



MONHEIM AM RHEIN

REMEMBRANCE INSTEAD OF FORGETTING

*“No person is forgotten until
his name is forgotten.”*

Gunter Demnig

Stumbling Stones in
Monheim am Rhein



3rd edition

www.monheim.de

A note about using this brochure

The focus of this brochure is the list of all the Stumbling Stones laid in Monheim and Baumberg. The list begins on page 13 and is arranged alphabetically by street name. All street names and house numbers are up to date as of December 2019. The terms marked with an → arrow in the text are explained on p. 66.

Walking tours or bike tours can be undertaken along the Stumbling Stones. Suggested routes for tours are provided on pages 62 through 65.



HIER WOHNTE
JOHANNA HERZ
JG. 1873
DEPORTIERT 1942
ERMORDET IN
TREBLINKA

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In 2003, the Town of Monheim am Rhein, together with the artist Gunter Demnig, began laying Stumbling Stones as a lasting memorial to the victims of the National Socialist dictatorship.

During daily walks through the

streets, the Stumbling Stones inspire reflection on the darkest times in German and Monheim history. At the same time, they are a constant reminder to resolutely oppose any effort to downplay, deny or even repeat the crimes of that time.

The first victims commemorated were the members of the Herz family, Monheim residents of the Jewish faith who were disenfranchised, persecuted, deported and murdered. In addition, one of the first Stumbling Stones was dedicated to the Catholic priest Franz Boehm, whose sermons criticizing state arbitrariness

continued even in the face of threats to his safety. Boehm was deported to the concentration camp in Dachau, where he died.

Other Stumbling Stones bear the names of forced labourers who died. During the Second World War, more than 1,400 people from Wehrmacht-occupied countries were pressed into forced labour in agriculture, the trades and industry in Monheim, Baumberg and Hitdorf. Stumbling Stones commemorating them were laid in 2018 and 2019.

To date, 72 Stumbling Stones and a Stumbling Threshold have been laid in Monheim am Rhein for the victims of the National Socialist regime. Now in its third edition, this brochure is intended to serve as a handbook and guide. It leads us to houses, farms, factories and other places to which the victims were closely tied. May this brochure help breathe life into the motto of "Remembrance instead of forgetting".

1hr Daniel Zimmermann

Daniel Zimmermann
Mayor
of the Town of Monheim am Rhein



Guests from the Polish partner town of Malbork also took part in the laying of Stumbling Stones in December 2018.





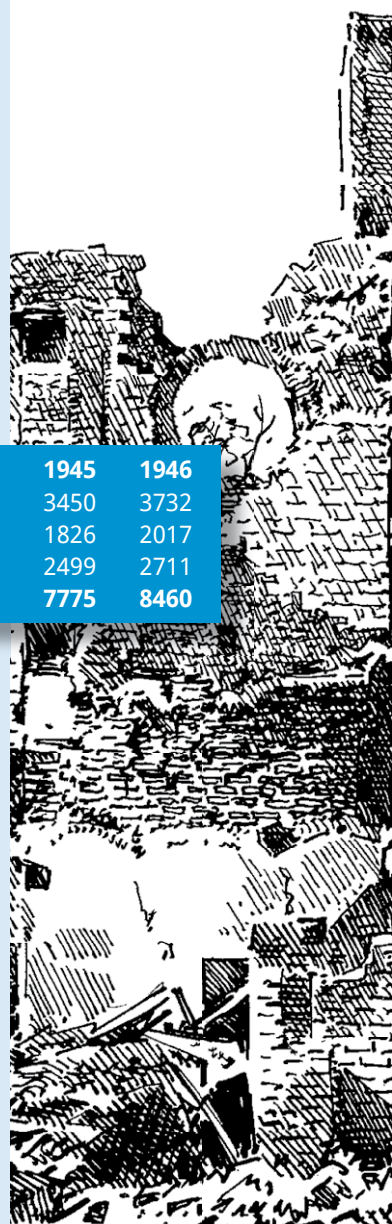
Monheim, Baumberg and Hitdorf 1900 to 1945

Beginning in April 1939, the municipalities of Monheim and Baumberg and the town of Hitdorf formed an administrative collective, the Office of Monheim. All three towns were largely rural in character at the time, a situation that was little changed even after several industrial operations were located there. The population nevertheless grew significantly beginning early in the 20th century:

	1900	1920	1929	1935	1939	1945	1946
Monheim	1853	2785	3164	3604	3512	3450	3732
Baumberg	1208	1576	1562	1745	1768	1826	2017
Hitdorf	1810	2070	2200	2431	2569	2499	2711
Total	4871	6431	6926	7780	7849	7775	8460

The total population thus grew by nearly 60 percent between 1900 and 1939. Strikingly, Baumberg experienced growth of around 46 percent; Hitdorf by as little as 42 percent. In the community of Monheim, however, the population almost doubled. For the largest of the three municipalities in particular, then, a structural change had begun, a change as remarkable as the strong growth subsequently seen after the three communities became a town in 1960.

There was little change in population in the wartime years of 1939 through 1945. The slight decline can be explained by deaths in the war and by the emigration of families who, especially in the final phase of the war, fled to safety or saw their homes destroyed.





*The Church of St.
Gereon following the
nighttime bombing
raid of February 21,
1945*

The events of the war can be summarized in the following figures:

- ▶ The air-raid warning station in the Town Hall recorded 1,034 alarms and 22,582 incendiary and explosive bombs dropped.
- ▶ In Monheim and Baumberg, 162 residential buildings were completely destroyed or severely damaged in bombing raids and artillery fire.
- ▶ At least 113 civilians lost their lives in Monheim and Baumberg, 51 of these alone coming in the bombing raid on Monheim on February 21, 1945.
- ▶ Of the soldiers drafted into the Wehrmacht from Monheim and Baumberg, at least 181 were killed. It is unknown how many German or Allied soldiers might have been killed in combat within today's town limits.
- ▶ During the war, at least 44 forced labourers lost their lives, more than half of these as a result of the war.
- ▶ 13 fellow citizens of the Jewish faith from Monheim and six from Hitdorf fell victim to the Shoah.

The Jews of Monheim

The long tradition of the Jewish community of Monheim is commemorated by six gravestones in the cemetery on Hasenstrasse, which was designed as a memorial. The oldest legible inscriptions date to the 1890s, such as those for Bernhard Herz (1830–1896) and his wife Friedericka, née Josephs (1826–1891). Most recently, Helene Wagner (née Herz) was buried there in 1953, followed in 1960 by her husband Hermann. Her tombstone warns:

“Let the dead rest in peace”

Jews have been living in Monheim since the 13th century. They handled financial transactions for the Counts of Berg in Cologne, an activity in which Christians were prohibited from engaging at the time. The last source with the mention of a Monheim Jew dates from the year 1349. This was the year when the plague epidemic reached Cologne. The Jews were framed as the source of this typically fatal infectious disease, prompting their most sweeping persecution to date on German territory. Only a few were able to flee and

emigrate. The Nuremberg Memorial Book also refers to Monheim as one of the communities in which Jews were killed and burned.

For several centuries thereafter, there were no more Jews living in the Bergisches Land region of Germany. The 18th century, the age of the Enlightenment, bore witness to a more sizable influx when the restrictions on economic activity were relaxed somewhat and religious tolerance had increased.

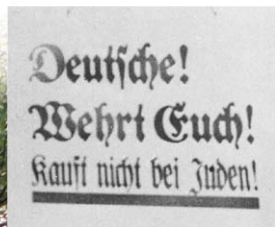
Monheim reported a Jewish family once again at the end of the 18th century: Simon Herz (b. 1751), together with his wife Carolina (b. 1761), moved to Monheim. Their eldest daughter, Veronika, was born in April 1790. Four sons and another daughter followed over the years.

The family lived in house no. 34, on what would subsequently become Grabenstrasse, located somewhere around today's house no. 12. Simon Herz was a butcher and livestock dealer. These occupations ensured the income of Jewish families for more than 150 years.





From September 1, 1941, Jews were required to display a yellow star (shown above) in plain sight on their clothing. Already in 1933, the National Socialists had called for the boycott of Jewish businesses (below).



The Jewish cemetery on Hasenstraße was laid out after permission was granted in October 1844 to build a house of prayer, and today has the character of a memorial.

The small Jewish community experienced its best days in the mid-19th century. A house of prayer opened in 1844 on Grabenstraße, close to what is today house no. 10, and the Jewish cemetery was built on the Sandberg. The first to be buried there was presumably the founder of the community, Simon Herz, who died in 1846 at the age of 95.

The situation deteriorated in the 1880s. The considerably smaller community abandoned the house of prayer and joined the synagogue community of Langenfeld.

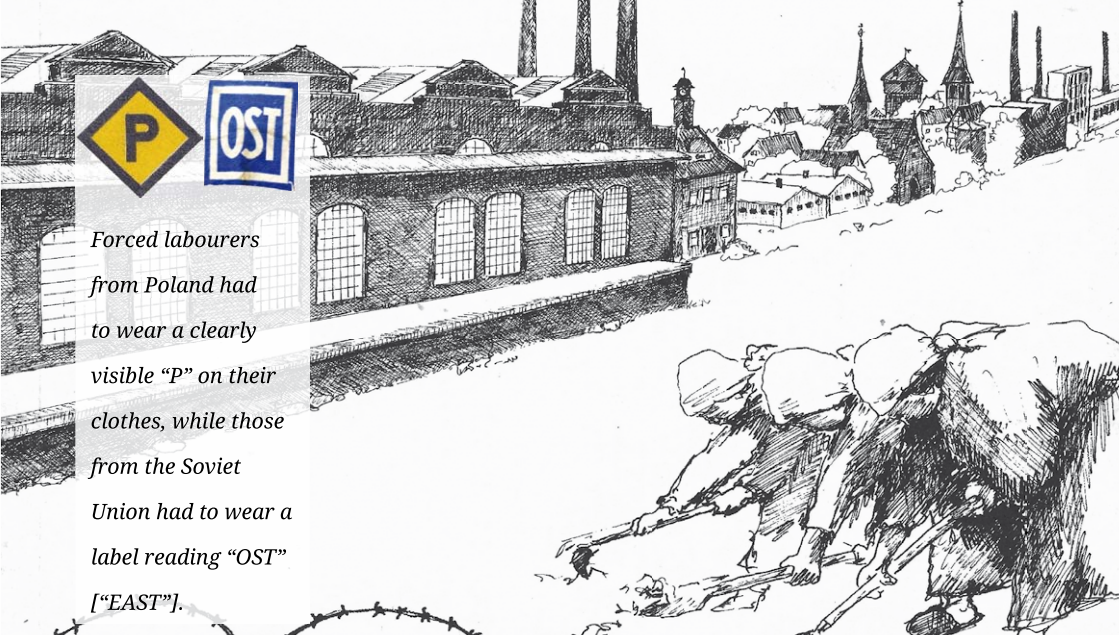
Like other such measures, the nationwide boycott of Jewish businesses on April 1, 1933, staged mainly by SA men, served to deprive Jewish families of their livelihoods. They became impoverished and lost their homes and other property. In the night of the pogrom on November 9-10, 1938, Jewish homes were looted and destroyed, their inhabitants insulted and mistreated.

The night of the pogrom resulted in the following toll for the entire Reich:

- ▶ More than 400 people were murdered.
- ▶ At least 1,400 synagogues and houses of prayer, along with more than 7,500 Jewish-owned businesses, were set ablaze, destroyed or severely damaged.
- ▶ Hundreds of Jews committed suicide out of despair.
- ▶ Around 30,000 male Jews were beaten out of their homes and abducted to concentration camps where hundreds died as a result of the most severe mistreatment or exhaustion.
- ▶ Nearly all Jewish homes were demolished and robbed.

On September 1, 1941, the "Police Ordinance on the Identification of Jews" was issued, stating: "Jews [...] are prohibited from appearing in public without the yellow star that identifies them as Jews."

The Holocaust began for the Jews of Monheim in 1941 as well, with their transport to the extermination camps. The only ones to survive were Isidor Herz, who lived in Gelsenkirchen at the time, and Helene Wagner (née Herz), who was married to a Protestant. The four-member Blumenfeld family had already emigrated to Palestine in 1933 and 1935 (cf. p. 27).



Forced labourers from Poland had to wear a clearly visible “P” on their clothes, while those from the Soviet Union had to wear a label reading “OST” [“EAST”].

Forced labour

During the Second World War, some 13 million workers were forcibly brought to Germany. They accounted for about 22 percent of the total population. More than 1,400 forced labourers came to Monheim, Baumberg and Hitdorf, a figure that corresponded to roughly 18 percent of the local population.

In the spring of 1940, an example was made of the first large group of forced labourers, who were Polish, in the form of a set of decrees, which for five years then developed into a routine and was intensified further along the way: The Polish forced labourers assigned to work in industry, often families with children, were housed in camps; agricultural workers were housed separately from the Germans on the farms where they worked. From early 1942, the guarding of the camps was further intensified with the recruitment of Soviet workers. Inhumane so-called “hygiene measures” prior to and after transport were added as well.

Any contact with Germans was prohibited, under threat of stiff penalty: “Anyone who

deliberately and without authorization associates with a prisoner, or with anyone else held in custody by official order, and who, in particular, communicates with him or her by means of words, signs or in any other way, in order to transmit something to, or to have something transmitted from that person, shall be punished with a fine of up to 150 Reichsmarks, or with imprisonment of up to six weeks.”

Wages for the forced labourers were paid according to the rates in effect at the time, but mostly according to the lowest such rate. Extra pay could not be granted, and no remuneration was paid in case of illness. A 15% “social compensation levy” was payable to the state from these wages. No consideration was given in exchange for this levy, and the proceeds were used to finance the war.

The Poles were largely prohibited from participating in public life. They were not permitted to travel by bus or train, to go to cinemas or swimming pools, or to celebrate mass in Polish.

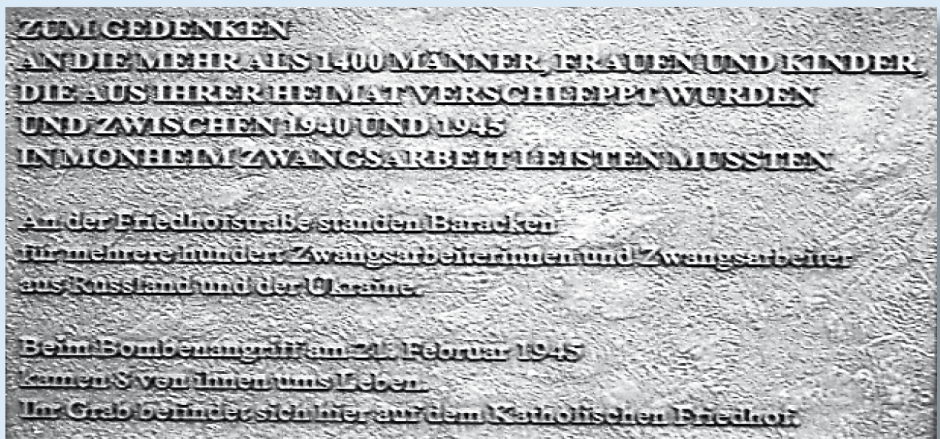
Anyone evading forced labour by escaping made him- or herself liable to prosecution and was pursued by the police.

All in all, there were at least 1,416 forced labourers working in Monheim, Baumberg and Hitdorf, thereof:

- ▶ 240 Poles, among them at least 21 prisoners of war
- ▶ 180 Dutch
- ▶ 125 Belgians
- ▶ 94 French, with many prisoners of war among their ranks
- ▶ 6 Serbs
- ▶ 320 Russians, among them an unknown number of prisoners of war
- ▶ 279 Ukrainians, among them an unknown number of prisoners of war
- ▶ 172 Italians, among them at least 165 prisoners of war

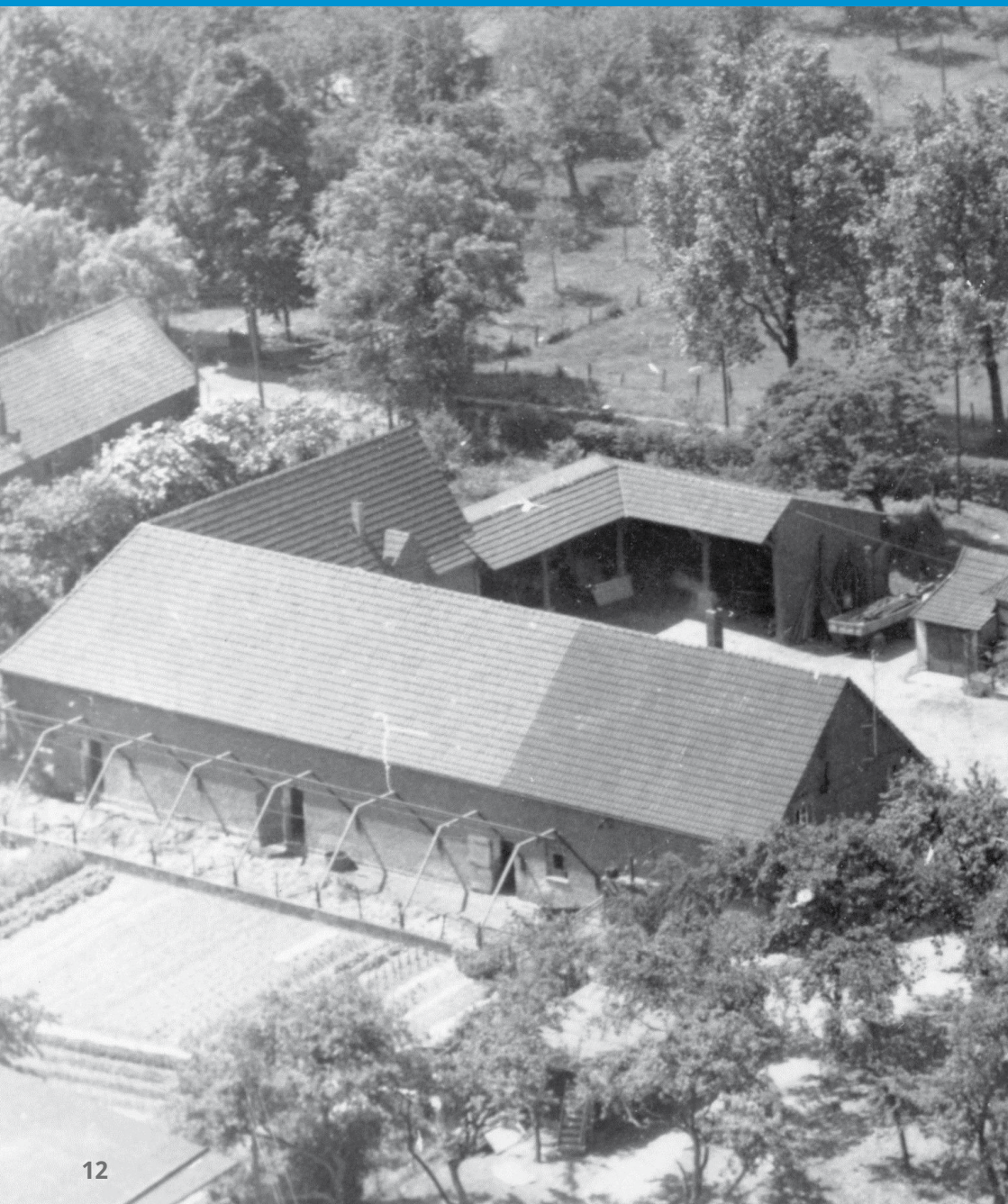
The German Reparations Act of August 2, 2000, does not sufficiently account for the fact that the agricultural labourers

- ▶ were restricted in their freedom of movement,
- ▶ were not permitted to attend leisure-oriented and cultural events,
- ▶ typically were supplied with rations inferior to those accorded industrial workers,
- ▶ were often housed in camp-like conditions, and in any event were kept separate from relatives and often forced to live in bad conditions,
- ▶ were subject to the discriminatory requirement of displaying a “P” label sewn into their clothing (for Poland) and an “OST” label for workers from the Soviet Union,
- ▶ faced the threat of severe sanctions, possibly including the death penalty, for non-work-related contact with Germans, and for sexual relations in particular,
- ▶ constantly had to expect the authorities to monitor compliance with these restrictive residence conditions as closely as they did for industrial workers.



Placed on the wall of the Catholic cemetery at the initiative of pupils of the Peter-Ustinov-Gesamtschule, this commemorative plaque recalls the forced labourers in Monheim, Baumberg and Hitdorf. The Polish prisoners of war who came to Monheim as early as 1939 were the first to be pressed into forced labour.

The Stumbling Stones in Monheim and Baumberg



Bleer Straße 41 (Klarenhof)



Józef Olczewski

was born on October 8, 1897, in Siemiechow (Poland). He was married and Catholic. From October 7, 1940, until his death on February 4, 1944,

the farm hand resided and worked with Wilhelm Herriger at Klarenhof. According to the death certificate, Józef Olczewski died of a heart attack.

He was survived by his **wife Paulina** (b. 1899) and **daughter Aurelia** (b. 1925), who were also employed by Herriger as farm hands.



Klarenhof is one of the oldest farms in Monheim. Its name dates back to the Order of the Clarisines, which had leased the farm in the 14th century. The aerial photograph taken in 1957 shows the farm and residential buildings of the Klarenhof.

Vogtshof is named after the three Vögten (judges) from the Bergisches Land region in the Aschenbroich family, which owned the farm in the 18th century. The photo from 1958 shows buildings that are no longer standing today.



Bleer Straße 43 (Vogtshof)



In early 1940, the Polish couple Katharina and **Johann (Jan) Krawiec** came with four children and Johann's younger sister **Franziska**, all born in Jezowe, to Vogtshof, where they worked for farmer Heinrich Roskothen. The Krawiecs had emigrated to France before the war. After that country was occupied by the German army, the entire family was drafted into forced labour.



The eldest son in the Krawiec family was his father's namesake, **Johann (Jan)**, born on October 8, 1923. He only lived to the age of 22. Without specifying a date, the registration file notes: '† [Langenfeld-] Galkhausen'. According to a directory in the Catholic parish archives of St. Gereon and Dionysius, Johann Krawiec died on April 20, 1945, "from a gunshot wound and was given a church burial". It is unclear, however, why there was no official record of his death in Monheim or Langenfeld.



In his memoirs of his "Youth at Voigtshof", Heinz Roskothen (b. 1930) writes that Johann Krawiec was "struck down by a friend – presumably out of jealousy – with a gunshot to the head on a moving motorcycle" ("Wir geben Zeugnis 1935 – Monheim – 1950", Schelmenverlag Jean König, Monheim am Rhein 2001, p. 197 f.).

The family's single, 20-year-old daughter Stanisława Krawiec gave birth to a son, Eduard, at St. Josef Hospital in September 1942. As Heinz Roskothen reports, she had "apparently become pregnant unintentionally". On August 25, 1945, Stanisława Krawiec married a 22-year-old Ukrainian fitter, Felix Franziczek Zielinski, with whom she was staying at the time in the Lottenstraße camp for foreigners. She certainly might have made his acquaintance before then, but she would not have had permission to marry him, because "workers from the East" were prohibited from marrying.

Son Stanislaus Krawiec was sent "to Westphalia to dig trenches" in September 1944 at the age of 19, presumably to the → Todt Organization. Franziska Krawiec moved to a private household in April 1943.

Bleer Straße 201 (formerly the Blee Estate)



The fitter **Kazimierz Załęski** from Poland was forced to work on the farm of Peter Poßberg, the former Blee Estate, beginning May 30, 1941. Załęski died on November 13, 1941, in Cologne-Ehrenfeld; his death was reported to the registry office there by an official of the Lindenburg district hospital.

Załęski was born on March 7, 1914, according to the registration card in Rosotnik (Sredni District); according to information in the registry office in Cologne-Ehrenfeld, however, he was born in Kolaki (Makowski Province). Załęski was single and Catholic.

Nothing has been preserved from the old buildings of the Poßberg farm. This picture showing the farmhouse was taken in 1958.



4 Franz-Boehm-Straße 3



After the municipality of Monheim had acquired the house at Franz-Boehm-Straße 3 for 5,300 Reichsmarks on May 22, 1939, it became the last stop for almost all of the Jews remaining here before they were deported to the extermination camps. Only Helene and Hermann Wagner were not forced to move into the so-called “Jews’ House” and instead continued to live at Frohnstraße 26 (cf. p. 28).

The Jews were relocated to barracks to facilitate their deportation. Even in mid-1939, then, this state of affairs had been reached in Monheim – far sooner than in most other towns and communities. The residents of the “Jews’ House” no longer owned any property, were unemployed and lived far below the subsistence level. There were seven of them remaining at that time:

- ▶ **Emanuel Herz** (80) and **daughter Mathilde** (50)
- ▶ Joseph Herz (74) and his sisters Sara (71) and Johanna (66) (cf. p. 38)
- ▶ Alfred Herz (57) and his wife Goldine (57) (cf. p. 24)

The livestock dealer Emanuel Herz, born on June 28, 1859, in Monheim, had long

lived at Franz-Boehm-Straße 3. The son of Hermann and Clara Herz (ne Fürst) had married Karoline (Lina) Rosenberg (1857–1929) of Reckendorf in Bavaria. They had three children: **Helena** (b. 1887), **Mathilde** (b. 1889) and Josef (b. 1893), who only lived to four and a half months of age.

At the age of 83, on May 21, 1942, Emanuel Herz moved to the retirement home of the Jewish community of Düsseldorf, which was located on Grafenberger Allee. Exactly two months later, he was transported to Theresienstadt with Transport VIII 1 and from there, on September 26, 1942, to the Treblinka extermination camp. Emanuel Herz’s date of death is unknown. He was declared dead on May 8, 1945.

Emanuel Herz’s daughter Helena was born on March 25, 1887, in Monheim. She resided in Düsseldorf and Solingen between 1901 and 1903, likely as an apprentice. Even in the years before the First World War, Helena was often outside of Monheim. Heinrich Schrank, a Catholic machinist from Bavaria, also temporarily resided at Franz-Boehm-Straße 3. He emigrated to the United States, to Baltimore, in October 1925. Helena Herz followed Heinrich

Schrank the following year, to marry him. On July 28, 1926, she departed from Bremen to New York aboard the steamer "Columbus". Seven years later, on July 11, 1933, Helena moved back to Monheim and remained until 1935.

After a stay in Cologne, Helena Schrank was registered in 1937 in Blumenthal, in the Eifel region, as a "domestic employee, married, separated". Following the pogrom night, she was arrested on November 11, 1938, in Blumenthal but was released again the same day. From Cologne, where Helena Schrank had now gone, on October 23, 1941, she was deported to the ghetto in Litzmannstadt (Łódź), and on May 10, 1942, to the Chelmno extermination camp. She, too, was declared dead on May 8, 1945.

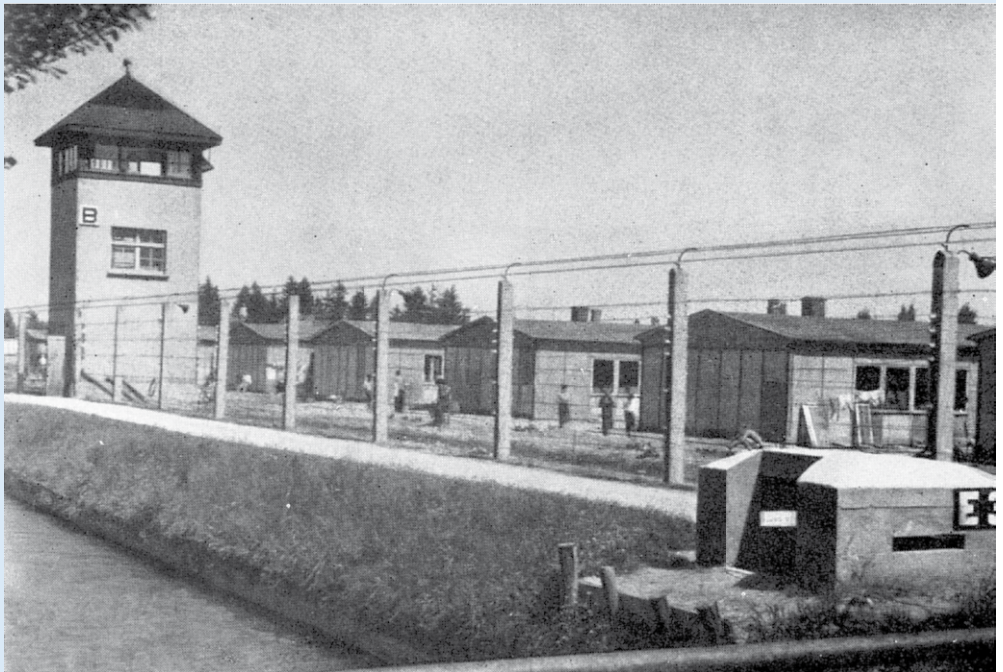
Mathilde Herz, born on April 11, 1889, in Monheim, apparently took an apprenticeship as a cook and remained single. Before the First World War, she lived in Cologne and Andernach for a time and returned to her parents' house in April 1913; even after the death of her mother in 1929, she remained in Monheim for the most part. According to a list by the synagogue community of Solingen, this was her final residence from May 1940 until her deportation on December 10, 1941. From the main train station in Düsseldorf, Mathilde Herz was first taken with many other Jews to the slaughterhouse in Derendorf, from whence the deportation to Riga began the following day. The circumstances surrounding her death are unknown. She, too, was declared dead on May 8, 1945.

*The Stumbling Stones
embedded in the pavement
at Franz-Boehm-
Straße 3 for Helena,
Mathilde and Emanuel
Herz.*



In front of the staircase leading to the Church of St. Gereon is the Stumbling Stone for the courageous **Father Franz Boehm**, who was pastor of the parish of St. Gereon from 1938 until his death in the concentration camp in Dachau in 1945.

Even during his previous ministry, in Sieglar, Boehm had left no doubt that he considered the worldview and activities of the National Socialists to be inhuman and un-Christian. Already before the Nazis took power in 1933, Boehm vehemently opposed the NSDAP and in particular the future Mayor of Sieglar, Jakob Hörsch. At the latter's insistence, he was expelled from Sieglar and the administrative district of Cologne from July 6, 1935 to May 4, 1936.



*The Monheim parish priest Franz Boehm was imprisoned in the Dachau concentration camp from August 1944 until his death on February 13, 1945. The photo shows prisoners' barracks, a watchtower, barbed wire fence and a moat. (Reproduced from: Reimund Schnabel, *Die Frommen in der Hölle*, Röderberg-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main [1966].)*

Franz-Boehm-Straße 4

Following a temporary amnesty, his final expulsion took effect in July 1937. Boehm spent eleven months in various places until, on June 26, 1938, in Monheim he succeeded the pastor Johannes Krüll, who had died in March.

Franz Boehm was born on October 3, 1880, in Boleszyn, West Prussia (now Poland). This is of particular importance for his work in Monheim since, in spite of the prohibition, he took the opportunity to provide pastoral care in their mother tongue to Polish civilian and forced labourer families and prisoners of war. By order of the district ad-

ministration of the Rhine-Wupper District, the parish hall was seized on September 21, 1939, and used to accommodate 30 to 40 Polish prisoners of war; Boehm's living room became the guardroom.

That Polish prisoners of war had begun arriving in Monheim very soon after the start of the war is also evident from the minutes of the municipal council meeting of December 7, 1939: "It was also proposed that the captured Poles from the local camp should be used [for] preparatory improvement work [and] in the repair of country lanes and Niederstraße."



A permanent exhibition in the Church of St. Gereon recalls the work of Pastor Franz Boehm. His portrait photo is held by three of his successors (from left): Burkhard Hoffmann (2003 – 2019), Rudolf Scheurer (1972–1987) and Winfried Motter (1987–2003).



“I don’t want to be burdened with the accusation of being a mute dog.”

Due to the high personnel costs of guarding them, after a little less than a year the prisoners were transferred to lodgings near their workplaces, which were mostly larger farms. A total of around 240 Poles arrived during the course of the war, along with many families. That is why, in April 1941, Boehm applied for permission to conduct Mass in the Polish language as well. This was prohibited because it was considered “subversive”.

As a further measure to suppress the Polish language, in 1941 the local police authority ordered that Polish not be spoken in restaurants. Restaurant owners were neither to tolerate nor participate in the use of the Polish language. Violations of the ban would be punished by the temporary or permanent closure of the restaurant, up to and including the withdrawal of the concession.

The → Gestapo continued its surveillance of Fr. Boehm in Monheim. While he was somewhat more cautious than he had been in Sieglar, there was no doubt about his attitude. On December 1, 1942, Mayor Josef Grütering explicitly asked the Gestapo to consider whether Boehm might not be sent to a concentration camp.

Since the accusations collected against the priest were apparently insufficient to justify imprisonment in a concentration camp, a security deposit of 3,000 Reichsmarks was imposed on him, payable within a little less than four weeks. Boehm was unable to raise the money from his savings, but he eventually made the payment, among oth-

er things by liquidating his life insurance at a considerable loss.

A full year later, the situation deteriorated again. During his Easter sermon in 1944, Franz Boehm unequivocally stated his opposition to the NSDAP’s euthanasia program. He referred to the motion picture “Ich klage an” (“I accuse”), which was showing near the Church of St. Gereon in the hall of the restaurant Menrath (today “Spielmann”). The film’s dramatic, sentimental plot suggested that it was an imperative of humanity to liberate the incurably ill from their suffering by bringing about death, thus glossing over the state-directed murder of the mentally ill and the disabled. To this, Boehm observed: “In the cinema, children’s souls are fed with pig fodder.”

The interrogations intensified after that. Ultimately, Boehm was arrested on June 5, 1944, immediately following a mass, and shortly thereafter was deported to the Dachau concentration camp. He fell seriously ill there due to the inhumane conditions of detention and died on February 13, 1945.

In Sieglar in 1934, Boehm had voiced his outrage at the graffiti that Hitler youth members had applied to a group of crucifixion figures. He quoted a passage from The Book of Isaiah (Isaiah 56:10) that fittingly characterized his unfaltering stance: “I don’t want to be burdened with the accusation of being a mute dog.”

Frohnstraße 9 (Frohnhof)



Jador Stepurko was born on May 13, 1889, in Schitomir (Ukraine) and was married to **Warwara**, born on April 23, 1885, also in Schitomir. The Stepurkos had four children: Tanja (b. 1922), Wera (b. 1924), Wasja (b. 1926) and Tolja (b. 1930).



Jador Stepurko initially lived as a farmhand and was employed by Maria Kersting on the Schleiderhof farm from May 28 to July 13, 1942. From there, he and his entire family were re-registered in Opladen, to the Walrafen plant nursery.

From May 4, 1943, Jador Stepurko and his wife and daughter Wera were registered with Aloys Herriger at Frohnhof. Jador Stepurko died on February 26, 1945, after being struck by shrapnel.

His daughter, Tanja Stepurko is listed twice in the register of forced labourers: once together with her family and once on a card of her own. The birthplace shown on her own card is not Schitomir but Korostashev, but since the date of birth and occupation (agricultural worker) coincide, the two cards likely represent one and the same person.

Jador Stepurko (b. 1930) is mentioned in the index as well. He was also registered residing with Aloys Herriger, Frohnstraße 15, from May 26, 1943, to November 17, 1943, before fleeing to an unknown location.



The oldest documentary mention of Frohnhof dates to the year 1157.

The aerial view shows the farm in the 1950s after repairs of the damage caused during the war.



Frohnstraße 14



Alfred Herz was born on February 27, 1882, in Monheim as the son of the merchant Emanuel Isaak, referred to as Simon Herz, and his wife Rina (née Weitzenkorn). Alfred had an older brother in Isidor (b. 1880) and a younger sister in Helene (b. 1885) (cf. p. 17 for both siblings). He attended the Protestant elementary school of Monheim and worked as a livestock dealer from 1908. Together with his brother-in-law, **Felix Blumenfeld**, Alfred ran a livestock dealership until the 1930s.



On July 12, 1907, he married **Goldine (Dina) Blumenfeld**, who, as the daughter of Joseph Blumenfeld and his wife Rika Goldberg, had been born on January 5, 1882, in Husen near Padernborn. The couple had four children: Hedwig (b. 1908), Simon Ernst (b. 1910), **Irma** (b. 1914) and Walter (b. 1919). Simon Ernst lived to just five months of age.

Despite the difficult economic situation, Alfred and Goldine Herz remained in Monheim in the 1930s. On December 10, 1941, they were deported to the slaughterhouse in Düsseldorf-Derendorf and from there, the following day, to Riga with transport "Da 38". They did not survive. The date of their deaths was officially set at May 8, 1945.



Unlike their parents, Walter and Irma Herz had left their home town. Irma, born on December 17, 1914, worked as a domestic employee and was single. She relocated several times between Monheim, Neuwied and Cologne between 1934 and 1938. In December 1938, she lived in Cologne-Lindenthal, at Corrensstraße 7, with the Grüneberg family; her most recent registration showed her residing at Cäcilienstraße 18-22. On July 20, 1942, Irma Herz was deported from Cologne to Maly Trostinez, a labour and extermination camp near Minsk. She did not survive. She, too, was declared dead on May 8, 1945.

The residence at Frohnstraße 14 bears the year 1864. Still visible to this day are signs that the building was temporarily used for business purposes.





Hedwig Dahl (née Herz), the eldest daughter of Alfred and Goldine Herz, was born in Monheim on August 31, 1908. Hedwig entered the preschool of the church school in Langenfeld in 1916, where she was a pupil in the Sexta (fifth form) in 1918. Nothing is known about her school-leaving certificate and occupation. Between 1930 and 1935, Hedwig had changing places of residence in Monheim, Oldenburg, Düsseldorf and Cologne.

On March 22, 1935, she married **Felix Dahl**, born on January 12, 1900, in Gevenich (Cochem District). He had moved to Monheim in 1933. Following the nuptials, he went to work at his father-in-law's livestock dealership. Felix and Hedwig Dahl moved to Cologne together in 1935, where they first lived on Severinstraße before moving to live on the Ubierring. This is where their daughter Erika was born, on December 1, 1936. In August 1937, when Felix Dahl was threatened with arrest in Cologne over allegedly negative statements about the German Reich's nutritional status, the family fled to stay with relatives in Trier and remained there until entry into Luxembourg was permitted in November 1937.

On December 8, 1937, Felix Dahl filed a request to take up residence there. The family changed residences several times and lived from the support of relatives and Jewish aid organizations. Felix Dahl tried in vain to emigrate to the United States. Following their emigration to Luxembourg, the couple were expatriated from Germany in 1939.

On October 22, 1940, Felix Dahl, his wife Hedwig and daughter Erika, together with 19 other Jewish refugees, were on the list of the first transport from Luxembourg to unoccupied France. This transport was part of the anti-Jewish policy of Gauleiter [Nazi district leader] Gustav Simon, the head of civil administration in German-occupied Luxembourg. Simon, it seems, used the return transports of Luxembourgers evacuated to France, in exchange, to deport Jews from Luxembourg to unoccupied France.

Many of these deportees came to the Gurs camp, in southern France, but the Dahl family did not. Instead, when they were registered in the Drancy transit camp near Paris on March 7, 1944, they had previously lived on Rue Botzaris in the 19th arrondissement of Paris. The files from the Drancy camp note that Felix Dahl was required to surrender 1,520 francs upon his registration. On May 27, 1944, Felix and Hedwig Dahl were deported with the 70th transport of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt [Reich Main Security Office] from Drancy to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. Neither one of them survived. They were declared dead on May 8, 1945.

To date, the fate of their daughter Erika Dahl is only partially known. It is certain that she survived, however.

Following the pogrom of November 9, 1938, the Gestapo arbitrarily took some 30,000 Jews throughout the Reich into → protective custody. One of the prisoners was **Walter Herz** (1919–1941),

Marga Davidoff (née Blumenfeld)

on her wedding day in 1946.

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of Irma Brautmann, Tel Aviv.



the brother of Hedwig and Irma Herz. He was a prisoner in the Dachau concentration camp from November 17 to December 22, 1938. After his release, Walter Herz presumably intended to emigrate, but he did not succeed. In April 1941, at the age of 21, Walter Herz died in a traffic accident on Werthmannstraße in Cologne-Lindenthal.

Since 1910, the in-law families of Ella and **Felix Blumenfeld** and of Alfred and Goldine Herz (née Blumenfeld) had lived in rental quarters on what is now Alte Schulstraße and operated a livestock dealership; the Blumenfeld family also opened a textile shop. Towards the end of 1918, they jointly purchased the house at Frohnstraße 14. Probably after the boycott of Jewish businesses in April 1933, Mr and Mrs Blumenfeld prepared to emigrate to Palestine. Their 19-year-old daughter **Marga**, an accountant by trade, left in September 1933; their son **Arthur**, a merchant, left Monheim on his 24th birthday in October 1935. The parents also succeeded in emigrating to Palestine.

Marga Blumenfeld married American Raymond Davidoff in Tel Aviv in 1946.

Together with their children Irma (b. 1947) and David (b. 1948), the Davidoffs settled in Frankfurt am Main in 1961.

Mayor Daniel Zimmermann contacted Irma Brautmann and David Davidoff in 2019.

Irma Brautmann wrote:

"Whenever my mother would tell me about her childhood in Monheim, it was always very positive. She attended a Christian grammar school and was an extremely good swimmer. She swam across the Rhine several times when practicing with the swim team."

And David Davidoff said:

"My mother died in 1993 at the age of 79. She kept her Rheinland sense of humour right up until the end. Her grave is in Frankfurt am Main, in the Jewish cemetery."



Frohnstraße 26



Helene Wagner (née Herz), born on May 21, 1885, in Monheim, worked as a seamstress and ran a shop for manufactory goods. First she lived on Krummstraße, and then, after the First World War, in the villa-like building at Frohnstraße 26.

She married fitter **Hermann Wagner** in 1920, who had been born 1892 in Breslau. That he was Protestant would later save his Jewish wife from deportation to an extermination camp, but not from reprisals and harassment. "I hereby declare that, in September 1934, I was forced to shut down my business for manufactory goods, which I had been running since 1918 [,] due to the conduct of the Nazi regime," Helene Wagner wrote in an affidavit in January 1949.

In addition, the most awful tricks were used for years to force Helene Wagner out of her apartment. Thanks to the steadfastness of her landlords, however,

a Hilden-based community of heirs, this effort did not succeed. On January 19, 1943, Helene Wagner was arrested and transferred to the women's prison in Düsseldorf, where she was held in protective custody until February 9, 1943→. She was imprisoned a second time in Berlin, from September 25, 1944, until the end of the war on May 8, 1945.

Hermann Wagner was also subject to constant harassment. Above all, he was repeatedly urged to divorce his Jewish wife. Shortly before the end of the war, he was also taken into protective custody by the Gestapo. On May 8, 1945, like his wife, he was released. Both then again lived in the house at Frohnstraße 26. Helene Wagner died on April 19, 1953, and Hermann Wagner on November 17, 1960. Both are buried in the Jewish cemetery on Hasenstraße (cf. p. 8).

HIER WOHNTE / ARBEITETE
HELENE WAGNER
GEB. HERZ
JG. 1885

ZUR GESCHÄFTSAUFGABE
GEZWUNGEN 1934
„SCHUTZHAFT“ 1943
GEFÄNGNIS DÜSSELDORF
GEFÄNGNIS BERLIN 1944
BEFREIT

HIER WOHNTE
**HERMANN
WAGNER**
JG. 1892

„SCHUTZHAFT“ 1945
GESTAPOGEFÄNGNIS OPLADEN
SAMMELLAGER LANGENFELD
BEFREIT

According to the inscription on the façade, the villa-like building at Frohnstraße 26 dates to 1906. This photograph was taken on New Year's Day 2020.





Monheim was a pivotal town in the life of **Isidor Herz**, a brother of Helene and Alfred Herz (cf. page 24). Isidor Herz was born in Monheim on September 6, 1880, and returned to Monheim late in his life.

In November 1904, Isidor Herz had set out from Monheim on his travels. A year later, after an intermediate stop in Düsseldorf, he settled in Heiligenhaus as a butcher and livestock dealer. His marriage to Meta Jacobs resulted in four children:

- ▶ **Alfred Herz**, born December 2, 1905, died in the US in October 1966.
- ▶ **Hilde Herz**, born on April 9, 1907, married to Siegmund Oss since 1934; deportation from Essen to Izbica on April 22, 1942, where she was murdered.
- ▶ **Arthur Herz**, born on May 18, 1908, deported to Riga on January 27, 1942, lived in Gelsenkirchen in 1946, was still alive and living in New York in 2001.
- ▶ **Dora Herz**, born September 26, 1910, died in the US on April 16, 1961.

In July 1912, Isidor Herz moved from Heiligenhaus and registered in Düsseldorf-Rath; by that time, his marriage to Meta Herz had probably already ended in divorce. Ruth Ortlinghaus reports on her fate and that of her children in "Journal 20. Jahrbuch des Kreises Mettmann [Mettmann District Yearbook] 2000/2001, p. 67:

"After her divorce, Meta moved to Gelsenkirchen with the children. Alfred was able to emigrate in time. Meta was deported to Riga with her children Dora and Arthur in 1942 and shot right in front her son. Miraculously, the children survived. After the war, Dora followed her brother Alfred to the United States. Following a horrendous odyssey through ten concentration camps, including Riga, Stutthof and Buchenwald, and liberated by the Red Army in Theresienstadt, Arthur emigrated to New York, where for decades the now 92-year-old ran a butcher's shop."

Isidor Herz's second wife was Antonie Paul. Their son Otto, born of this marriage, was murdered in Auschwitz. Isidor Herz was imprisoned in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp from June 22, 1938 until January 31, 1939. The ill treatment inflicted on him there damaged his health permanently. His home at the time was Essen, where he lived with Hilde, his daughter from his first marriage, her husband Siegmund Oss and their son Günter. Probably after Hilde's deportation, Isidor Herz went underground in 1940. Apparently under a false identity, he worked in the Nordstern mine in Gelsenkirchen from 1941 to 1944. But Isidor Herz survived the final year of the war again in hiding.

He married his third wife, Maria Pluta (née Bungert), in 1957; she had been born in Gelsenkirchen in 1916 and ran a private school there.

In 1959, Isidor and Maria Herz purchased the house at Frohnstraße 26, where Isidor Herz's sister Helene and her husband Hermann Wagner had been tenants. Maria Herz became known to many Monheimers through her typing and stenography courses, which she taught at the Volkshochs-

chule (centre for adult education) from its foundation in 1968 until 1981.

Isidor Herz moved to a retirement home in Cologne in 1963, where he died in July 1967. Maria Herz lived in the house at Frohnstraße 26 until her death in 1995.

This photo was taken in 1953 in the garden at Frohnstraße 26.

At the far right is Helene Wagner (née Herz); at her left, Isidor Herz with his son Sigmund on his lap, standing behind them Hermann Wagner and Erika Dahl.

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Frohnstraße 44 (Pötz & Sand Chain Factory)



The Pötz & Sand Chain Factory (established in 1876) had already employed forced labour before, mainly French, during the First World War. Cartridge casings and rifle cleaning chains were also produced here in the Second World War. There were at least 262 forced labourers employed in the factory: 179 Russians, 75 Ukrainians and eight French. They were all housed in the two camps located on Friedhofstraße, just behind the factory halls.

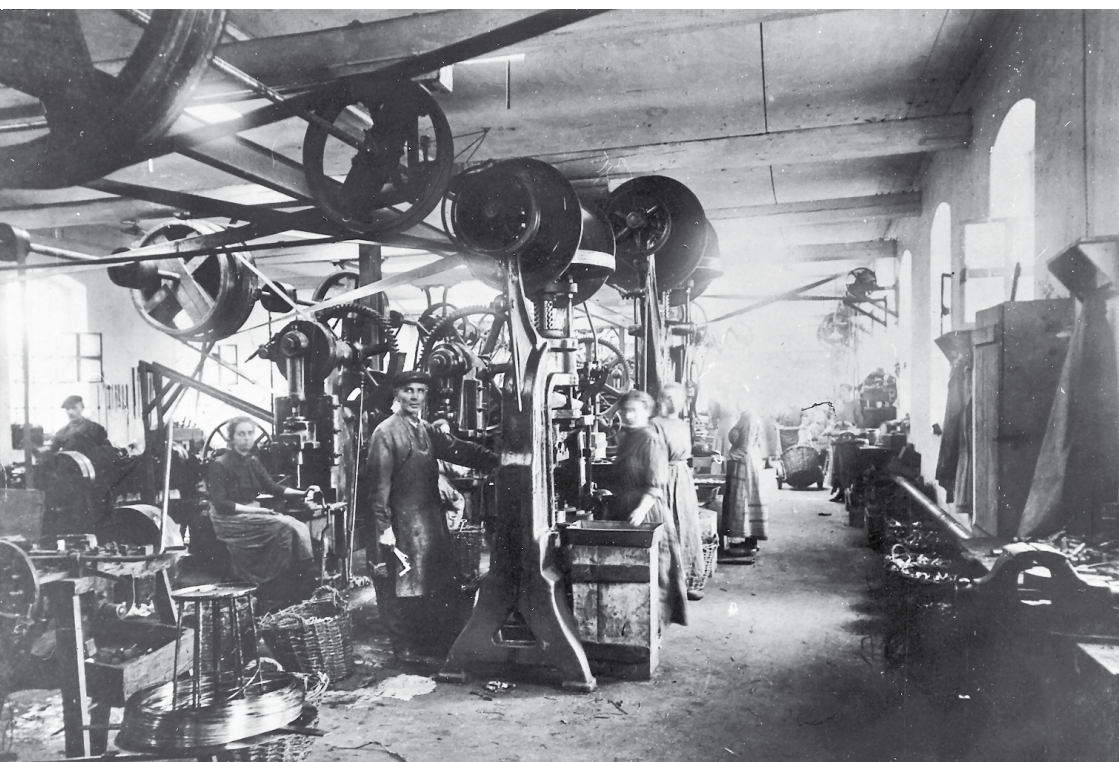
According to a letter from Pötz & Sand to the administration of the Monheim office dated April 15, 1943, the company had 132 male workers at the time, 87 of them German and 45 foreign. The company named Jacob Bormacher the “Führer” (leader) of a construction brigade that would be deployed also outside the plant to repair damage due to bombing. Members of the construction team were French forced labourers Marcel Boquillon and Frederic Legouge – both fitters by trade – along with “Eastern Worker No. 76”. While the French were still mentioned by their names, the “Eastern Worker” from the Soviet Union was downgraded and referred to only as a number. This was not an isolated case, as another example from the Rheinische Pappenfabrik, a cardboard factory, illustrates (cf. p. 41).



Ekaterina Arsenyeva, born in 1907 in Meowad (Leningrad District, Russia), came to Monheim along with her four children Angelina (b. 1936), **Ivan** (b. 1930), Michail (b. 1937) and Viktor (b. 1944) from the Wuppertal transit camp in September 1944. Her husband was not with them, possibly because he was a soldier. At just 15 years of age, Ivan Arsenyev was the youngest forced labourer killed in the worst bombing attack on Monheim, which occurred on February 21, 1945. His mother experienced the liberation along with the three younger children.



Wladimir Kolomichev was born on April 25, 1925, in Rostow (Russia); he was single and employed as a lathe operator at Pötz & Sand from October 8, 1942, to August 15, 1943, and from September 6, 1943 until his death on February 21, 1945.



Factory hall of the chain- and metal-goods industry Pötz & Sand, founded in 1876 shown in an undated photograph.



Also killed on February 21, 1945 were:

- ▶ **Iwan Litwin**, born August 19, 1925 in Saporosje (Russia), employed as a fitter at Pötz & Sand beginning April 22, 1944.
- ▶ **Rufina Smyschljaewa**, born June 16, 1917, in Porchow (Leningrad District, Russia), employed as a worker beginning September 11, 1944.
- ▶ **Alexandra Muroschkocz**, born June 17, 1905, in Gesk (Ukraine) employed as a worker beginning May 28, 1942.
- ▶ **Warwara Wernigora**, born on December 24, 1909, in Demitryka (Ukraine), employed as a worker beginning May 28, 1942.

Seven of the ten forced labourer victims of the nighttime bombing raid of February 21, 1945, were employed by Pötz & Sand. The time of death was stated at 1.45 a.m. for all of them. The high number of casualties is attributable to the fact that the plant's air-raid shelter was hit by bombs. It was located at the factory entrance on Frohnstraße, near the railway tracks at the time (now a cycling path). According to contemporary witnesses, the detonation was so severe part of the rail track bent upwards and reached to the building across the street. One wall of the shelter was blown out. Actually, forced labourers were prohibited from entering air-raid shelters and bunkers. It is particularly tragic that circumventing this rule would end so badly.



Ewdokija Glebowa was born on April 4, 1908, in Werchni-Prichon (Leningrad District, Russia). She was married and of the Russian Orthodox faith. On September 11, 1944, she was transported from the transit camp in Wuppertal along with her three children, Nina (b. 1931), Antonia (b. 1933) and **Paraskewa** (b.

1939) to the camp on Friedhofstraße. She was employed as a worker at Pötz & Sand. Her youngest daughter, Paraskewa, died on November 24, 1944 at just five years of age. Pulmonary tuberculosis was determined as the cause of death – one of the typical diseases that are usually fatal under the poor hygiene conditions of the camps. Ewdokija Glebowa experienced liberation with her two other children.



Frohnstraße 44 (Pötz & Sand Chain Factory)



Lidija Matwejew a was born on September 29, 1926, in Werchni-Prichon (Schimski District, Russia). Together with her mother **Klowdija** (b. 1899) and her brother Alexander (b. 1934), on September 11, 1944, she came from the transit camp in Wuppertal to the camp of Pötz & Sand. She died of pulmonary tuberculosis on November 7, 1944.

Klowdija Matwejew a and her son lived to experience the liberation.



The widower **Wasilij Alexejev**, born on March 7, 1882, in Prichodizi (Russia), was employed by Pötz & Sand until his death on September 23, 1944. No registration date is given for him; it is assumed likely that he arrived with the collective transport from Wuppertal on September 11, 1944. Even though Alexejev was already 62 years old, the cause of death, “weakness due to old age”, may have been the result of the conditions of forced labour.



Roman Waschenin, Orthodox, was probably born in Russia in 1904. He is buried in the parish graveyard of the Catholic cemetery. According to the death certificate, he died on June 3, 1945, as a result of alcohol poisoning. It is unclear whether he intended to take his own life. Because Roman Waschenin is not included in the registration records, nothing can be said about the duration of his stay.

There are ten people buried in the graveyard built by Pötz & Sand as a final resting place for Russian and Ukrainian forced labourers in the neighbouring Catholic cemetery. The inscription on the tombstone – “Erected by the Pötz & Sand Company in gratitude for our loyal Russian employees who lost their lives in the bombing raid of February 21, 1945” – is not completely correct.

In fact, seven people died the night of the bombing; the remaining three had died of other causes prior to that, among them a five-year-old girl, Paraskewa Glebowa in November 1944 from pulmonary tuberculosis. This was also the cause of death for the 12-year-old girl Lidija Matwejew a, who was not given a final resting place in the one or the other graveyard. Three of the forced labourers buried here were not employed by Pötz & Sand;

Frohnstraße 44 (Pötz & Sand Chain Factory)

two worked at the cardboard factory (Iwan Newesenko and Wasilij Seleni) and one at Frohnhof (Jador Stepurko). The inscription of the tomb concludes with the call:

Cause of death: Accidental drowning in the Rhine."

A review of the registry of deaths reveals that, in 1944 and 1945, one encounters

"Avoid hatred – seek peace"

A second graveyard houses forced labourers who were employed at Pötz & Sand as well as at the Sanderhof, Großen Hof, Vogtshof and Altjudenhof. According to the tombstone, there are ten dead here, including three of Russian origin, as the writing in Cyrillic suggests, and seven of Polish origin. It cannot be ruled out that further burials took place in the graveyard, which was used from 1941 to 1945.

While it is already unusual that an anti-aircraft aide, the Russian prisoner of war Sinoi Toporikow (third name from the top on the tombstone), was buried here, even more remarkable is the case of the young Polish farm hand Josef Zlobinski (second from below on the tombstone).

Born on April 19, 1914, in Bascew (Poland), Zlobinski was Catholic and, according to his death certificate, last resided in Porz-Langel, Hauptstraße 108. Further: "Found dead in the Rhine River and brought on land on June 26, 1941, at 9 a.m. in Monheim. Registered upon written notice from the local police authority in Monheim. [...] The day and hour of death have not been established. Zlobinski was last seen alive in Porz-Langel on June 22, 1941, at around 6 p.m. [...]"

an unusually large number of cases of people who drowned in the Rhine and whose bodies were later brought on land. As perhaps in the case of Josef Zlobinski, there may have been accidents among these, but the majority may have been desperate people who saw no other way out than to end their lives. Two examples may be cited as representative of them all:

Milan Karanovic, married, Orthodox, born on June 30, 1912, in Veliko Ocijevo (Yugoslavia), vulcanizer, residing/employed: Hafenstraße 12, Duisburg. According to the death certificate, "[he] was brought on land lifeless in Monheim im Rhein on August 2, 1940, at 3.30 p.m. [...] Registered upon written notice from the local police authority in Monheim. The day and hour of death have not been established. Karanovic was last seen alive in Cologne on July 27, 1940, at around midnight. [...] Cause of death: Accidental drowning in the Rhine."

Jaromir Sterba, born on April 5, 1923, in Nowa Paká, Czech Republic, residing and employed at Donarstraße 2, Cologne-Rath. According to the death certificate:

Grabenstraße 54



After purchasing the building on Grabenstraße, the livestock dealer **Joseph Herz**, born on October 1, 1865, married Clementine Abraham (1872–1927), who originally came from Katzenfurt in the Westerwald region. Their only son, Hermann, was born in 1912 and lived only to the age of six months. Clementine Herz died in the sanatorium and nursing home in Bedburg-Hau. After that, Joseph Herz continued living as a widower, with his sisters Sara and Johanna, in the house on Grabenstraße until he was forced to sell in 1938 for economic reasons. They were forcibly moved into the so-called “Jews’ House” at Franz-Boehm-Straße 3 (cf. p. 17).

Sara Herz was born on January 23, 1868 in Monheim. She remained single and worked as a maid, kitchen assistant, cook and seamstress. She changed her place of residence more than 20 times between 1891 and 1921. During stays in Monheim, she first lived with her parents and then, until his death in 1930, with her brother Nathan at Grabenstraße 40. After that, she moved in with her brother Joseph Herz. Both were deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto and then, on September 26, 1942, were transported, with transport “Br” under number 621, to the Treblinka extermination camp. Their exact dates of death are unknown; they were declared dead on May 8, 1945.

Johanna Herz was born on July 2, 1873, in Monheim. She remained single and lived with her parents and, later on, with her brother Joseph, apart from a few brief interruptions. Together with her siblings Joseph and Sara, on July 25, 1942, she was deported from Düsseldorf to Theresienstadt with Transport VIII 2, and then from there, on October 22, 1942, to the Treblinka extermination camp. She, too, was declared dead on May 8, 1945.

*Laut Beschluss des
Amtsgerichts in
Opladen vom 3. Ok-
tober 1950, rechtskräf-
tig am 5. Dezember
1950 wird die unbe-
belebte Leiche
für tot erklärt. Als
Zeitpunkt des Todes
wird der 8. Mai 1945
24⁰⁰ Uhr festgesetzt.
Man heim den
22. Februar 1951
bei Standesbeamte
in Wuppertal.
Mitfügen*

HIER WOHNTE
JOSEPH HERZ
JG. 1865
DEPORTIERT 1942
THERESIENSTADT
TOT 12.8.1942

HIER WOHNTE
SARA HERZ
JG. 1868
DEPORTIERT 1942
THERESIENSTADT
TREBLINKA
???

HIER WOHNTE
JOHANNA HERZ
JG. 1873
DEPORTIERT 1942
ERMORDET IN
TREBLINKA

Marginal note on birth certificate no. 15/1868 of the Registry Office of Monheim: Per order of October 3, 1950, by the District Court [Amtsgericht] in Opladen, said Sara Herz is hereby declared legally dead as of December 5, 1950. The date of her death is set at midnight on May 8, 1945. Monheim, dated this February 22, 1951. The Registrar: By proxy [Fritz] Güßgen



Born in Monheim on January 1, 1872, **Wilhelmine (Mina) Herz**, another sister of Joseph Herz, had been in mortal danger since 1933, and not only because of her Jewish descent. The first mass murder organized by the Nazi regime, → the "T 4" campaign, targeted the mentally ill and the disabled. Wilhelmine Herz, who had moved to Cologne as a maid at the age of 16, was plagued by mental illnesses, which led to her hospitalization and placement under guardianship from 1900 onwards.

Wilhelmine Herz spent many years in the provincial sanatoria and nursing homes in Bedburg-Hau and, beginning in 1928, in Langenfeld-Galkhausen. She was transferred on February 12, 1942, together with 39 other female Jewish patients and three male Jewish children, from Galkhausen to the provincial sanatorium and nursing home in Düsseldorf-Grafenberg. Her name is included on a list of Jewish patients transported from Grafenberg on February 14, 1941. The transport arrived at the killing centre in Hadamar that same day. Wilhelmine Herz was immediately murdered in the gas chamber there. A death certificate was issued in Cholm, Poland, to conceal the circumstances surrounding her death.

The building at Grabenstraße 54 has a long history. The two-part house is included in a building plan dating to 1902. At the time, it belonged to the workman Heinrich Bremer, who applied for the construction and addition of a stable to the left half of the house. The building was renovated in 1908. The photo was taken in the 1930s.

Hofstraße 12 (Großer Hof)



Tadeusz Pipczyński was born on March 3, 1908, in Okveg (Lipno District, Poland). He was married and Catholic. From November 27, 1940, until his death on June 3, 1945, he resided and worked with Fritz Herriger at the Großer Hof Farm, located at Hofstraße 12. Tadeusz Pipczyński died of methyl alcohol poi-



The oldest documentary mention of Großer Hof dates to the year 1545.

The photo shows a part of the farm grounds in 1951.

Industriestraße 2 (Uniform yeast plant, formerly the Rheinische Pappenfabrik, a cardboard factory)



The neighbouring companies, Rheinische Presshefe- und Spritwerke AG (now Uniform) and Rheinische Pappenfabrik AG, maintained a camp on the factory grounds that was mainly used for civilian individuals. A second camp was located at Rheinuferstraße 17, near the so-called “Mäuseturm” (“Mice Tower”). It replaced the provisional structure in the bowling-alley building (now children’s playground) in Marienburgpark. At first, mainly French people were housed here, and then workers of other nationalities were assigned to live there as well.

At 309, the cardboard factory employed the most forced labourers in Monheim. It was also the only company to employ workers from all eight countries represented in Monheim: ten Poles, one Belgian, 66 Dutch, 63 French, five Serbs, 82 Ukrainians, 22 Russians and, as the last to join their ranks, 60 Italians. On April 1, 1943, by its own accounts, the company had 355 male employees, foreign workers included.

Staff of the cardboard factory were detailed to extend air-raid shelters outside the plant, as a letter to the administrative authorities of the Monheim Office dated August 10, 1943, illustrates: “We have made the craftsmen Heinrich Meythaler, Peter Süss and Heinrich Süss available to you up to and including today [...], while the craftsman Hermann Bormann and the Eastern Worker No. 419 are still available to you until the end of this week. We will leave the 3 Dutch civilian workers at your disposal until the end of next week. As the

shortage of personnel in our company is very high and the transfer of labourers to you has already led to great difficulties and backlogs, we would be very grateful if you could dispense with these three workers beginning at the end of next week.”

The fact that the “Eastern workers” from the Soviet Union were particularly degraded by being assigned a number rather than a name can be seen in another example from the Pötz & Sand chain factory (cf. p. 32).

The “Presshefe- und Spritwerke” employed 44 forced labourers. It comes as no surprise that these were 41 Dutch and three Belgians, as the majority of the shares in the plant were held by Koninklijke Nederlandsche Gist- en Spiritusfabriek NV. This company offered its forced labourers the most humane treatment and gave them generous leave to return home, for example.

The Dutchmen **Johannes de Waal** (b.1920 in Roosendaal) and **Gerardus Tukker** (b.1921 in Heemstede), employed in the “Presshefe- und Spritwerken”, stayed in the house of the Kuhl family on the Alte Schulstraße during the most serious bombing raid on Monheim, early in the morning of February 21, 1945. The building was completely destroyed by a



**Industriestraße 2 (Uniform yeast plant, formerly
the Rheinische Pappenfabrik, a cardboard factory)**

HIER ARBEITETE
NIKOLAUS
MISCHENKO
Jg. 1907
UKRAINE
ZWANGSARBEIT SEIT 1942
TOT 7.3.1945
TIEFFLIEGERBESCHUSS

HIER ARBEITETE
GIJ BOOTS
Jg. 1924
NIEDERLANDE
ZWANGSARBEIT SEIT 1943
TOT AN DEN FOLGEN
4.10.1943

HIER ARBEITETE
GASTON SEYER
Jg. 1912
FRANKREICH
KRIEGSGEFANGENER
ZWANGSARBEIT SEIT 1943
TOT 14.2.1945
BOMBENANGRIFF

HIER ARBEITETE
WASILIJ SELEN
Jg. 1928
UKRAINE
ZWANGSARBEIT SEIT 1942
TOT AN DEN FOLGEN
9.2.1945

HIER ARBEITETE
IWAN NEWESENKO
Jg. 1928
UKRAINE
ZWANGSARBEIT SEIT 1942
FLUCHT IN DEN TOD
27.12.1944

HIER ARBEITETE
AURELIO FUMAGALLI
Jg. 1906
ITALIEN
ZWANGSARBEIT SEIT 1944
TOT 25.11.1944
BOMBENANGRIFF

*The “Rheinische
Pressehefe- und Spirit-
werke” housed forced
labourers at their
prestigious direc-
tors’ and guest house
on Rheinuferstraße,
which included the
so-called “Mice Tow-
er”. This photograph
dates from 1935.*

direct hit. Seven people died in the rubble, including Johannes de Waal and Gerardus Tukker. Their connection to the Kuhl family probably resulted from the fact that their daughter Irmgard Maria (b.1920 in Monheim) had been married to Dutchman Johannes Verwijs (b.1922 in The Hague) since 1944. Maria Verwijs was killed in the bombing as well.

Nikolaus Mischenko was born on February 3, 1907, in Ivanova Vorischilov (Gratoli District, Ukraine). A farmer in his native country, he began work at the cardboard factory on May 27, 1942. Nikolaus Mischenko died on March 7, 1945, of injuries he had sustained in an air raid.

Gaston Seyer, born on June 8, 1912, in Petit Croise (France), was a prisoner of war and housed and employed as an unskilled labourer at the cardboard factory from November 26, 1943, to February 14, 1945. He had "fallen in Monheim on February 14, 1945", according to his registration file. The entry can be understood as saying that Seyer was killed in one of the bombing attacks on the factory grounds. He was buried in the Catholic cemetery.

Ivan Newesenko from Ukraine was born on August 18, 1926, in Buryn, was single and Orthodox. According to his registration file, he was actually a farmer but was employed and housed at the cardboard factory from June 29, 1942, to July 13, 1942, and then from July 16, 1942. According to information in the registration office, he died of poisoning on December 27, 1944.

Guij Boots was born on March 31, 1924, in Maastricht (Limburg Province in the Netherlands), was single and Catholic. From June 28 to October 4, 1943, he worked as an unskilled labourer at the cardboard factory. He was housed in the camp at Rheinuferstraße 17. On October 4, 1943, Guij Boots died of pneumonia in St. Josef Hospital in Monheim.

Wasilij Seleni, born on May 25, 1926, in Micheilowka (Ukraine), was a farmer in his home country. But beginning May 27, 1942, he was pressed into service as a worker at the cardboard factory. Seleni contracted pulmonary tuberculosis and died on February 9, 1945.

Aurelio Fumagalli, born on July 24, 1906 in Cassago Brianza, Italy, was probably employed at the Rheinische Pappenfabrik cardboard factory beginning in September 1944. He was killed in a bombing raid on November 25, 1944. According to the official certificate that was not issued until 1951, Fumagalli was a member of the → Todt Organization.



Kapellenstraße 36 (Bremer Farm)



Stanisław Tomczyk was born on September 24, 1919, in Bondkow, Poland (Turek District). He first worked and lived with Heinrich Roskothen at Vogtshof, Bleeer Straße 43 (cf. p. 15) from October 1939 to April 1940, and then with Wilhelm Bremer, Kapellenstraße 36.

The bombing raid of February 21, 1945, largely destroyed the farm of Wilhelm Bremer and killed Stanisław Tomczyk. That he was the only victim could owe to the fact that he was denied access to an air-raid shelter.

After the war, Wilhelm Bremer relocated his farm to Niederstraße, where he also operated a gravel-dredging operation. He rebuilt the partially destroyed residential building on Kapellenstraße.

This photograph taken by the US Air Force in 1945 gives an impression of the severity of the bombing raids. Each of the small dark dots indicates an impact. The Rhenania-Ossag oil refinery can be seen above the Rhine.

The house on Kapellenstraße 36 was previously part of the Bremer farm.

The photograph shows the building scheduled for demolition on New Year's Day 2020.





Clappertorstraße 47 (Rheinterrassen Baumberg Beach)

The 72 Stumbling Stones within the town limits are complemented by the first Stumbling Threshold, which commemorates an entire group of victims. Its inscription reads:

Baumberg Beach" (former names: "Baumberger Rheinterrassen", "Wacht am Rhein") emerges from a note in the chronicle of the Catholic Parish of St. Dionysius in Baumberg. There, Pastor Wilhelm Gehrman

HIER BEFAND SICH VON 1940 BIS 1945 DAS

STAMMLAGER 1313

HIER WAREN MINDESTENS 44 FRANZÖSISCHE KRIEGSGEFANGENE

INTERNIERT

DIE KRIEGSGEFANGENEN MUSSTEN – ENTGEGEN DER GENÈVE

KONVENTION – ZWANGSARBEIT LEISTEN

IN DER BAUMBERGER LANDWIRTSCHAFT – IN DER INDUSTRIE – IM HANDWERK

The existence of "Stalag 1313" was known from the registration file, where information on many French forced labourers can be found, such as "POW Camp Baumberg", "Stalag Camp 1313" or "Camp Baumberg". The camp must have been set up by 1942 at the latest, because the guard book of the air-raid warning station of the Monheim Office in the Town Hall contains the following entry for the night of November 12 to 13, 1942: "8.25 p.m. POW camp in Baumberg calls[:] a French POW escaped from Rhenania between 5 and 6 a.m."

That the camp must have been located at the modern-day restaurant "Rheinterrassen

noted on March 5, 1945:

"Around 11 o'clock in the evening, the Americans bombarded the right bank of the Rhine for the first time. Hits at the corner of Clappertorstraße and Uferweg. A soldier was killed at the prison camp near Herberg, and a guard was injured." "Herberg" as used here cannot be a reference to the farmer at Sanderhof on Leienstraße (cf. next page) but is the innkeeper Luise Herberg who had run the restaurant on Clappertorstraße since the death of her husband Wilhelm (1874–1944).

The identity of the soldier who was killed is unknown.



The Baumberg ferry docked below the restaurant "Wacht am Rhein" until the end of 1956. The restaurant and neighbouring buildings are clearly visible in this photo taken in 1937. It is unclear exactly where the prisoner-of-war camp was located.

Tatjana Kosupskij (centre) and her husband Iwan were forced labourers at Sanderhof beginning in 1943, and she gave birth to their son Anatoly (right) in September 1944.

The photograph was taken in 2006 when Gertrud Kremer-Schillings (left), daughter of Sanderhof farmer Peter Herberg, visited the Kosupskijs in Ukraine.



Published with the kind permission of Gertrud Kremer-Schillings (b. 1922), Rommerskirchen.



From June 8, 1943, until his death on April 10, 1945, Ukrainian-born agricultural worker **Iwan Kosupskij** lived and worked for farmer Peter Herberg at the

Sanderhof in Baumberg. When working in a field near the Rhenania-Ossag mineral oil plant, Iwan Kosupskij and Peter Herberg were surprised by a low-flying attack. They managed to make it back to Sanderhof, but Kosupsky had been shot in the abdomen. He died of his severe injuries on April 10, 1945, at the hospital in Langenfeld-Galkhausen. He was buried there as well.



In March 1943, at the age of 21, Iwan Kosupskij and his 19-year-old wife **Tatjana** came to Sanderhof. Their son **Antonius** (called “Anatolij”) was born on September 10, 1944. At the initiative of Gregory Randerath, a teacher at the Peter-Ustinov Gesamtschule, in May 2005, Anatolij Kosupskij came to Monheim am Rhein and visited the places of remembrance and the burial place of his father.

Lottenstraße 6



Aleksander Drzymalski was born on February 21, 1905, in Wolka (Rypen District, Poland), was married and was Catholic. He initially worked from July 1, 1940, to October 10, 1941, in Baumberg at Sanderhof with Peter Herberg (cf. p. 47). Drzymalski was then employed by two shoemakers, from October 10, 1941, to January 21, 1943, for Heinrich Anhalt on Hauptstraße in Baumberg, and from January 21, 1943, to April 10, 1945, for Johann Pelzer on Krummstraße in Monheim.

When the war ended for Monheim when the American troops came marching in on

April 16, 1945, the forced labour camps at the companies and farms were dissolved. Especially for Poles and Ukrainians, transitional camps were set up on Lottenstraße in the school, the gymnasium and some residential buildings. The return to their home countries would begin there. Aleksander Drzymalski was also housed on Lottenstraße. He died on June 3, 1945, of methyl alcohol poisoning at the hospital in Langenfeld-Galkhausen.

Methanol (methyl alcohol) was not difficult to come by. An industrial product, it is not suitable for human consumption, as it can lead to poisoning, blindness and, in higher doses, to death. Forced labourers often consumed methanol nonetheless. It is usually impossible to determine wheth-



Opladener Straße 79 (Bauunternehmen Wilhelm)

er these deaths occurred by accident or whether there was an intention to commit suicide. In any case, however, there was a connection with the oppressive conditions for forced labourers and their housing in camps.

During the Nazi period, the Lottenschule had to bear the name 'Albert-Leo-Schlageter-Schule' (lettering above the entrance). Schlageter, a right-wing radical bomber executed in the 1920s, was glorified by the Nazis as a martyr.



Anna Szczotka (née Klusak), born on February 17, 1917, in Saybusch (now Zywiec, Poland), was a forced-labour housekeeper with

the construction contractor Georg Wilhelm from October 3, 1941, until her death on May 6, 1946. She died of poisoning.



Her husband **Wladislaw Szczotka** was born on November 30, 1911, in Trzebinia (Poland). He was forced to work as a bricklayer at Wilhelm from October 3, 1941.

Wladislaw Szczotka remained after the end of the war, and was officially deregistered as "moved, location unknown" on September 24, 1945.

Opladener Straße 200 Former gravel dredgings



The Büteführung and Schwartner gravel-dredging operations employed at least 126 forced labourers: ten Dutch, 103 Belgians, six Russians and seven Italians. Both plants had their own camps but also used the accommodation at the Wilhelm construction company, Opladener Straße 79, and at the Küppers plant nursery at Opladener Straße 213. Almost all of the employees at the construction company and at the gravel-dredging operation were experts from the construction sector.



Born in 1891 in a small Czech village, from September 1944 **Ernst Kolisch** worked as an accountant at the Schwartner gravel and sand dredging company located on the present-day Monbag Lake. Until then, he had managed to conceal his Jewish roots. Due to a denunciation made by a truck driver at the home of the daughter of Kolisch's former innkeeper in the restaurant "Waldschlößchen", Kolisch did then fall into the clutches of the Gestapo. When he was searched, they found sheets of paper in Kolisch's pockets on which he had written the word "Bravo" on jottings taken from BBC radio reports on the advance of the Allied forces. That was tantamount to his death sentence.

On December 1, 1944, Kolisch was transferred to the Buchenwald concentration camp. He died there, on March 26, 1945, following numerous illnesses suffered as a result of the catastrophic conditions of detention there.

The fate of Ernst Kolisch was uncovered in 2012 by the legal historian Michael Emmerich (Haan). He made his research available for the book "Geschichte der Juden in Monheim" [History of Jews in Monheim] (cf. pp. 220–228 there), which was published by the Town of Monheim am Rhein in 2014. The Stumbling Stone for Ernst Kolisch, which was subsequently commissioned by the Town Council of Monheim am Rhein, was laid in November 2015 on Opladener Straße in front of the former dredging crane, which is a listed historical monument.

The 14th Stumbling Stone within town limits was laid in November 2015 in memory of Ernst Kolisch at the former dredging crane on Opladener Straße. "Kolisch's traitors stood to gain nothing personally through their betrayal, not a single advantage. They would not have been worse off if they had just kept their mouths shut," Mayor Daniel Zimmermann said in his remarks.



Parkstraße 6 (Hof Bamberg)



Stefan Urbaniak

was born on December 11, 1916, in Krolikow (Konin District, Poland). He was single, Catholic, and resided and worked as a

farm worker with farmer Josef Bamberg from December 3, 1940, until March 1945. There are two statements in the town archive dating from October 1946 on the circumstances surrounding the death of Stefan Urbaniak.

Theodor Bamberg, son of farmer Josef Bamberg, stated for the record: "The agricultural worker, former merchant Stefan Urbaniak, lived with us and performed agricultural work for us as well. He was wounded by artillery fire while here. This occurred on March 18, 1945, in the evening, at around 6 p.m. I drove him to the hospital in Richrath."





The Bamberg farm was still in operation through the late 1960s. It has been home to a café since 2013.

Farm manager August Döpfer stated: "I was standing [on March 18, 1945] with Urbaniak at the front door of farmer Fritz Herriger's [Großer Hof, Hofstraße] and was also struck by the same grenade. Ur[baniak] suffered a severe abdominal injury. Around 8 p.m., on the same day of the wounding, [...] we were both in Richrath Hospital. [...] Stefan Urbaniak died at around 5 o'clock a.m. on March 21, 1945. I saw [him] die." His body was buried, as Theodor Bamberg reported, in the Catholic cemetery in Monheim.



Bolesław Urbaniak,

single, Catholic, was born on August 25, 1921, in Łódź. From May 27, 1940 until July 7, 1941, Stefan's brother worked at the Hanke brickworks, Opladener Straße 205, and then at the Haustätter brickworks in Opladen. He was alive at the liberation.



Rheinpromenade / Krischerstraße 100 (Rhenania-Ossag Mineralölwerke)

Until 1987, an oil refinery owned by **Deutsche Shell** (founded in 1913 as **Mineralölwerke Rhenania**, renamed **Rhenania-Ossag Mineralölwerke** in 1925) was located on the site of the Rheinpark industrial park. The former administrative building and the former barrel-filling hall, which are set to be converted into a large event hall in the coming years, the K 714 Cultural Refinery, stand as reminders of this past in the Rheinpark. Both buildings are listed as historic monuments.

One might think that Rhenania-Ossag was an important armaments company right from the start of the war. In fact, however, production was curtailed in the first years of the war, and 25 Belgian and two Ukrainian forced labourers were enough to replace the German labourers who had been drafted into the Wehrmacht. They were housed in two barracks camps south of the filling hall and administration building, on Krischerstraße.

Only in the last year of the war was the production of gasoline and lubricating oils ramped up again, in a situation of ever-increasing shortages of resources. Although Belgian forced labourers had already left the company in October 1943, 106 Italians, almost all of them prisoners of war, were assigned a year later. They were the last group of people forcibly taken to perform forced labour from neighbouring European countries. Among the western and southern European countries, the Italians were assigned to the worst status.

Meanwhile, the plant had become the main target of the Allied air forces. During the worst bombing of the war, in the early morning hours of February 21, 1945, the refinery also suffered numerous hits. "In the blood-red glow of burning oil tanks of the Rhenania, Monheim offered a horrible picture of devastation. It was almost incomprehensible how such destruction



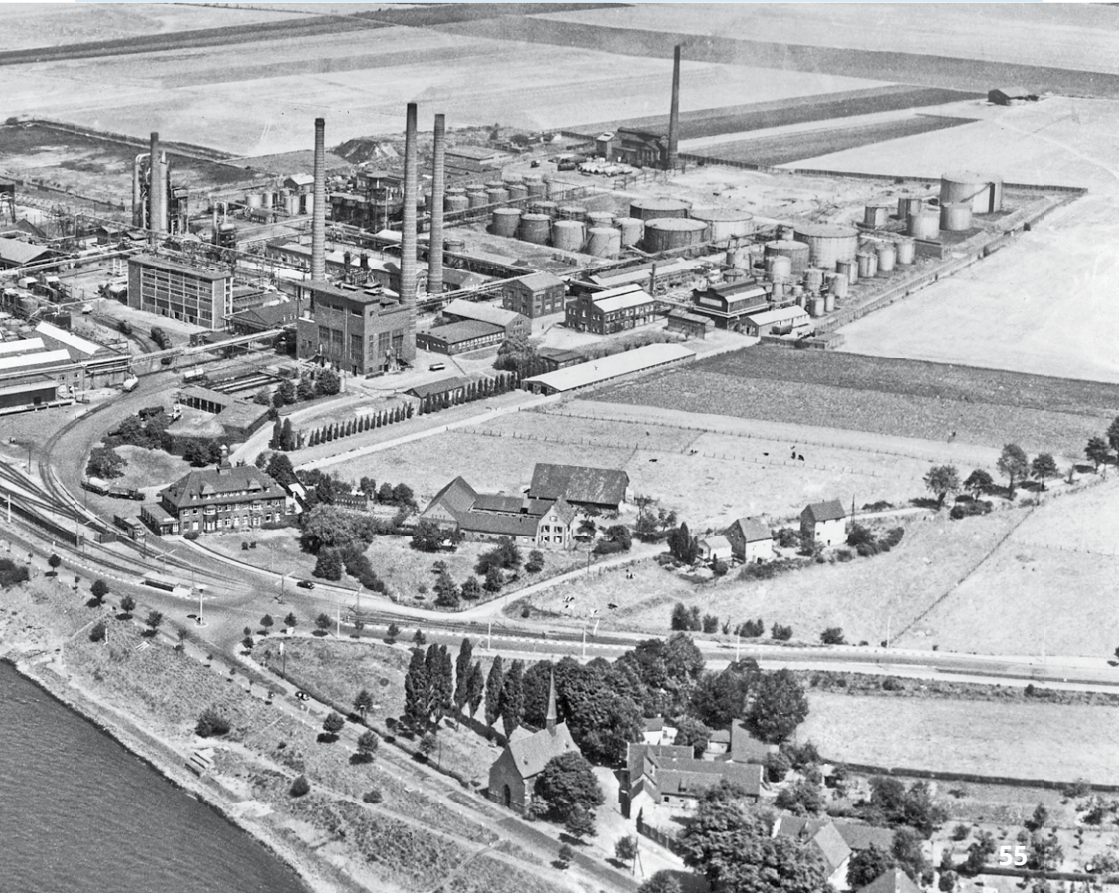
*The administration building of Rhenania-Ossag
in June 1940 following a bomb attack.*



could unfold in 20 minutes," as Chaplain Hans Meixner, who represented the priest Franz Boehm (cf. p. 19), who was imprisoned in the Dachau concentration camp and died there, wrote in the parish chronicle for St. Gereon.

Continued on next page →

The Monheim plant of Deutscher Shell (formerly Rhenania-Ossag) in 1959.



Rheinpromenade / Krischerstraße 100 (Rhenania-Ossag Mineralölwerke)

At least eight people died on the grounds of the Rhenania-Ossag plant in a dive-bomber attack on October 6, 1944. There were six Italian forced labourers among them:

Luigi Cogliati was born on May 1, 1917, in Milan. The fitter, single and Catholic, was not entered into the file until October 9, 1944, i.e. three days after his death, when he was entered with Rhenania-Ossag. This contradiction can only be explained by the fact that he worked at Rhenania-Ossag even before the registration took place. The same holds true for **Pietro Di Gregorio**, born February 19, 1918, in Palermo. He, too, was single and Catholic, and had been a farmer in his home country.



Luigi Lanfranchi (b. 1917 in Leffe, Bergamo Province), **Giovanni Mapelli** (b. 1917 in Mariano, Como Province), **Roberto Rosada** (b. 1920 in Venice) and **Augusto Santandrea** (b. 1924 in Bertinoro, Forli Province) are listed not in the rolls of forced labourers but in a directory in the parish archive of St. Gereon and Dionysius. According to the official registrar's confirmation not issued until 1951, Mapelli, Rosada and Santandrea were members of the → Todt Organization (OT).



They performed cleaning and repair work required following air raids at the Rhenania-Ossag plant but also built walls to protect against shrapnel. In 1944, an OT group, Hansa, built two above-ground bunkers measuring 60 and 116 square metres. The smaller building was intended for the storage of fire-extinguishing equipment, while the larger one was intended as a shelter for factory employees. The bunkers had a wall thickness of two metres.

After the attack of February 21, 1945, OT or a company commissioned by it repaired the roof of the administrative building and roofs in the group of residences on Heinrich-Späth-Straße. At the end of the war, a million bricks were stored on the premises of the plant; these bricks were designated for use in building protective walls around tanks and production facilities.



Born on August 15, 1913, Limbourg, Belgium (District of Liège), **Josef Ernst Marie Adolphe Pleers** was single and Catholic. Pleers worked for exactly three months, from May 4 until his death on August 4, 1943, at Rhenania-Ossag and lived in the company camp.

The death certificate reads: “[Pleers] died on August 4, 1943, at 5.30 p.m. in Monheim while driving between Monheim and Langenfeld-Galkhausen, cause of death: Suicide.” The more detailed circumstances come from a communication from the local police authority to the registry office: “This was a suicide caused by being run over by a factory locomotive in the plant of [...] Rhenania-Ossag [...].”



Schallenstraße 34 (Hofer Farm)

HIER WOHNTE UND
ARBEITETE

OLGA
PODMARIOWA

JG. 1915
UKRAINE

ZWANGSARBEIT SEIT 1943
FLUCHT IN DEN TOD
4.10.1944

Olga Podmariova, widowed, Catholic, was born on June 3, 1914, in Soltawa (Ukraine). She lived as a farm worker and worked for Peter Hofer/ the Hofer siblings, Schallenstraße 34, from May 8, 1943, until December 10, 1943. She then worked for the Goetze company in Burscheid until April 17, 1944, and then again at Hofer until her death.

The death certificate states: "[...] found dead on October 4, 1944, in Baumberg at 2.30 p.m. on the farmer's estate. [...] Registered upon written notice from the local police authority in Monheim of October 7, 1944. [...] Cause of death: Suicide [!] by hanging."



Altjudenhof should actually be called "Altjuddenhof", as the name derives from the Judden family of Cologne. The photo shows its condition in 1958.



Schleiderweg (Altjudenhof)

After Monheim suffered the heaviest bombing on February 21, 1945, no further air raids took place. Nevertheless, the situation remained treacherous, as the US Army reached the left bank of the Rhine in early March and fired artillery from there. One could not be safe, even at Altjudenhof, which was far from the town centre, as was shown on April 6, 1945. Just ten days before the invasion by American troops, two Polish forced labourers were hit by shrapnel and fatally injured.



Prisoner of war **Bolesław Krzyškowiak**, born on November 23, 1908, in Bruczków, was single and Catholic. Since about 1940, he had lived and worked for the farmer Johann Aengenheister at Altjudenhof.



Czesław Pitucha, married, Catholic, was born on August 2, 1913, in Siedliska. He came to Altjudenhof as a farm worker on October 1, 1940.





In 2019, Gunter Demnig laid 34 Stumbling Stones in Monheim am Rhein for men and women as well as their children and siblings who died or lost relatives during forced labour.

The Stumbling Stones Project

The first Stumbling Stone was laid by artist Gunter Demnig in his home city of Cologne, in front of the Historic City Hall, on December 16, 1992. With this, he marked the 50th anniversary of the order by SS leader Heinrich Himmler for the deportation of the “Gypsies” (also known as the “Auschwitz Decree”).

Stumbling Stones are brass plates, 96 by 96 mm mounted on a concrete base 10 cm high. They feature the names of people who were persecuted or murdered during the era of National Socialism. Stumbling Stones can now be found in more than 1,100 municipalities throughout Germany, and in nearly all European countries. Their numbers have risen to more than 60,000. In their entirety, they are the largest decentralized memorial in the world. Meanwhile, Gunter Demnig has also begun laying Stumbling Thresholds in the format of 100 by 10 centimetres. They commemorate not individuals but entire groups of victims.

In 2003, the Otto-Hahn-Gymnasium, the Catholic parish of St. Gereon and the association Partnership with Israel [Partnerschaft mit Israel] played a key role in the unanimous decision by the Town Council of Monheim am Rhein to begin laying Stumbling Stones in the town. They, the parties represented in the Council and the citizenry, took on sponsorships for the stones.

When the tragic fate of Ernst Kolisch became known in 2014, the town added another Stumbling Stone to the twelve for the Jewish victims (see p. 50). In 2018, the work of laying Stumbling Stones for forced labourers and their next of kin began. First there were 16 stones for Polish victims of forced labour, and then in 2019 there were 34 stones for forced labourers of other nationalities. Most recently, eight stones were laid in March 2020 for persecuted Jews, and a Stumbling Threshold was laid for the first time in memory of French prisoners of war who were pressed into forced labour.



Tour of the Old Town along the Stumbling Stones for Jewish families, Pastor Franz Boehm and forced labourers

- 1 Memorial 'In memory of the injustice 1933–1945', Kradepohl
- 2 Stumbling Stones, Grabenstraße 54
- 3 Stumbling Stones, Franz-Boehm-Straße 3
- 4 Stumbling Stone for Franz Boehm, steps to the Catholic Church of St. Gereon
- 5 Location of the former Jewish House of Prayer, Grabenstraße 10
- 6 Stumbling Stones, Frohnstraße 9
- 7 Stumbling Stones, Frohnstraße 14
- 8 Stumbling Stones, Frohnstraße 26
- 9 Stumbling Stones, Frohnstraße 44



Of the 18 Jews living in Monheim when the National Socialists seized power, only six survived the Holocaust. Most of those who were persecuted and murdered were members of the Herz family. One of them was Irma Herz (cf. p. 24). A Monheimer by birth, in July 1942 she was deported from her last place of residence in Cologne to Maly Trostinez, a labour and extermination camp near Minsk. How and when she died there is not known. At the end of the war, on May 8, 1945, Irma Herz was declared dead – like so many whose



Bicycle route along the Stumbling Stones for forced labourers and the Jewish accountant Ernst Kolisch



- 1 Stumbling Stone, Kapellenstraße 36
- 2 Stumbling Stones, Rheinpromenade
- 3 Stumbling Stone, Lottenstraße 6
- 4 Stumbling Stones, Opladener Straße 79
- 5 Stumbling Stone, Opladener Straße 200
- 6 Stumbling Stones, Schleiderweg / Altjudenhof
- 7 Stumbling Stones, Industriestraße 2
- 8 Stumbling Stone, Blerer Straße 201
- 9 Stumbling Stones, Blerer Straße 43
- 10 Stumbling Stones, Blerer Straße 41
- 11 Stumbling Stone, Hofstraße 12
- 12 Stumbling Stones, Parkstraße 6
- 13 Stumbling Stones, Frohnstraße 9
- 14 Stumbling Stones, Frohnstraße 44
- 15 Collective graveyards for forced labourers; Catholic cemetery, in front of the wall along Friedhofstraße



Along the recommended route, 45 Stumbling Stones have been laid to commemorate forced labourers who died during their time in Monheim. Position 5 on the map also features a Stumbling Stone for the Jewish accountant of the Schwarzen gravel and sand excavation operation. Ernst Kolisch was denounced and killed. His fate is described in detail on page 50.

Explanation of terms

Gestapo – the Secret State Police was answerable to SS leader Heinrich Himmler. In the German Reich and the territories occupied by it, the Gestapo persecuted and suppressed all persons and acts that were unpopular to the Nazi state. Arrestees were often tortured during interrogations. The Gestapo was authorized to take people into protective custody for an indefinite period, and that meant being sent to a concentration camp.

Todt Organization– Named after its founder Fritz Todt, the Todt Organization (OT) was responsible for the construction of military and transport facilities in the German Reich and the occupied territories beginning in 1938. The first workers deployed were German conscripts, but during the war these were largely replaced by forced labourers.

Reichsnährstand – Beginning in 1933, the German Reich's nutritional status ordered the merger of all agricultural operations, including the processing and trade of their products.

Protective custody – The **Gestapo** had the authority to detain any person in a concentration camp about whom it was assumed that they might engage in anti-state activity. This arbitrary measure, which affected political opponents as well as people of Jewish faith, was described using the euphemism of “protective custody”.

T 4 – The abbreviation stands for Tiergartenstraße 4, the address of the chancellery of the Führer. Adolf Hitler had stipulated in October 1939 that “mercy killings” could be granted to the incurably ill. From the Führer's chancellery, data on patients in clinics and nursing facilities were compiled; these patients were then moved to killing facilities equipped with gas chambers and murdered there.

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Stadtarchiv Leverkusen:

Bestand 4010 (Rhein-Wupper-Kreis, u. a. Wiedergutmachungsakten)

Among other things, files of the Düsseldorf Public Prosecutor's Office and of the Gestapo, redress files

www.passagierlisten.de, accessed on December 4, 2019

We would like to thank the following for their kind support with the research: Gemeinde Brachtal, KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau, Institut für Stadtgeschichte Gelsenkirchen, Gedenkstätte Hadamar, Stadtarchiv Heiligenhaus, NS-Dokumentationszentrum der Stadt Köln, Archiv der Evangelischen Kirchengemeinde Monheim/Rhld., Archiv der Katholischen Kirchengemeinde St. Gereon und Dionysius Monheim am Rhein, Stadt- und Kreisarchiv Paderborn, Historisches Zentrum Wuppertal

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Publisher's details

Publisher:

Town of Monheim am Rhein
– The Mayor –
Rathausplatz 2
40789 Monheim am Rhein, Germany
www.monheim.de

Copy: Karl-Heinz Hennen, Michael Hohmeier

Editorial team: Michael Hohmeier, Thomas Spekowius

Illustrations: Michael de Clerque, Karl-Heinz Hennen, Michael Hotopp,
Thomas Spekowius, Stadtarchiv (Ferdinand Crone, Sonja Felten, Josef Greulich,
Luftfoto Bremen, Klemens Siebeneichler, Westdeutscher Luftfoto)

Design: Strich!Punkt GmbH, Heike Kapteina, Monheim am Rhein

Printing: Lenz Druck, Leverkusen

3rd, improved and extended edition, March 2020





Gunter Demnig

*during the laying of Stumbling Stones in Monheim am Rhein
in memory of persecuted and murdered Jews,
victims of forced labour and Pastor Franz Boehm.*