

A TRIBUTE

THE OBERMAYER GERMAN JEWISH HISTORY AWARDS

PRESENTED TO:

PASCALE EBERHARD

MARLIS GLASER

DETLEV HERBST

JÖRG KAPS

CHRISTIAN REPKEWITZ

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS:

WOLFGANG HANEY

RENATA STIH & FRIEDER SCHNOCK

ABGEORDNETENHAUS, BERLIN
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DEALING WITH THE PAST

The Obermayer German Jewish History Awards were established to pay tribute to Germans who have made outstanding voluntary contributions to preserving the memory of their local Jewish communities, including their history, culture, cemeteries, and synagogues. The awards are now recognized as the most significant honor these individuals can receive, especially since they come primarily from Jews who have a full appreciation of the horrors of the Hitler era. These awardees are prime examples of how Germany has dealt with its past. Today, the German government and people are quick to recognize the slippery slope from arrogance to bigotry, intolerance, hatred, repression, dehumanization and barbarity -- and are among the first to say, "never again". Today, Germany can be an example for the whole world of how a terrible period in a country's history can continue to impact on the psyche of its inhabitants for future generations.

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ENRICHING THE FUTURE



This year marks the fifteenth annual presentation of awards that were created to honor the past and enrich the future. German life was once filled with contributions made by Jewish scholars, writers and artists. Music, science, literature and architecture were often collaborative efforts that brought diverse talents together. The collective history of Germans and Jews was profoundly connected and served to benefit the world.

The Nazi regime and its obliteration of the German Jewish community ended a long period of collaboration and mutual trust.

However, many German citizens, ranging from academics to those working in business and professions, did not let go of their interest and commitment to Jewish history and culture. Many worked at great personal cost to preserve and reconstruct aspects of Jewish life, which had contributed to the cultural richness of their lives and the lives of their respective communities. These individuals have researched, reconstructed, written about and rebuilt an appreciation of Jewish culture that will enrich life today and in the future.

Diverse individuals, without thought of reward, have helped raise awareness about a once vibrant community. Their ongoing efforts pay tribute to the importance of Jewish subject matter and its value to German society as a whole.

Many volunteers have devoted years of effort to such projects, but few have been recognized or honored for their efforts. The German Jewish Community History Council and its cosponsors believe it is particularly important for Jews from other parts of the world to be aware of this ongoing work. The annual Obermayer German Jewish History Awards provide an opportunity for the Jewish community worldwide to acknowledge German citizens who have rekindled the spark of Jewish thought that once existed in Germany. The award winners have dedicated themselves to rebuilding destroyed institutions and ideals. Their achievements reflect a personal connection to Jewish history and a willingness to repair a small corner of the world.

Awardee

PASCALE EBERHARD

Wawern, Rhineland-Palatinate

In 1997, Pascale Eberhard and her husband moved to Wawern, a village close to Trier on the German border with Luxembourg, where they bought a home next to the town's "very beautiful, small [but empty] synagogue," sparking her fascination but also prompting some immediate questions: "I wanted to know what happened here and I began to ask people, 'What about the Jews, where are they, what do you remember?' The first reaction was not so good, lots of silence," she recalls, "and for me I couldn't accept that."

In response Eberhard, a professor of French and Communications, quickly began to investigate Wawern's Jewish past. Her research unearthed never-before-told stories about the fate of Jewish families in the Saar and Lorraine region—specifically, the first 518 people from the areas of Luxembourg and Trier who were deported on October 16, 1941, to the Litzmannstadt (Lodz) ghetto in Poland, only 15 of whom survived the war. But the stories on paper were not enough for Eberhard: "When I began this work, I thought, 'I must meet the descendants of these families.'"

After four years and immense efforts that included dozens of meetings with Jewish descendants from the region, visits to archives in Israel, Poland, Germany and the U.S., and trips to places as far away as Paraguay, Bolivia and the Dominican Republic to personally meet with members of surviving families, Eberhard produced the exhibition, "Der Überlebenskampf jüdischer Deportierter aus Luxemburg und der Trierer Region" (The Struggle for Survival of the Luxemburg and Trier Jews Deported to Litzmannstadt: Letters, Photographs, Documents). The show—translated into Polish and English, with an accompanying book in German, French and English—made its debut in Trier in 2011—the 70th anniversary of the deportation. The show later appeared in Luxembourg, Mainz, Bitburg, and finally in Lodz itself, two years later on the 70th anniversary of the liquidation of the ghetto. The exhibition will come full circle and return to Trier later this winter.

Eberhard, co-founder and president of the association Gedenken und Gestalten (Commemorate and Build), says she is driven by the need to fight discrimination wherever it appears. While "it's a challenge to make that history relevant" to the high school student of today to whom she teaches Holocaust history, she remains undaunted. "My first motivation is humanity," she says. "I can't accept that people are discriminated against, whether Jews or Protestants or Muslims," and she has made it her mission "to destroy stereotypes and discrimination."

Born in 1954 in the south of France, Eberhard grew up in Paris and later studied German literature and Sociology at Paris VIII University. In the 1980s, she moved to Frankfurt to complete her doctorate about German and Austrian exiles during the Nazi reign. A glance backwards

into Eberhard's family would reveal that resistance to Nazi oppression is nothing new. Her father hailed from the acclaimed southeastern French village of Dieulefit whose residents—including her father and other relatives—hid thousands of Jews during the war. "In my family it was normal to help Jewish people," she recalls.

Not only that, but Eberhard's father served in the resistance movement against the Vichy government; as an underground courier, he obtained scarce paper products that were used to make false passports, which enabled some Jews to flee. Captured in Lyon by Vichy police, her father was handed over to the Germans and deported to Dachau, where he survived the war. "He never spoke about it and I always wanted to know more," says Eberhard. "I asked and I asked and I asked, but he was not able to discuss what he was suffering. It was too heavy." It was only many years later after settling in Wawern that Eberhard followed her interest and rediscovered Germany's wartime history—this time, with a clear mission to resuscitate the memory of Jews who were deported and never heard from again.

Eberhard has organized educational meetings and workshops around the "Struggle for Survival" exhibition, which has already been attended by some 20,000 schoolchildren. Ingo Loose, a nominator and a Berlin-based historian at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte (Institute of Contemporary History) specializing on Holocaust research, praises Eberhard as "a personality who combines thoughtful commemoration and precise research with the constant aim to bring these stories and fates to the public, in order to make those silent voices heard again."

According to nominator Suzanne Mayer Tarica of Bethesda, Maryland, whose parents escaped the Holocaust, Eberhard's "sensitivity and her sense of justice and morality have made her particularly attuned to the tragedies" of the Nazi era. And while her "efforts serve as a model for raising awareness of the once-vibrant communities that fell victim to the Holocaust...one of her greatest strengths has been the ability to bring together individuals in the many communities."

Every November since 2008, Eberhard and her association have organized a Klezmer concert at the renovated Wawern synagogue to commemorate Kristallnacht, in what has become a popular event attended by many throughout the region. Looking ahead, Eberhard is working to finish a book about the lives of Jews in Wawern before the war. Meanwhile, she continues to teach and engage not only with students, but also adults, raising issues of injustice and discrimination. "It's necessary to continue this work, because people forget a lot of things. I'm convinced we have to discuss it with young people and relate the subject of anti-Semitism and any form of racism, asking: 'How do you feel about your neighbors—and do you have empathy for those who are discriminated against?' You can motivate young people to react against that."

Nominated by: Adrian Binke, London, UK; Marc Cukier, Dalheim, Luxembourg; Edmund Elsen, Mainz, Germany; Ruth Hirsch, London, UK; Debbie Hurwitz, Williamsport, PA, USA; Ingo Loose, Berlin, Germany; Françoise Moysse, Luxembourg; Suzanne Tarica, Bethesda, MD, USA

Awardee

MARLIS GLASER

Attenweiler, Baden-Württemberg

After leaving her native Swabia to attend school in Bremen, the young artist Marlis Glaser grew engaged in social and political issues while painting the portraits of union workers, communists and social democrats. Then, in 1984, at the age of 32, she produced the portrait of a woman named Hannah Erdmann, a Jew from Breslau who had survived Theresienstadt and whose story of survival fascinated Glaser. As she painted her subject and learned more about Erdmann's life, Glaser realized that she needed to go deeper: "I started wanting to know about the Jewish people."

Since painting the image that lit a fire in her three decades ago, Glaser has dedicated years of artistic craft and literally hundreds of works of art to the preservation and commemoration of Jews who survived the Holocaust, drawing cultural attention to the importance of Jewish heritage in pre-War Germany. Through a combination of drawing, sculpture and painting, Glaser has produced 22 exhibitions across Germany, France and Israel. She has also published several widely read catalogues and books, including *Neue Arbeiten 2008-2012: Bilder über Menschen und Bücher, Baume und Früchte* (Recent Works, 2008-2012: Pictures About People and Books, Trees and Fruits).

In addition to giving numerous tours and presentations in which Glaser has discussed her work, her paintings of Jewish survivors and their family members hang in synagogues, museums, churches and art spaces across Germany—including galleries in Dusseldorf, Tübingen, Schorndorf, Ravensburg, Mochental Castle, and in her hometown Attenweiler, close to Ulm in Baden-Württemberg.

Glaser's partly figurative, partly expressionist works in bold colors, which incorporate text, symbols, flowers and trees, are known for capturing the strength of character and, in many cases, the optimism of her subjects. For Glaser, tears of sadness and tears of joy belong to her art as well as her life. "With my project theme 'Abraham Planted a Tamarisk Tree' I pick up this biblical quote and express the aspect of continuity from Abraham until today. This spiritual and ethical tradition in Judaism starts with Abraham and goes until today."

The Abraham Project is perhaps Glaser's best-known work, started in 2005. One series includes some 200 paintings of 70 individuals, combining interviews and portraits of German-Jewish immigrants to Israel and the U.S. to depict the life stories of dozens of individuals forced to flee Germany to escape the Holocaust.

Based on her many trips to Israel, and inspired by Judaism and what she has learned about Jewish culture, Glaser combines images of nature as well as religious symbols – such as a menorah, a Seder plate, a wedding dress, a shofar, a prayer book – into the portraits of her subjects to connect them with their personal stories. Glaser includes biographical, religious and historical details in her work, she says, because "in art, everything should have a meaning. I was interested in their stories: how did they survive, how many family members did they lose? I wanted to interpret these people with four symbols: portrait, tree motif, name (identity) and object (from their personal life)."

Through her creative process portraying elderly Jews, their descendants and the families' legacies of surviving the Holo-

ocaust, Glaser has become linked to Judaism in a unique way—and brought her sons into the process as well. She not only celebrates weekly Shabbat and the Jewish holidays, but both of her non-Jewish sons—Samuel, 22, who studies art in Munich, and Joshua, 18, who currently engages in woodworking—had symbolic bar mitzvahs. Glaser knows Hebrew phrases and prayers as well as the alphabet, and she enjoys baking challah bread with her children. "I want to know the traditions of Jewish culture and religion so that I know what I have lost," she says.

Glaser gives school lectures and leads workshops to teach students about Germany's Jewish past. She has also designed flyers and used her paintings in exhibitions commemorating the European Jewish Day of Culture. "It's a generation that isn't here—which should be here, which is absent," says Glaser. "That's why I went 12 years ago with my boys to Israel. I wanted them to meet and see these people who once came from Germany and I wanted to meet the generation of my youth—the children of these survivors."

Amos Fröhlich, of Shavei Zion in Israel, says Glaser "internalized the Holocaust and decided to dedicate all her energies to the commemoration of the fate of the persecuted Jews who were forced to flee Germany—and to the education of young people in Germany today for the sake of future generations." And describing the art itself, Judith Temime, also from Shavei Zion, says Glaser's "observations are at once sober and tender, and the riotous colors and somber shadows she uses are as telling as words... [Her] engagement with the German-Jewish narrative and her faithful commitment to 'remembrance and hope' have come together to produce a unique and wonderful body of work."

During a 10-year period starting early last decade, Glaser says her work "interpreted" and was inspired by the German-Jewish poet Else Lasker-Schüler, who was born in Wuppertal in 1869 and died in Jerusalem in 1945. Glaser herself grew up hearing stories that her great aunt and uncle told about Jews who had lived in Ulm before the war. Her grandmother—who was introduced to her grandfather by a Jewish cattle dealer—helped hungry Jewish families survive the war by sending Glaser's mother, then a 13-year-old girl, to deliver eggs and other food supplies to Jews in the neighboring village of Laupheim.

Glaser says her Jewish-inspired artwork has a dual purpose – to keep alive the memory of Holocaust survivors, and to, commemorate the Jews whom the Nazis murdered. Her other socio-political works include wall installations depicting stories from modern labor movements, the women's 20th century liberation movement, women of the French Revolution, and women in the WWII resistance. Glaser, whose work has been written about extensively in both the German and Israeli press, produced an especially celebrated exhibit in 2008 on the anniversary of the founding of Israel and the 70th anniversary of Kristallnacht.

For Glaser, perhaps as important as anything is her desire, through art, to help defeat prejudice and force people today, and in the future, to ask: "How we can reduce anti-Jewish stereotypes and resentment in ourselves?"

Nominated by: Chava & Motke Berkovicz, Shavei Zion, Israel; Aron Berlinger, New York, NY, USA; Elma Erlanger, Shavei Zion, Israel; Amos Fröhlich, Shavei Zion, Israel; Esti Geva, Kiryat Tivon, Israel; Ivo Gönner, Ulm, Germany; Dina Grinspan, Mevasseret Zion, Israel; Rabbi Yehoshua Helman, Naryariyya, Israel; Raya Hoffmann, Nofit, Israel; Yehudith Kahn, Asseret, Israel; Silvester Lechner, Elchingen, Germany; Yitzhak Steiner, Re'ut, Israel; Judith Temime, Shavei Zion, Israel

Awardee

DETLEV HERBST

Uslar, Lower Saxony

As a child growing up in Bavaria after the war, Detlev Herbst played hide and seek in his town's Jewish cemetery and observed the ruins of a synagogue, destroyed in Kristallnacht, which stood opposite his grammar school—though he had no understanding of what the sites meant because no one in the town discussed them. His father had died of pneumonia while serving in the Wehrmacht medical corps in Warsaw during the war, and Herbst, born in 1943, was evacuated with his mother and grandmother when their home was bombed in Hannover. It wasn't until many decades later when Herbst, a secondary school teacher in the town of Uslar in Lower Saxony, plunged into Jewish historical research and resuscitated his own region's rich Jewish legacy while striving to make sure there was never any silence again about the Holocaust.

Herbst's discoveries began in the 1980s, when he assigned his students a project researching the lives of children during the Third Reich. "In the schoolbooks I only found material about Jewish life in the cities—in Berlin and Hannover and Cologne—but nothing about the rural places," he recalls, "so we started to ask older people what they knew about Jews who had lived here before." Herbst and his students developed a series of questions for Uslar's residents. "We stopped people on the street and got a lot of interesting answers, so much information. Some even said, 'I can tell you the names of Jewish families and show you where the families lived.'"

Herbst turned the interviews into a small exhibition at the Uslar town hall, but that was just the beginning. Soon, a local journalist contacted Herbst to tell him about an ancient, little known synagogue and Jewish cemetery that existed in the neighboring town of Bodenfelde. "I didn't know about it, nobody before had mentioned it," Herbst says, and when he visited the town he found the 1825 synagogue. Built in the traditional half-timbered construction, with thick external beams embedded in clay bricks, the synagogue "was still standing but it was in a really poor state. The roof was leaking, water penetrated into the building, the condition was really poor. I showed it to my students, and then I thought, 'Why not show it to the people of Uslar and Bodenfelde?'"

So began Herbst's efforts to restore one of Lower Saxony's great historic synagogues. In 2006, with the organizational and fundraising help of another Obermayer Award winner, Brigitta Stammer (2011), the Bodenfelde synagogue was dismantled, piece by piece, and moved to nearby Göttingen, where it became the new anchor to the city's liberal Jewish community of 300. Herbst also worked with more than 200 students to restore and tend to Bodenfelde's Jewish cemetery, where he has led tours, held lectures and taught young people and locals alike about their region's Jewish past.

Herbst says he is driven by three main reasons to do this work. First, because "I want to give back names and faces to the forgotten Jewish neighbors and help the descendants of Jews from Uslar and Bodenfelde find information on their families' history." Second, he is showing today's population "that a minority of people lived here who were very useful for the community, as Jewish people established factories and

shops and gave thousands of people work in furniture, stones, coal and glass [industries]." And third, because "the Jewish population of this region was forced to leave this place, they were driven away and killed only because of their religion, and this must not be forgotten."

As articles about Herbst's work appeared in the local press, more and more residents stepped forward to tell him details and stories about what they remembered before the war. "I learned that some had worked in Jewish shops, or had a Jewish neighbor," he says, and people delivered to him previously unseen documents, files, photographs, letters and other biographical items relating to the 60 to 80 Jews who had once lived in Uslar and Bodenfelde. Meanwhile, Herbst grew relationships and was able to collect information from descendants of several dozen Jewish families from the region, now living in places as remote as South Africa and Australia, the U.S. and Brazil, Italy, Britain, Sweden, Norway and Israel.

His work culminated in an exhibition at Uslar's regional museum entitled "Jüdisches Leben Im Solling" (Jewish Life in Solling), which received more than 2,500 visitors and later became a one-room permanent exhibit, containing detailed biographies of the families and descriptions of the town's former Jewish life dating back more than 400 years. Herbst wrote an accompanying book, *Jüdisches Leben im Solling* (Jewish Life in Solling), in addition to numerous articles about the Jewish heritage of Uslar and Bodenfelde. His latest book, *Spuren Jüdischer Geschichte zwischen Solling und Weser* (Traces of Former Jewish Life Between Solling and Weser), was published in 2014.

Additionally, Herbst has helped raise money to install more than a dozen Stolpersteine and numerous mounted plaques outside the homes where Uslar's Jews formerly lived. He is also responsible for a Holocaust memorial erected in a central park in Bodenfelde dedicated in memory of the town's 20 residents who were murdered in concentration camps.

In the words of Livingstone Treumann of Redington Beach, Florida, whose grandparents fled from Bodenfelde: "Detlev Herbst is not only helping to restore synagogues and cemeteries, he is restoring something much more important and powerful: memories for future generations." And Rabbi Philip Heilbrunn, past President of Orthodox Rabbis of Australia, said Herbst "has been a tower of strength and support in my passion to explore the roots of my mother's family... [his] untiring efforts to broaden and deepen the understanding of the lives of this district's Jews, and his deep sense of care and sensitivity to his mission to restore their memory, is unsurpassed."

Still today, while striving in so many ways to keep alive the memory of Jews from Uslar, Herbst also manages several times a year to take his students to clean Bodenfelde's Jewish cemetery—cutting branches and grass, taking away rotting leaves and cleaning the graves. "The students really like working there, we stay for five or six hours," he says. "It's so important that this part of the history of the region must not be forgotten."

Nominated by: Ronald Bildstein, Beachwood, OH, USA; Sabine Bloch, Herrsching, Germany; Anne Forrester, Vero Beach, FL, USA; Rabbi Philip Heilbrunn, Victoria, Australia; Harald Jüttner, Rosdorf-Atzenhausen, Germany; Yehudith Mogle, Mevasseret Zion, Israel; Ruth Oppenheimer-Katz, Jerusalem, Israel; Livingstone Treumann, Redington Beach, FL, USA

Awardee
JÖRG KAPS
Arnstadt, Thuringia

There has been a surge of interest in recent years in the history of Jewish life in Arnstadt, and one reason may be that Jörg Kaps “can give the facts a face. I’m introducing the families, their history—not general information, but concrete. I show photos, I tell the ways they died, life in the concentration camps, who their relatives are, what jobs they did, where and how they lived, giving shape to local history. Now there is talk in Arnstadt about this history—people pass a house and they know its Jewish past. It’s in the consciousness of the city.”

Born in 1962 and raised in this industrial, former East German town, one of Kaps’s strongest early memories occurred when he was six or seven and he visited a cemetery not far from his grandparents’ home. On one of the memorial stones he read that the family Hirschmann had died at concentration camps in Buchenwald and Auschwitz. “I spelled the words and later I asked my mother, ‘What is Auschwitz? What is Buchenwald? What do they mean?’ My mother explained that they were concentration camps and that many people had been murdered there, and later my parents told me about the Nazis,” he recalls. Later as a teenager traveling in Budapest, Kaps entered a bookshop and bought the book, *Der SS Staat* (The SS State), in which he read about a couple killed in Buchenwald and sewn into their clothing were the names Hirschmann. “That was the moment I understood that the history which was far away had to do with Arnstadt, my home, and it made me ask more questions and have the desire to learn more about this history,” he says.

It wasn’t until many years later, while employed as a social worker, that he would finally seize the opportunity to do so—and begin to educate so many others as well. In the winter of 2007, the Arnstadt city council voted to install Stolpersteine outside the homes where Jews had formerly lived. The task fell to Kaps, an outspoken opponent of neo-Nazis, to research information about the city’s Jewish past. At the city archive they handed him a short book, *Arnstadts Jüdische Mitbürger* (Arnstadt’s Jewish Citizens), along with four additional pages of information, and warned he wouldn’t find anything further.

But soon Kaps did. Through his meticulous research at the archive, he uncovered unexpected details and documents about the city’s Jewish past. Kaps recalls scribbling notes into the margins of the book, and when he filled them up, he wrote on small pieces of paper that he stuck between the pages. “There was so much information it couldn’t all fit,” he said. And that’s when he realized this wealth of information needed to be publicized. “It was the crossroads of my life, when I took the direction that I’m still keeping on,” said Kaps. “Until that day, I thought the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 was the most exciting time in my life. But now I know this research is the other high point.”

Kaps traveled to Buchenwald, visited more archives and gathered additional contacts and sources about Jewish life in Arnstadt until he had filled 14 large files with information. When a man from New York named Robert Cohen finally contacted him about his work, it represented Kaps’s first communication with a Jewish descendant of Arnstadt, and “it touched me deeply. It changed everything, and it gave me energy to do this hard work,” he says.

Today, as a result of those painstaking efforts, more than 120 Stumbling Stones in Arnstadt commemorate the Jewish

families that once lived there. Kaps has developed relationships with 17 Jewish families spread literally across the world—from America and Israel to France, England, Holland and as far away as Chile, Argentina and Uruguay—whose relatives from Arnstadt died in the Holocaust. Without realizing where his social work would lead, Kaps became the foremost expert on his city’s Jewish history, giving symposia and public lectures and leading guided walking tours. He frequently gives talks at schools about Arnstadt’s Jewish past, and has led dozens of students on trips to Auschwitz and Birkenau.

In addition, Kaps undertook in-depth research and compiled geneological data to create extensive Arnstadt Jewish family trees—one of which expanded into a massive, street-sized roll of paper seven meters in length. Kaps has also steered reconciliation projects that bring together the relatives of victims and perpetrators of the Holocaust to speak in schools and generate open discussions about the past. “People meet face to face and tell the students their stories,” he says, and “young people are interested in this history more and more and more.”

Kaps’s feelings of social justice found early expression; while working as a machine technician in the 1980s, he joined a Protestant youth group called *Schwerter zu Pflugscharen* (Swords to Plowshares) which discussed social problems in the GDR. He found himself targeted by Stasi, the East German state security, and was interrogated twice. As a member of the Initiative für Frieden und Menschenrechte (Initiative for Peace and Human Rights), he helped organize street demonstrations in the months leading up to the fall of the Berlin Wall. And immediately after, Kaps quit his technician job and became a social worker for the Arnstadt government, helping educate people about the rising dangers of the extreme right. He worked in a youth club organizing anti-Nazi demonstrations, and in 2006 he joined the group *Demokratie braucht Zivilcourage* (Democracy Needs Civil Courage). It was then that the Arnstadt city council approached Kaps to research the city’s Jewish history—and he has been impacting families across the globe, and educating Germans about their past, ever since.

Lisa Black, whose grandmother from Arnstadt escaped to Australia, praises Kaps as “a man who is endeavoring to right the wrongs of his past generation, and in doing so is deeply touching the lives of those that have been wronged around the world.” And Ruth Gofin, of Haifa, Israel, says Kaps “is educating the public about a human catastrophe by highlighting the fates of individuals who lived as neighbors in his community, while honoring their memory.”

Still today, Kaps volunteers cleaning the Jewish cemetery in the nearby town of Plaue—one more way he has committed to rescuing the Jewish history of his region. “Even my generation should bear responsibility for the Holocaust. It’s not a question of guilt, but of responsibility of the following generations—for the present and for the future,” he says. “I will continue on the Holocaust issue—the research, talking about it, bringing it into consciousness. There’s still a lot of work to do. It’s not finished for the families, for the relatives of the Arnstadt Jews, and for the town’s citizens, too.”

Nominated by: Annie Arnold, Rishon Lezion, Israel; Lisa Black, Melbourne, Australia; Robert Cohen, Island Park, NY, USA; Salomea Genin, Berlin, Germany; Ruth Gofin, Haifa, Israel; Stefan Goldschmidt, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Alicia Gottfeld, Miami Beach, FL, USA; David Jonas, New York, NY, USA; Peter Lederman, New Providence, NJ, USA; Eduardo Mendel, Oldenburg, Germany; Eva Nickel, Berlin, Germany; Reinhard Schramm, Erfurt, Germany; Irene Schwab, London, UK; Dorit Stern, Veitschöchheim, Germany; Donald Strauss, Naperville, IL, USA

Awardee
CHRISTIAN REPKEWITZ
Altenburg, Thuringia

In 2004, Christian Repkewitz met a man named Ingolf Strassmann, who as a child during World War II had fled Altenburg with two of his four siblings and escaped to Palestine. Strassmann was writing a history about Jewish life in Altenburg and he contacted Repkewitz, who was a resident there, to seek assistance finding a publisher and funding for the project. The more the two spoke, the more Repkewitz became immersed in Strassmann's stories. "I really didn't know anything about Jewish life in Altenburg," says Repkewitz. "But step by step I wanted to know more and more and more. My interest and research grew, and in the end, I was in."

The 24-year-old Repkewitz had moved just three years prior to this Thuringian city to work as a public relations officer in the mayor's office. He had little prior knowledge of Germany's Jewish history other than what he'd learned about the Holocaust in his East German schooling. Soon, Repkewitz would put his new passion for Jewish history into action, organizing the 70th anniversary commemoration of Kristallnacht in Altenburg, where some 300 Jews had lived before the war. He also arranged the installation of three Stolpersteine outside the warehouse of the well-known Levy family, and his connections to other descendants of Altenburg's former Jews flourished. Then, tackling his biggest project, Repkewitz "wanted to know what families lived here, what their work was," and he began making a map of the city, locating all the buildings once connected to the city's Jewish past.

"At the beginning I thought it would just be some houses in the city, but it grew bigger and bigger," he recalls. Repkewitz visited the city and state archives in Altenburg and examined reparation files in archives in Hannover. A friend of his wrote a computer program that allowed him to insert Jewish residences directly into a Google map. Finally, after four years of painstaking work that he funded entirely on his own, Repkewitz posted the Online City Map of Jewish Altenburg, containing over 300 Jewish homes and businesses with information about the people who had lived and worked there. He also led guided walking tours through Jewish Altenburg on European Heritage Day and wrote articles for the local newspaper about his discoveries.

But that wasn't enough for Repkewitz, who one day realized, "I had researched so much info and was the only one who knew it at the time—why not make a book for others to know this information as well?" So in 2011, Repkewitz began what he called a "flowing process" of research, in which he gathered some 190 separate stories based on letters, photographs, documents and archived materials provided to him by the families of Altenburg's descendants. "I had to find out more about these people," he says, and his efforts culminated in the 2014 book, *Verblasste Spuren: Lebens- und Leidenswege jüdischer Einwohner der Stadt Altenburg von 1869 bis 1945* (Faded

Tracks: The Life and Suffering of Jewish Inhabitants of Altenburg from 1869-1945), which explored the histories and fate of 500 Jews since the city's founding.

Now 34 years old, Repkewitz is a leading young voice for Jewish remembrance in the region. In addition to his book, he has also established a school project called Anne Frank War Nicht Allein (Anne Frank Was Not Alone), using the story of the tragic teenage author from Amsterdam to engage Altenburg's students in Holocaust history—particularly the stories of the city's Jewish children who weren't recognized but "who suffered the same fate" as Frank. In addition, Repkewitz wrote a booklet commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Polish Action of 1938, when thousands of Polish Jews were expelled from Germany back to Poland. He also founded and led a political tolerance and education group called KORA, which for the 2012 commemoration of Kristallnacht produced a banner with names and information about 221 Jews from Altenburg who died in the Holocaust—a unique event that Repkewitz says received "a very big and positive response" from the community.

"All of these people I'm showing in my book were neighbors, colleagues, friends of Altenburg residents, and now all the traces of them, or most of the traces, are gone," he says. Repkewitz has received praise from Jewish families in Israel, America and Europe whose relatives' stories he helped rescue. According to nominator Dafna Yalon from Ein-Vered, Israel, Repkewitz not only "has succeeded in reviving the memory of the extinct Jewish community in Altenburg, [but] is creating constant opportunities to awaken interest in his community—especially in the young generation. He has single-handedly and voluntarily created public awareness about the past Jewish life in his town."

Indeed, Repkewitz is driven to reach people his age and younger with the history. "I think all people of my generation, and the generation before and the generation after, have to know about these people because they were citizens like the other Altenburg citizens, and they were driven out. We have to remember," he says, because "when you see anti-Semitism today, or encounter the Israel question, you see it's actual and current, not only in 1945."

Before his work, there was little talk about the Jewish legacy in Altenburg, a city of 33,000 located 50 kilometers south of Leipzig in the heart of the former East Germany. Now, Repkewitz believes students here "are especially interested [because] in the GDR, Jewish history was not the focus. So I think the young people want to know everything about their city—not just the facts, but about the people, who they were, their fates."

"The connections, the exchange with Jewish descendants of former Altenburg residents, was the important thing. There's not much information left, so it's the personal connections that matter most," he adds. Looking ahead, "I will go on with my work. Maybe there will be another book. I want to continue and hopefully I'll get more details about Jewish life in Altenburg. I don't feel I'm at the end of my work."

Nominated by: Jürgen Fröhlich, Altenburg, Germany; Olaf Strassmann, Rehovot, Israel; Dafna Yalon, Ein-Vered, Israel



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

WOLFGANG HANEY Berlin

Wolfgang Haney was an avid collector, initially of stamps and coins as a child growing up in Berlin. And later, after a successful career as an engineer at the Berlin magistrate and the Berlin utility company BEWAG, he grew passionate about growing a much more important kind of collection—traveling the country to retrieve all items and objects he could find relating to Jewish history, anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, accruing more than 12,000 pieces in all.

Now, at the age of 91, Haney, who is the author of a half-dozen books, holds one of the most extensive private collections of Holocaust-era material, all of it financed solely through his retirement pension. From postcards and letters sent from concentration camps, to documents, photographs, posters, leaflets, stamps, stickers, anti-Semitic caricatures and even Jewish ration cards, Haney's objects along with his personal story have been the subject of dozens of exhibitions throughout Germany—from Ludwigsburg to Koblenz, from Heidelberg to Osnabrück—and gained a popular following in Poland, with exhibitions from Wrocław to Krakow to Gdansk.

“My desire and goal is to inform the German population, especially the youth, and explain that what the Nazis [did] was an unimaginable disaster for Germany,” says Haney, who is motivated in part by his fears of a resurgent anti-Semitism in the country. “In schools they hear from teachers about the Nazis, but they're not so informed. It's very important that they know what happened. In earlier years, the Germans said that they did it and they [acknowledged that the Holocaust] was very bad. But now, slowly, the anti-Semitism is beginning again.”

Born in 1924 to a Catholic father and a Jewish mother, Haney experienced that anti-Semitism personally: due to his mother being Jewish, Haney was kicked out of high school, and his father, a pianist, saw his music school closed down by the Nazis in 1933. When their house was bombed and destroyed in 1943, the family was forced to move into a basement before a relative of his father took them in. Haney's mother later avoided deportation by fleeing into the woods outside Berlin, where she hid and survived the war. But the rest of her extended family perished in the Holocaust. “My uncle, my aunt, the whole of our family was sent to Litzmanstadt (Lodz), then to Auschwitz. No one came back,” says Haney, who was spared deportation due to his father's connections.

Haney was later able to attend school, and after earning a degree in engineering he went to work for the city

administration helping to rebuild Berlin after the war. Only many years later, after retiring from his work as a municipal civil engineer, did Haney realize he needed to address not only his own family past but Germany's role in the Holocaust. “I left work and thought, ‘I must do it—I must do something to remember all the people who died in our family. The Germans must say what they have done to the Jews.’”

Haney worked in cooperation with the Bundesarchiv (National Archives) and the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Federal Agency for Civic Education), as well as the Museum für Kommunikation (Museum for Communication) in Frankfurt and the Jüdisches Museum Frankfurt (Frankfurt Jewish Museum) to produce numerous books about Germany's Holocaust history, including *Der Weg nach Auschwitz* (The Way to Auschwitz), *Abgestempelt: Judenfeindliche Postkarten* (Stamped: Anti-Semitic Postcards), *Das Geld des Terrors* (The Money of Terror), and *Spuren aus dem Ghetto Lodz 1940-1944* (Traces of the Lodz Ghetto 1940-1944). Haney's books today are housed in libraries, courts, schools, museums, memorials and archives throughout the country.

Guy Stern, director of the Institute of the Righteous within the Holocaust Memorial Center of Greater Detroit, says Haney's work “is absolutely necessary in efforts to have concrete reminders and evidence of a never-before perpetrated atrocity. His collection of artifacts, brought together by arduous work, personal devotion and expenditure... has not only served as a reminder of past atrocities but as a defense against anti-Semitism [today].”

Haney, who received Berlin's highest honor, the *Verdienstorden des Landes Berlin* (Order of Merit), from the Mayor in 2006, says he acted with the dual goal of documenting Nazi history while communicating that history to the wider public. “I had to learn the history, so I bought all that I could buy that was Jewish. I bought them in shops, in markets, in antique stores,” he says, recalling his painstaking research. “You must look, you must look, you must go, you must ask.”

Nominated by: Hans-Guenter Müller, Berlin, Germany; Norbert Kampe, Berlin, Germany; Guy Stern, Farmington Hills, MI, USA; Wolfgang Michalka, Heidelberg, Germany; Helmut Gold, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; Isabel Enzenbach, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; Wolfgang Hempel, Gaggenau, Germany



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

RENATA STIH & FRIEDER SCHNOCK

Berlin

A few years after the Wall came down, Berlin city officials launched a competition for a work of public art honoring the memory of Berlin Jews who perished in the Holocaust. The conceptual artists Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock submitted their idea, and from 96 entries they won the competition.

In 1993, Stih and Schnock installed *Orte des Erinnerns* (Places of Remembrance), a permanent street exhibition documenting the anti-Semitic laws and decrees enacted incrementally by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945. Composed of 80 obvious brightly painted signs affixed to lamp posts with short texts describing specific anti-Jewish restrictions. They are in the *Bayerische Viertel* (Bavarian Quarter) of Schoeneberg which was formerly a mostly middle class Jewish neighborhood in Berlin, where Albert Einstein and Hannah Arendt once lived. The signs alert passersby to dozens of specific laws passed by the Nazi government, from “Jews are excluded from sports groups. (April 25, 1933)” “Jews may not use the public beach at Wannsee (August 22, 1933);” “Employment ban for Jewish actresses and actors.(March 5, 1934);” “Employment forbidden for Jewish musicians.(March 31, 1935);” “Jewish doctors may no longer practice (July 25, 1938);” “Jewish children are expelled from public schools (November 15, 1938)” and “Jews in Berlin are not allowed to buy food between four and five o’clock in the afternoon (July 4, 1940)”.

Nominator Elizabeth Pozen, a psychoanalyst and figurative painter describes it as follows. “The installation is meant to show the slow but systematic progression of the marginalization, isolation, discrimination, dehumanization, and destruction of Jews. The anti-Semitic laws and decrees, in some ways appearing initially banal or irritating, served to divide the Jews culturally – first from each other, and then from society at large. Over time this led “logically” to the total casting-out and murdering of thousands of people.”

In the two decades since their public art appeared, the installation has “educated people about the totalitarian and perverse thinking of the Nazis,” says Stih. “People were not ready to understand how consequential it was, how merciless it was. [The project] created some type of shock, because people were not used to this kind of truth in pure realism. No one had done a memorial before that way. We answered this system of the Nazis with a visualized system in public space.”

Exhibiting shortly after the reunification of East and West Germany, the art project emerged from what Stih calls “two systems of memory, which came together and created a new need to bring [the Holocaust] to the table and look at it again. As an artist one has other tools than historians and politicians – I think art is very powerful to discuss politics in public space because people are not exactly prepared for what [they see].”

After *Orte des Erinnerns*, Stih, who is a professor at Beuth Hochschule für Technik (Beuth University of Applied Sciences), and Schnock, who is an art historian, lecturer, curator, critic and art consultant as well as the education department director at *Berufsverband Bildender Künstler Berlin* (Professional Association of Berlin Artists), became globally recognized for their work. Articles about the pair have appeared in the *New York Times*, *New Yorker*, *Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times*. They have also lectured at major U.S. universities including the Art Institute of Chicago, Harvard, Princeton, Columbia and Brown University.

In addition, Stih and Schnock in 1994 created a “transitory” memorial artwork called *BUS STOP* for Berlin’s Holocaust Memorial, and produced a Munich map with stories called “The City As Text – Jewish Munich” for the opening of the Jewish Museum in Munich in 2007. This January, Stih and Schnock are installing a new art project that recognizes the Jewish heritage of the ancient city of Ostia, next to Rome.

Stih says it falls on others, not only Germans, to continue to question and publicly remember the role they played in the Holocaust. “Other European countries should also ask themselves what they have done during World War II and what they did to Jewish citizens,” she says.

“It is crucial to discuss the Holocaust, which shouldn’t be forgotten. I don’t think there is ever enough of this kind of discourse. If there is a need in society to recall or question the Holocaust, then it’s good – and every new generation will do the same, I hope. I hope there will be many more artists to come and work on the topic.”

*Nominated by: Elizabeth Pozen, Boston, MA, USA;
Bonnie Woods, Chelsea, MA, USA*

BOARD MEMBERS AND JURY

German Jewish Community History Council

The jury is composed of seven prominent individuals who have taken a keen understanding and appreciation of the contributions Jews have made to Germany and an awareness of what non-Jewish Germans have done to preserve that memory. Each year, the international media is made aware of the availability of these awards and the formal nomination procedure, and the jury selects the five most worthy nominees for awards. In the first year, every nominator happened to be a Jewish survivor. Most nominators find these awards to be the best way to demonstrate their personal appreciation for outstanding work done in the community where their Jewish ancestors once lived.

DAVID ELLENSON, Chancellor of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) and I.H. and Anna Grancell Professor of Jewish Religious Thought, and past President of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (2001-2013), is internationally recognized for his publications and research in the areas of Jewish religious thought, ethics, and modern Jewish history. Rabbi Ellenson's extensive publications include *Tradition in Transition: Orthodoxy, Halakhah and the Boundaries of Modern Jewish History* (1989), *Rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer and the Creation of a Modern Jewish Orthodoxy* (1990), *Between Tradition and Culture: The Dialectics of Jewish Religion and Identity in the Modern World* (1994), *After Emancipation: Jewish Religious Responses to Modernity* (2004), *Pledges of Jewish Allegiance: Conversion, Law, and Policymaking in 19th- and 20th-Century Orthodox Responsa*, co-authored with Daniel Gordis (2012), and the forthcoming *Jewish Meaning in a World of Choice*. He is the preeminent scholar on Rabbi Asriel Hildesheimer, the great German rabbi and leader of the Orthodox Movement in Germany.

KAREN FRANKLIN, an exhibit researcher for the Museum of Jewish Heritage, is Co-Chair of the Board of Governors of JewishGen. A past president of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies and chair of the Council of American Jewish Museums, she is currently a vice-chair of the Memorial Museums committee of ICOM (International Council of Museums). She serves on the Advisory Board of the European Shoah Legacy Institute and was awarded the 2012 ICOM-US Service Citation for her work in Holocaust-era property restitution. The citation is the highest honor of ICOM-US.

FRANK MECKLENBURG is Chief Archivist and Director of Research at the Leo Baeck Institute (LBI) New York, where he has worked since 1984. He heads the LBI Archives branch at the Jewish Museum in Berlin and is in charge of DigiBaeck, the digital archives project at LBI. He has been an active participant in the annual conference of Jewish Studies and German Studies and is working on a series of articles concerning the history of Jews in Central Europe during the 20th century from a post-cold war, post-East-West perspective. Born in Berlin he immigrated to the U.S. in 1981, the same year he received his Ph.D. from the Technische Universität Berlin in modern German history.

SARA NACHAMA studied in Jerusalem and moved from Israel to Berlin over 30 years ago. She has worked for German national TV program SFB (Channel 3) and ZDF (Channel 2) editing documentary films. From 1992 to 1999, she organized as a volunteer the annual Berlin Jewish Cultural Festival (Juedische Kulturtag). Mrs. Nachama became the executive founding director of the Berlin branch of Touro College (NY) in October 2003. It is the only Jewish American College in Germany. Since 2005 she is a vice president of Touro College. She is on the Board of "Willkommen in Berlin" – the club of diplomats in the Foreign Ministry of Germany. In the beginning of 2012 she was elected in the parliament of the Jewish Community of Berlin. She also serves on the board of the Jewish Hospital in Berlin.

ARTHUR OBERMAYER is a high-tech entrepreneur and philanthropist in the Boston area. The Jewish Museum in his ancestral German town of Creglingen was initiated by him. He has been a long-term board member and officer of the American Jewish Historical Society, and a coordinator and webmaster of the German component of JewishGen.org. His family background is described in *The Obermayers: A History of a Jewish Family in Germany and America, 1618-2009*. The German President has awarded him the Bundesverdienstkreuz -- the Cross of the Order of Merit -- the highest tribute given by the Federal Republic of Germany.

NATAN SZNAIDER is a Full Professor of Sociology at the Academic College of Tel-Aviv-Yaffo in Israel. He was born in Germany, received his Ph.D. at Columbia University in New York City and lives currently in Tel-Aviv. His research interests over the last few years have centered on giving a sociological account at processes of trauma and victimhood. Sznaiider's current project focuses on Jewish politics after the Holocaust through the lens of cosmopolitan memory. Sznaiider published many books and articles on these issues. His books include *The Compassionate Temperament: Care and Cruelty in Modern Society*, (Rowman & Littlefield, Boulder, Co. 2000), *Erinnerung im Globalen Zeitalter: Der Holocaust, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag*, (2001, co-authored with Daniel Levy), expanded and translated into English and as *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, (Temple University Press, 2006). A volume on cosmopolitan politics and human rights, "*Human Rights and Memory*", was published in 2009 together with Daniel Levy. In 2011 he published *Jewish Memory and the Cosmopolitan Order* with Polity Press.

RALF WIELAND has been President of the Berlin House of Representatives since October 27, 2012. He was born in 1956 in Wilhelmshaven and served an apprenticeship as a shipping clerk. After his apprenticeship, he worked as a planner and manager of a shipping office. He then worked as a line officer in the Senate Department for Construction and Housing from 1996 to 1997, and led the Construction Waste Authority of Berlin. In 1997 he joined the Senate Department for Urban Development, Environment and Technology and worked there until 1999 as a section manager. From 1999-2004 he was national managing director of the Berlin SPD. Mr. Wieland has been a member of the Berlin Parliament since 1999. For many years he was Chairman of the Board, which is one of the most important parliamentary committees. He is responsible for the proceedings of the Berlin budget law and the monitoring of budget implementation by the government of Berlin.

PREVIOUS AWARD WINNERS

Winners of past awards originate from almost all states and from both urban and rural Germany. Ranging in age from their 30s to their 80s, they come from very diverse backgrounds. Yet they have in common a love of history, a great curiosity for what was, and a dedication to tolerance and social justice. All are committed to confrontation with Germany's past and to preserve the Jewish heritage that was once such an integral part of their country. Most have devoted years of volunteer work to such projects, but few have been recognized for their efforts. The aim of the Obermayer German Jewish History Awards is to honor these unsung heroes.

Hans-Dieter Arntz:

Euskirchen, North Rhine-Westphalia, 2009

Wolfgang Batterman:

Petershagen, North Rhine-Westphalia, 2012

Hans Jürgen Beck: Bad Kissingen, Bavaria, 2013

Klaus Beer: Leonberg, Baden-Württemberg, 2013

Lothar Bembenek: Wiesbaden, Hesse, 2004

Hans-Eberhard Berkemann:

Bad Sobernheim, Rhineland-Palatinate, 2003

Gisela Blume: Fürth, Bavaria, 2000

Günter Boll:

SteinStadt, Baden-Württemberg, 2002

Angelika Brosig: Schopfloch, Bavaria, 2010

Johannes Bruno: Speyer, Rhineland-Palatinate, 2007

Gerhard Buck: Idstein-Walsdorf, Hesse, 2008

Gisela Bunge: Gardlegen, Saxony-Anhalt, 2002

Irene Corbach: Cologne, North Rhine-Westphalia, 2003

Lothar Czoßek: Elsterau, Saxony-Anhalt, 2013

Gunter Demnig: Cologne, North Rhine-Westphalia, 2005

Klaus Dietermann:

Netphen, North Rhine-Westphalia, 2009

Heinrich Dittmar: Alsfeld, Hesse, 2003

Olaf Ditzel: Vacha, Thuringia, 2002

Michael Dorhs: Hofgeismar, Hesse, 2009

Klaus-Dieter Ehmke: Berlin, 2004

Rolf Emmerich: Laupheim, Baden-Württemberg, 2012

Johann Fleischmann: Mülhausen, Bavaria, 2006

Inge Franken: Berlin, 2007

Helmut Gabeli: Haigerloch, Baden-Württemberg, 2010

Bernhard Gelderblom: Hameln, Lower Saxony, 2009

Barbara Greve: Gilserberg, Hesse, 2010

Johannes Grötecke: Bad Wildungen, Hesse, 2014

Joachim Hahn: Plochingen, Baden-Württemberg, 2000

Guenther Heidt: Konz, Rhineland-Palatinate, 2006

Michael Heitz:

Eppingen/Kraichgau, Baden-Württemberg, 2011

Heinz Högerle: Rexingen, Baden-Württemberg, 2011

Rolf Hofmann: Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg, 2006

Frowald Gil Hüttenmeister:

Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg, 2014

Gerhard Jochem: Nuremberg, Bavaria, 2003

Kurt-Willi Julius: Vöhl, Hesse, 2006

Ottmar Kagerer: Berlin, 2000

Cordula Kappner: Hassfurt, Bavaria, 2004

Wolfram Kastner: Munich, Bavaria, 2005

Rolf Kilian Kießling: Forchheim, Bavaria, 2013

Fritz Kilthau: Zwingenberg, Hesse, 2012

Monica Kingreen: Windecken, Hesse, 2002

Ernst & Brigitte Klein: Volksmarsen, Hesse, 2009

Hans-Peter Klein: Melsungen, Hesse, 2014

Manfred Kluge: Vlotho, North Rhine-Westphalia, 2008

Peter Körner: Johannesberg/Aschaffenburg, Bavaria, 2011

Robert Kraus: Ettenheim, Baden-Württemberg, 2005

Robert Kreibitz: Berlin, 2006

Heidemarie Kugler-Weimann:

Lübeck, Schleswig-Holstein, 2010

Silvester Lechner: Elchingen, Bavaria, 2014

Dorothee Lottmann-Kaeseler: Wiesbaden, Hesse, 2004

Charlotte Mayenberger:

Bad Buchau, Baden-Württemberg, 2008

Lars Menk: Berlin, 2007

Josef Motschmann: Staffelstein, Bavaria, 2002

Hanno Müller: Fernwald-Steinbach, Hesse, 2013

Christa Niclasen: Berlin, 2012

Heinrich Nuhn: Rotenburg on the Fulda, Hesse, 2005

Walter Ott: Münsingen-Buttenhausen,
Baden-Württemberg, 2010

Carla Pick: Borken, North Rhine-Westphalia, 2003

Erika Pick: Borken, North Rhine-Westphalia, 2003

Steffen Pross: Ludwigsburg, Baden-Württemberg, 2014

Johanna Rau: Kalbach, Hesse, 2008

Fritz Reuter: Worms, Rhineland-Palatinate, 2008

Susanne Rieger: Nuremberg, Bavaria, 2003

Gernot Römer: Augsburg, Bavaria, 2000

Ernst Schäll: Laupheim, Baden-Württemberg, 2007

Moritz Schmid: Ichenhausen, Bavaria, 2000

Heinrich Schreiner: Mainz, Rhineland-Palatinate, 2002

Werner Schubert: Weisswasser, Saxony, 2012

Jürgen Sielemann: Hamburg, 2004

Karl-Heinz Stadler: Vöhl, Hesse, 2006

Brigitta Stammer: Göttingen, Lower Saxony, 2011

Barbara Staudacher:
Rexingen, Baden-Württemberg, 2011

Sibylle Tiedemann: Berlin, 2011

Helmut Urbschat: Vlotho, North Rhine-Westphalia, 2008

Ilse Vogel: Üchtelhausen, Bavaria, 2005

Christiane Walesch-Schneller:
Breisach am Rhein, Baden-Württemberg, 2004

PREVIOUS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD WINNERS

The Distinguished Service Award, initiated in 2014, honors those who do not qualify for our regular awards, but whose contributions to German Jewish history deserve recognition.

Charlotte Knobloch: Munich, Bavaria, 2014

SPONSORS

GERMAN JEWISH COMMUNITY HISTORY COUNCIL

The organization operates under Obermayer Foundation, Inc., which has sponsored and directed projects in various parts of the world. In Germany, it has also provided the seed funding and continuing support for the Creglingen Jewish Museum in Baden-Württemberg. In the former Soviet Union in the early 1990s, it produced about 20 popular television programs on market economics. In Israel-related activities, it has focused on a variety of projects related to achieving peace with its neighbors. In the USA, it supports programs related to economic justice and international affairs, and also provides support and advice to nonprofit organizations on internet/digital strategies. For more information, go to <http://www.obermayer.us>.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF BERLIN

President Ralf Wieland sponsors these awards. For many years through this event, the Parliament has been commemorating the German Holocaust Memorial Day of January 27, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz Concentration Camp. The decision was made in the year 2000 to have this event as its principal observance.

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE

The Leo Baeck Institute (LBI) is devoted to the history of German-speaking Jews. Its 80,000 volume library and extensive archival and art collections represent the most significant repository of primary source material and scholarship on the Jewish communities of Central Europe over the past five centuries. LBI became a co-sponsor in 2014.

GERMAN JEWISH SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP OF JEWISHGEN

This internet-based organization has almost 2000 daily participants who are involved in German-Jewish genealogy. It has been operating since 1998 through its discussion group and web site at www.jewishgen.org/gersig.

PROFILE PREPARATION

Writer: Michael Levitin
Translator: Heike Kähler
Editors: Betty Solbjor, John Woods, Jr.

STATISTICS

2000 - 2015

Total Awardees	82
Men.....	59
Women.....	23

AWARDEES BY GERMAN STATE

Hesse	17
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Bavaria	14
Rhineland-Palatinate.....	8
Berlin	7
North Rhine-Westphalia	6
Thuringia	4
Lower Saxony	3
Saxony-Anhalt.....	2
Hamburg.....	2
Saxony	1
Schleswig-Holstein.....	1

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U.S.	195
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Architect	1
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Engineer	1
Estate Manager	1
Film maker	1
Judge.....	1
Lawyer	1
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