his request, he was buried at the Jewish cemetery in Hohenems and many local residents participated at his funeral. He was born in Hohenems in 1898 as the son of the local cantor of the community. Before his emigration he played the organ at the synagogue and was active in the local Gesangund Orchesterverein.]

A Jewish community in St. Gallen was not officially constituted until 1863. Their new cemetery was not used until 1869 when the first burial took place. Before that time, the deceased were brought to Hohenems.

The first synagogue in St. Gallen was established in 1866 and was located in rented quarters in a courtyard

near the city center. About this time, the first rabbi, Dr. Engelbert, arrived in St. Gallen. The rented facility previously used was replaced in September 1881 by a representative synagogue building located at Frongartenstrasse. Among the speakers at the inauguration was Dr. Adolf Guttmann, then rabbi in Hohenems.

Both the Hohenems and St. Gallen communities adopted what was then called "moderate reform," which means that the basis of the religious service was traditional, but with changes and innovations. Among those were the introduction of the vernacular besides the Hebrew language, the use of an organ ("harmonium," not a pipe organ) and deviations on festivals from the traditional Torah readings. Dr. Engelbert's successor as rabbi was Dr. Emil Schlesinger (1900-1939). Much more is known about Dr. Lothar Rothschild who became rabbi in St. Gallen in 1943 and retired in 1968.<sup>7</sup> His successor was Rabbi Imre Schmelczer.

Little statistical information exists about the size of the Jewish community in St. Gallen. In an interview in 1990, the then president of the community, Simon Rothschild, mentioned a figure of 120 persons for that year. Since the Jewish religion was not recognized by the Canton St. Gallen as a "confession," Jews were not obligated to be members of the Jewish community because the latter could not be incorporated. He promised to do everything in his power to have the legal status changed. He estimated that the numbers of Jews in the canton may amount to 350 (1990). ❖

### References:

1. A. Tänzer, *Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems*, page 310.
2. *Philo Lexikon*, 1935, p. 766.
3. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol Eleven
4. *Jüdisches Jahrbuch für Österreich*, 5693 (1932/1933), page 8.
5. *Ibid*, page 89/90.
6. *Montfort, Zeitschrift für Geschichte, Heimat- und Volkskunde Vorarlbergs*, 19. Jahrgang 1967, Heft 3, page 198 f.
7. Dr. Lothar Rothschild, who died in on March 27, 1974 in St. Gallen, was born in Karlsruhe (Baden) in 1909. His first rabbinic position was in Saarbrücken. He was a prolific writer, speaker and publicist. His weekly Torah comments were published in Germany and Austria. In addition to St. Gallen, he also officiated as rabbi in Kreuzlingen, a small community south of Konstanz near the German border. Among his publications were "Im Strom der Zeit, Hundert Jahre Israelitische Gemeinde St. Gallen" 1863-1963, which is here cited.

# JEWISH SETTLEMENTS SOUTH OF HOHENEMS

GERHARD SALINGER

## SULZ, VORARLBERG, AUSTRIA

Under the rule of many feudal landowners in Europe, it was well known and accepted that the Jewish subjects of these rulers would serve them as a source of revenue to fill their coffers.

This was also the case in Hohenems in 1675 under the rule of Count Carl Friedrich who exploited his Jewish subjects financially, but tolerated them as long as they satisfied his fiscal needs. After his death in 1675, his son Count Franz Karl succeeded him.

On the ninth of January 1676, he confirmed the letters of protection (Schutzbriefe) granted to his Jewish subjects in Hohenems previously under Carl Friedrich, but this was of short duration. Four months later, without any known reason, he expelled them from Hohenems. By a threatened fine of 20 fl. (Florin), they were also prohibited from attending the markets in Hohenems.

After their expulsion they moved south to the Austrian domain of Feldkirch where they received the protection of the Austrian authorities. A number of Jews settled in Sulz, a small town between Hohenems and Feldkirch.

Thus began a relatively brief period between 1676 and 1744 in which a small Jewish community was in existence in Sulz<sup>1</sup>.

The periodical "Rheticus" published an article by Karl Heinz Burmeister, "Die Synagoge in Sulz, 1738-1744," in which the author describes this brief chapter in Vorarlberg's Jewish history.<sup>2</sup> Major sources for this

publication are Aron Tänzer's book on the Jews of Hohenems and Bernhard Purin's, "Die Juden von Sulz. Eine jüdische Landgemeinde in Vorarlberg 1676 - 1744."

Sulz is to this day small enough, so that the address is the house number, not the street number. At the time of the Jewish settlement in Sulz, the town had a total population of 200-300. Already in 1663, two Jewish families resided in Sulz, those of Josle Levi and Mayer Moos. They were granted permission to live there for two years by Archduke Sigmund Franz. The "Schutzgeld" they had to pay was 18 fl per family. One year later, in 1664, Josle Levi, father of three adult sons, lived in Altenstadt near Feldkirch and then returned to Hohenems in 1666.

Most of the Jewish settlers stayed in Sulz for only about twelve years, because in 1688 they were able to return to Hohenems. Only the wealthiest Jewish families remained in Sulz after 1688, where they occupied four houses. They were Salamon, Abraham and Wolf Levi and were tolerated by the Austrian government. Gradually the number of Jewish families increased to ten, but the additional families were mostly descendants or relatives of the existing families. During the period from 1676 until 1688, the total Jewish population consisted of about 60 to 70 persons. In 1685 Wolf Levi moved from Aulendorf to Sulz. He and Josle Levi's son Salamon were considered to be quite wealthy.

In addition to the regular taxes, each of the Jewish families had to pay annually

100 Taler to the town of Sulz and 200 fl to the Austrian government as "Schutzgeld."

After the death of Salamon Levi, his son Josle became the leader of the Jewish community in Sulz. His house contained a prayer room and his wealth permitted him to employ a rabbi and a teacher.

There were substantial commercial relations between the Jews of Sulz and Hohenems. Tänzer lists the following Jewish households in Sulz in 1743.

1. Josle Levi, Salamon's son
2. Jacob Levi, son of the Josle Levi
3. Jacob Wolf, son-in-law of Josle Levi
4. Emanuel Wolf
5. Baruch Wolf
6. Wolf Levi, Josle Wolf's son
7. Samuel Levi
8. Levi Lazarus Levi
9. Levi Weil
10. Wolf Wolf, Emanuel's son
11. Moses Levi

Burmeister describes the opening of a new synagogue in 1738, in one of the four existing Jewish houses. It was most probably established in a wing which had been vacated by one of the Jewish families who had returned to Hohenems. Only for six years, until 1744, was this place of prayer in use.

That year, 1744, was a year of calamity for the Jews in Sulz. It was at the beginning of the second Silesian War (Schlesischer Krieg), when Prussia and France were allied that French troops approached Vorarlberg. Vorarlberg

mobilized its reserves (Landsturm) and was able to repel the French forces. Once the danger was over, the reserves were demobilized and returned to their homes.

During the prior years, hatred had been kindled against the Jews. There was political unrest and criminal elements under the leadership of local officials were ready to expel the Jews and destroy and plunder their property in Sulz. This destruction of Jewish property extended over several days. The Jewish houses were totally demolished and everything destroyed. This mob action resulted in a planned expulsion of the Jews from Sulz.

Following these events, court action by the Austrian authorities took place and a trial took place in Innsbruck. There were 14 defendants who were charged with participating in what was called at that time a "Raubzug" (pillage and plunder). The authorities treated the perpetrators rather leniently. However, Jewish victims received a partial restitution in the amount of 2900 fl.

Since that time no Jewish community was ever reconstituted in Sulz.

## AM ESCHNERBERG, LIECHTENSTEIN

"Die Jüdische Gemeinde Am Eschnerberg - 1637-1651" is a brief chapter of Jewish history in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the area south of Hohenems.

Karl Heinz Burmeister describes in this publication in great detail the development of this Jewish settlement.

*(Continued on page 9)*



## JEWISH SETTLEMENTS SOUTH OF HOHENEMS

(Continued from page 8)

The Eschnerberg community was located near the villages of Eschen and Mauren, in the northern part of the domain (Herrschaft) Schellenberg, which is located southwest of Feldkirch, in the northern part of the principality of Liechtenstein.

Individual Jews settled in the area in 1637. The impetus for the establishment of a larger settlement was created at that time by the expulsion of the Jews from Feldkirch. The settlement of Feldkirch was in turn influenced by the fact that the Jews in Rheineck were under pressure to leave that town. Count (Graf) Kaspar of Hohenems, who was also the Austrian overseer (Vogt) in the domain of Feldkirch, welcomed the Jews to his territory. But the local citizens of Feldkirch opposed any Jewish establishment there for economic reasons and obstructed the Count's plan. It was the fear of Jewish competition in commerce and trade which influenced that attitude. Gradually, by 1641, all Jews had left Feldkirch and had found a new refuge near Eschen and Mauren. The Eschnerberg settlement was not a closed ghetto, but was spread over a considerable area.

Since it was so close to Eschen and Mauren, these towns demanded in 1649 payment of local taxes. Both of these towns had a "Judengasse," so there is a probability that individual Jews owned or rented houses there. However, Burmeister is of the opinion that the name "Judengasse" may have been coined at a later time.

According to Burmeister, there were at least 20 male adult

Jews in the Eschnerberg Jewish community. Including women and children as well as service personnel and teachers, the total number of persons may have exceeded 100.

In 1649, Abraham Neuburg served as rabbi and Moses Bernheim as advocate.

A prayer room probably existed in the house of the rabbi. A sketch in Burmeister's paper (page 162) points to the house number 10 and 11 in Popers (Mauren) where this prayer room may have existed. These buildings, later privately owned, burned down in 1856. Presumably there was a mikvah, but Burmeister could not find any specific evidence. Fridolin Tschügmell refers to a "Judenbüchel" which was not far from the location of the prayer house. There is also speculation that this "Judenbüchel" may have contained a small Jewish cemetery, but Tschügmell has no proof for this.

Burmeister names the following persons comprising this community:

1. Rabbi Abraham (probably Abraham Neuburg who may be from Thannhausen)
2. Moses Neuburg, son of the above, originally from Thannhausen
3. Isaac Neuburg, probably a relative, also from Thannhausen
4. Samson Bernheim, called "der Alte," presumably also from Thannhausen
5. Samuel Bernheim, son of the above
6. Moses Bernhim, probably from Thannhausen, leader of the community who was

frequently in Innsbruck "for negotiations"

7. Salomon Bernheim
8. Elias Bernheim, probably from Thannhausen
9. Jacob Dannhauser or Theinhauser, who according to his names comes from Thannhausen
10. Jacob Simon/Sima
11. David Filischrebest
12. Joseph (also Josle) Henli
13. Jacob Henli
14. Nathaniel
15. Lazarus Bock
16. Wilhelm Bock
17. Marx Hildefüng
18. Oswald Kaufmann
19. Anstel Kaufmann
20. Mendline Liebermann

Since the Jewish residents in the Eschnerberg vicinity came as refugees to this area, their community could not be considered wealthy. Their money lending practices played a minor role and were not a substantial source of income. They were primarily traders and horse and cattle dealers. Their trading area covered a substantial territory and not just the immediate vicinity.

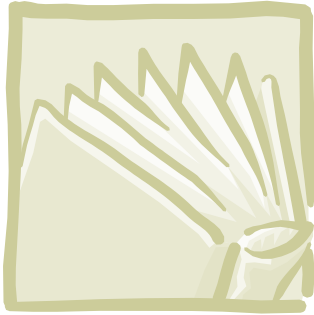
There were times when they came in conflict with their non-Jewish neighbors, but for the most part they were protected by the local authorities. But enmity between the local Jews and their non-Jewish opponents existed. Outside of Hohenems, Jews in other localities were not provided with a letter of protection ("Schutzbrief") and were merely tolerated, mostly for a period of time. This protection by local rulers could at any time be withdrawn.

This seems to have occurred in the case of the Eschnerberg Jews, although details are not known. The community was dissolved before July 19, 1650, but a number of Jews remained until Martini 1651. An order entered in 1650 specified that all debts owed to Jews had to be repaid "by Martini," which in 1651 fell on March 13<sup>th</sup>.

As Burmeister explains, it is unknown to what locations these Jewish families migrated. In some cases, he believes they returned to those places from which they had originally come. ❖

### References:

1. Aron Tänzer in "Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems" p. 41 f.
2. Rheticus, Heft 4-1992, Jahrgang 14, page 205 f



## BOOKS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE AMERICAN FRIENDS

We have available a few copies of the 1998 descendants reunion book at a price of \$35. We also still have a few books of the history of the Synagogue, at a cost of \$45.

Please contact Uri Taenzer if you would like to buy one of these. ❖



## “YOU’VE GOT EMAIL!”

If you would like to receive your copy of *In Touch* by email, please drop a line to Uri Taenzer at:

taenzeru@juno.com

# HOHENEMS REVISITED

URI TAENZER, ESQ.

It was a wish fulfilled. An exhibition and symposia to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of my grandfather’s book: *“Die Geschichte der Juden in Hohenems und im übrigen Vorarlberg.”* Although Marlena and I had just been to Hohenems in October, 2004 in connection with the Kantomania concert and exhibition, I was thrilled to return on March 12<sup>th</sup> to participate in the programs launching the *“Aron Tänzer, Rabbiner, Forscher, Sammler und liebevoller Pedant”* exhibition which ran from March 9th to May 8th.

This was truly an emotionally charged, once-in-a-lifetime, experience. Our family’s esteem for our patriarch, Rabbi Aron Tänzer, transcends our admiration for his impressive literary accomplishments. He fathered seven children, five by my grandmother, Rosa (who passed away in 1912) and two children by Bertha who was murdered in Theresienstadt. One child, Olga, died in infancy. Paul and my father, Fritz, as well as Irene, were born in Hohenems. Hugo was born in Meran. Erwin and Ilse were born in Göppingen. The exhibition includes

numerous photographs of my parents, uncles and aunts and their spouses during various stages of their lives. Also displayed are many letters and original documents reprising the stations of Aron Tänzer’s life.

Credit for the high caliber of the exhibition belongs first and foremost to our amazing and indefatigable Museum Director, Dr. Hanno Loewy. For many months, Hanno, Eva-Maria Hesche and Patrick Gleffe (of Innsbruck) assembled a mosaic of Aron Tänzer’s literary legacy, including original historical records generously loaned for the exhibition by Dr. Karl Heinz Ruess, archivist of the city of Göppingen. My grandfather’s patriotic service and personal sacrifices as chaplain in the “Bug Armee” on the eastern front during WWI is commemorated through photographs, by his diaries, in his book *“Die Geschichte der Juden von Brest-Litwosk,”* and by collected letters from front-line soldiers. I am grateful to our good friend and JMH stalwart, Felix Jaffe, who retrieved these letters and other memorabilia from the archives of Hebrew University in Jerusalem. I was particularly intrigued by

the original color painting of the Hohenems Synagogue. This was a gift given to my grandfather in honor of his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday by the Hohenems congregation. It is the same wonderful painting featured on JMH postcards and various brochures.

I was particularly thrilled that most of the original documents which my uncle Erwin entrusted to the Museum at its formation and those which I brought at the time of the 1998 descendants conclave were on display.

Another very exciting and unexpected aspect of my visit pertained to the annual meeting of the “Alemannia Judaica” which took place at the Museum during my stay. I met fascinating curators of various Jewish museums in southern Germany. Their presentations as well as photographs of the event are featured on [http://www.alemannia-judaica.de/jahrestagung\\_hohenems\\_2005.htm](http://www.alemannia-judaica.de/jahrestagung_hohenems_2005.htm). Nostalgic floodgates opened when I mentioned to Dr. Christiane Walesch-Schneller that my maternal grandparents, Joseph and Rosa Burgheimer, were born in Breisach and Kippenheim, respectively. That serendipitous encounter opened a whole new chapter which compels a visit the “Blauen Haus” in Breisach and environs on our next trip to Europe.

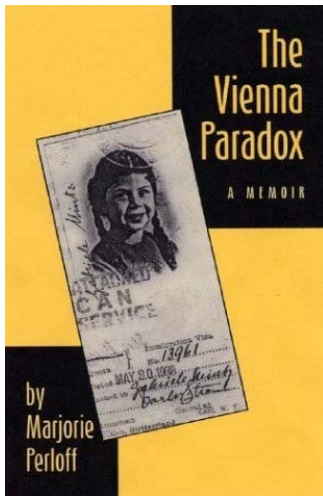
I am grateful to everyone associated with the Museum as well as Mayor Richard Amann who welcomed me with open arms. Finally, a special thank you to Astrid Loewy for her warm and gracious hospitality. ❖



Uri with Dr. Karl Heinz Ruess, Bürgermeister Amann and his wife.

# THE VIENNA PARADOX, A MEMOIR BY MARJORIE PERLOFF

SUSAN R. SHIMER



Marjorie Perloff, a descendant of Joseph Rosenthal, one of the Gebrüder Rosenthal, was born Gabriele Mintz in Vienna. The day after the Anschluss she left for Zurich with her parents and brother Walter. A short time later, the family emigrated to the United States. Subsequently, she studied at Oberlin and Barnard, took her PhD in English literature at Catholic University, and began an academic career culminating at Stanford University, where she is now Professor emerita of English and Comparative Literature. She is also recognized as a leading American literary critic.

While there is extensive literature on the experience of Jewish émigrés from Nazi Germany/Austria, Professor Perloff tells a delightful and informative tale detailing her family history from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, through the 20<sup>th</sup>. She describes their life in Vienna, their hasty departure from that city and their subsequent adjustment to the United States. I, the editor of your Newsletter, who also left Vienna at an early age, was

fascinated, and I am not alone.

The review by Douglas Clayton of the Harvard Graduate School of Education in *World Literature Today*, January-April 2005, states that it is an “interesting, highly nuanced, even elegant book.” It tells of “her family’s flight from Vienna to the United States...and is also an insightful account of their forced transition from the refinements of high Central European culture to the democratized, popular culture they encountered in their new homeland.” The book tells “the intertwined stories of her parents, grandparents, and sundry other relatives. The result is a rich portrait of a fascinating, ambitious family and its social milieu, both before and after the Nazi annexation of Austria.” The review continued that “[m]ixed with these complex, memoiristic elements are equally ambitious considerations of Austrian, European and American history and of an impressive range of ideas about culture and society.”

A review of the book by Corinna Lothar in the *Washington Post* states that it is “a fascinating and lively account of the cultural, political and intellectual time in which Marjorie Perloff lived; in the Vienna she was too young to remember firsthand but which comes alive in detailed family memoirs and letters, and then in the United States, where she would become a distinguished professor of English and a literary critic. It’s what a memoir should be,

told with wit and insight into a life well lived.”

Tag Gronberg of Birkbeck College, London, writes in *Textual Practice*, Vol 19, #1 (Spring 2005) that “[o]ne of the chief fascinations of this book is the way in which the format of the memoir is deployed to present different periods and national cultures (pre-Second -World War Vienna and the post-war period in the USA) not only as contrasts but also as symbiotically interrelated.”

A number of the reviews I have read report details about the book; I will not do that here, but rather encourage you to read *The Vienna Paradox*. There is so much to learn.

As Adam Kirsch put it in *The New York Sun*, her “achievement is all the more valuable because Ms. Perloff was born into a world on the brink of annihilation, which now survives only in memory: the refined, assimilated, always precarious paradise of Jewish Vienna. In telling the story of her transformation from Gabriele Mintz, born in Vienna in 1932, to Marjorie Perloff, leading American literary critic, she offers a probing and affectionate tribute to that vanished milieu.... The book ends as a charming New York memoir, richly evocative of 1940s Jewish life in the Bronx and the Upper West Side.” ❖



“IN VIENNA  
THEY PUT YOU  
IN JAIL: THE  
MAX BIRNBACH  
STORY”  
BY FILMMAKER  
CHERYL  
BLAYLOCK

We have previously reported about this film recounting Max Birnbach’s harrowing flight from Vienna to Hohenems and then through Hohenems across the water to Switzerland and his internment in that country.

At the time of our last report, the film was a work in progress. Since that time, Blaylock’s film was honored as Best Documentary at the Long Island International Film Expo in 2004, and featured in last year’s Portland Jewish Film Festival, as well as other festivals throughout the United States.

In December, Safra Hall at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City was filled for a showing of this film and to honor Max Birnbach, now 92 years old. Some of the letters featured in the film were donated by Mr. Birnbach to that Museum for their permanent collection. Ms. Blaylock recently visited the museum and presented a copy of the film to it. ❖

# IN TOUCH

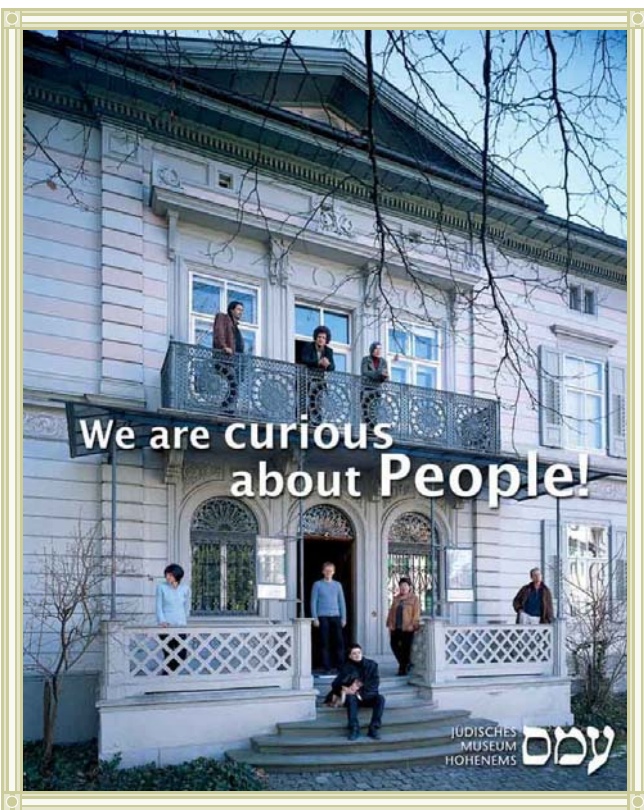
JULY 2005



We're on the Web!

<http://www.jm-hohenems.at>

The Jewish Museum of Hohenems, as a regional museum, remembers the rural Jewish community of Hohenems and its various contributions to the development of Vorarlberg and the surrounding regions. It confronts contemporary questions of Jewish life and culture in



Europe, the diaspora and Israel - questions of the future of Europe between migration and tradition. The museum also deals with the end of the community of Hohenems, the regional Nazi history, the expulsion or deportation of the last members of the community, anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. Along with these fragmented lines of regional and global history, it is also devoted to the people and their histories and maintains a relationship to the descendants of Jewish families in Hohenems around the world.

The permanent exhibition in the Heimann-Rosenthal Villa, which was built in 1864, documents the history of the Jewish community in Hohenems which existed for over three centuries until its destruction during the era of the Nazi regime. The museum offers annually changing exhibitions and an extensive program of events. ❖

## JOIN US . . .

BECOME A MEMBER AND LET'S KEEP *IN TOUCH!*



During the meeting of the descendants of Jewish families from Hohenems in 1998, the idea to found the American Friends of the Jewish Museum Hohenems, Inc. emerged. The association unites the numerous descendants living in America and supports the Jewish Museum

of Hohenems in various ways. Annual dues are \$25. We hope to count on you to join today. Dues can be sent to:

**PO Box 237  
Moorestown, NJ 08057-0237**

Any additional contribution you could make would be very

much appreciated and thus enable the American Friends to continue to make important contributions to the Museum at Hohenems as well as to other endeavors designed to contribute to knowledge of the Hohenems Jewish Community as it was when our ancestors lived there. ❖