In Touch

The Newsletter of the American Friends of the
Jewish Museum Hohenems, Inc.

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In Touch Editor:
Jennifer Shimer Piper

Please send your
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Letter from the President

TIMOTHY L. HANFORD

Dear Friends and Supporters of AFJMH:

It is my pleasure to share with you this newsletter with an update on activities of the Jewish Museum Hohenems and with riveting stories of how some Hohenems Jewish family members barely escaped the looming Holocaust.

Last year we celebrated the 400th anniversary of Jewish families being permitted to live in Hohenems. That was a happy event commemorating a much earlier one. This newsletter reminds of us less happy times.

Like other descendants of Jewish Hohenems families, I owe my current existence to the fact that an ancestor left the town at some point. In my case, my great, great grandfather Ferdinand Hirschfeld, the youngest in his family, left Hohenems in the 1850s to seek his fortune and ended up in Paris, and from there his children moved on to the United States and Mexico. Others left Hohenems at different points in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. The Jewish Museum Hohenems has made amazing progress in tracing the Hohenems diaspora and can help all of us fill in family trees and meet new cousins from around the world.

With the rise of the Nazis in Germany, the later annexation of Austria, and the rampant antisemitism, Jews still in Hohenems at the advent of World War II could not remain in the town (or elsewhere in Austria or in neighboring countries). But as the stories in this newsletter show, getting out wasn't easy, and it got harder as time passed.

The Jewish Museum Hohenems serves a vital function in serving as the repository of 400 years of Hohenems Jewish family memories and stories. I am grateful that this newsletter can help add to that history, even though the stories aren't always pleasant.

The AFJMH is proud to have so many American Hohenems descendants as members. But we are always pleased to welcome more! Please send a note your siblings and cousins and urge them to take a look at the AFJMH website (www.AFJMH.org) and consider joining AFJMH. And, I encourage you to continue your financial support as we support the Jewish Museum Hohenems in its vital mission.

Sincerely,
Tim Hanford
President

News from the Museum

DR. HANNO LOEWY

Dear Friends of the Jewish Museum,

After enjoying a successful 2017 as we celebrated the 400th anniversary of the Jewish community of Hohenems, the third reunion of descendants, and the most successful show "The Female Side of God," we are now making plans for the future.

As excited as we are that our museum had nearly 20,000 visitors in the past year (a new all-time high in the museum's history), it presents a serious challenge for our future development. As the number of visitors indicates, culture tourism is a growing factor in our region. At the same time, in the last ten years, Hohenems has revitalized, developing new urban life. This produces an even more attractive ambiance for our visitors, both from the region itself and from travelers seeking authentic traces of history and new ideas about our contemporary life.

In response to these trends, we are undertaking new cooperative endeavors. One is with the Swiss Institutions for Multicultural Education and Cultural Tourism, and another is a program from our educational department that offers tours into the history of escape routes along the border. The historical stories of refugees impact how we connect with current events. Our research on our past should not be merely about antiquities, but about what they tell us regarding the challenges of our current days. Please help us continue to develop our museum as a focal point of a culture of inclusion, mutual understanding and openness for others and ourselves. Your support is crucial. Thanks for all you have already done for us.

Cultural capital of Europe?

Dornbirn, Hohenems and Feldkirch are preparing a joint application for the cultural capital of Europe in 2024 to host the European annual festival city. The application will focus on the meaning of borders and the threatening renaissance of border making and exclusion in Europe and beyond. It's a long way still to go, but our museum is playing an important role in the process and you can help us keep on track by expressing your interest to the organizing committee through Bettina Steindl, the head of the preparation team (***bettina.steindl@dornbirn.at***).

European Summer University for Jewish Studies

We are already celebrating the tenth anniversary of the summer university in Hohenems. This began in 2009 as a pilot program with three Jewish studies departments (Munich, Basel and Salzburg) and has since expanded to a regular academic program at six universities. Together with our colleagues in Munich, Basel, Salzburg, Vienna, Zürich and Bamberg, we conduct an intensive one-week course about an exciting topic each year. In 2018, we will present new research and discussions about the following subjects:

- power in Jewish history and presence
- power and inequality inside of Jewish institutions and organization
- families and gender relations
- strategies of self-empowerment with respect to gentile societies
- fantasies about Jewish might
- the reality of sovereignty, power and violence in Israel.

The Reunion of 2017 lives on in the second edition of "Old Liberties of Hohenems" and in three topical videos

This summer we will publish the second edition of our newspaper "Old Liberties of Hohenems," sharing speeches, family histories, essays, talks, travel reports from the Hohenems Diaspora, and more. Stay tuned to receive your personal copy or send orders to ***office@jm-hohenems.at***.

We were pleased to see our 2017 reunion covered by three television productions. The news feature "Heimat Diaspora—Die Juden von Hohenems," produced by Markus Barnay for Austrian Television, is available on the website of the Jewish Museum (*http://www.jm-hohenems.at/en/descendants/descendants-reunion-2017*). Also linked on that webpage is a feature by Bernd Seidl for German Television, "Wer bin ich. Auf der Suche nach den eigenen Wurzeln."

Lastly, a documentary film produced by Ingrid Bertel and Nikolai Dörler about the life and work of Ely Jacques Kahn, the Hohenems descendant and acclaimed New York architect of the 1920s, will come out in an English version. Many thanks go to the generous help of the Kahn family and the American Friends of the Jewish Museum Hohenems to make this possible. We will provide an update when the English language version is available.

The Reunion was also a very productive occasion for descendants to meet with the staff who maintains our collection and archives, Anika Reichwald and Raphael Einetter. We expect they will remain busy in the future with many collaborations on various collections.

Hanno Loewy and Anika Reichwald:

New exhibition, curated by Boaz Levin (Berlin): "Say Shibboleth! On Visible and Invisible Borders"

English Catalogue available

"And the Gileadites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; Then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand."

Book of Judges, 12:5,6

As we constantly discuss globalization, open borders, and international community, investment in new technologies for border security is increasing around the world. New fences and walls go up: around states, occupied territories, and upscale residential communities; between public and private space; between social classes. Some of these borders are visible; others are drawn by means of language tests or new biometric methods. Borders and cultural codes spell the difference between life and death, "identity" and "alienness," belonging and exclusion. They determine the right of people to move from one place to another or even to be anywhere at all.

Today, 70 states worldwide protect their borders by fences and walls, up from just 15 in 1990. Increasingly, these borders turn out to be dangerous as more people are forced to risk escape or migration as a result of civil wars and extreme poverty. The International Organization for Migration documented 40,000 deaths from 2005 to 2014 in connection with border crossings. In addition, many refugees languish in camps far from Europe.

Meanwhile, these growing efforts toward "border security" provide a further boost to human traffickers. Moreover, the call for even more aggressive forms of border security, for the placement of refugees in "concentrated camps" on the periphery, or their internment on islands, is shaping the political climate in Europe and the USA. This vicious cycle is also being exploited for political purposes. A growing number of political parties in Europe and the USA owe their power to the fear of open borders.

What is the significance of these numbers, or the images and reports featuring the fate of refugees—25 years after border controls between countries within Europe were abolished in 1993 as part of the Schengen Agreement? Where is Europe heading, in view of the cynical talk of the "closed Mediterranean" or the growing contempt for people seeking help? What happens to societies that are unable to open up to a foreigner? In the light of newly awakening nationalism, what becomes of the ethnic conflicts in a Europe that wishes to reinvent itself as a community of shared values?

The Jewish Museum Hohenems—in cooperation with the Jewish Museum Munich—is addressing these fundamental questions and investigating the contradictions of this new desire for borders and their significance for our present-day life. In this context, Hohenems itself is a sounding board of a frequently suppressed though vivid history. Between 1938 and 1945, Vorarlberg's border, and hence that of the German Reich to Switzerland, was the scene of untold refugee dramas. Any exhibition about borders in this location must take this historic moment as a point of interest for the examination of the disturbing return of borders. For this purpose, we invited international artists working in the fields of photography, video, and exhibitions to present their own positions and radical questions about borders in our time.

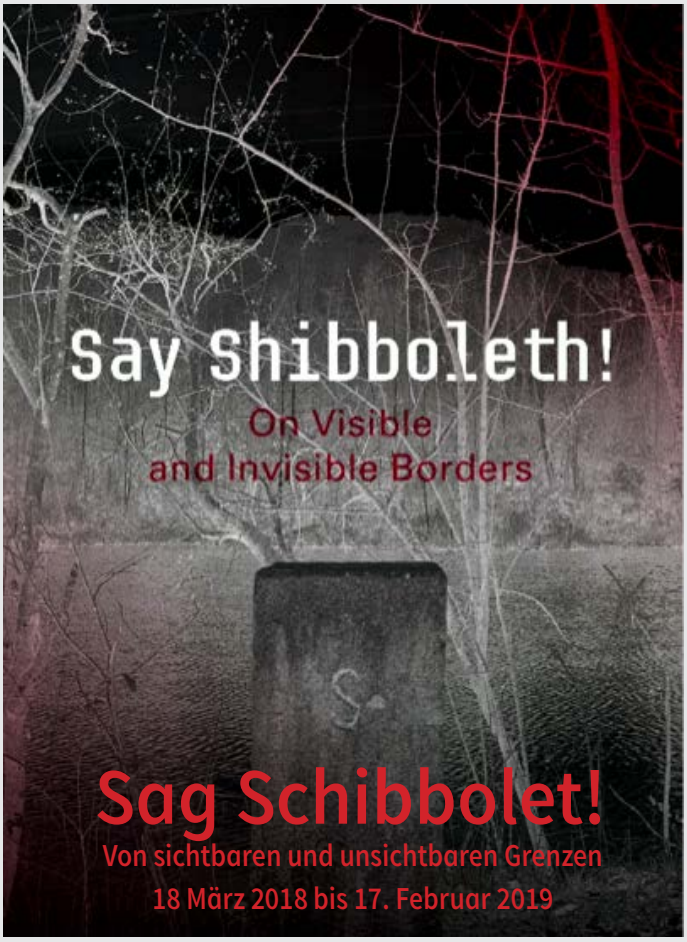
The exhibition ***Say Shibboleth! On Visible and Invisible Borders*** starts with a brief biblical episode from the Israelites' tribal wars and demonstrates the complexity of

New exhibition, curated by Boaz Levin "Say Shibboleth! On Visible and Invisible Borders *(cont.)*

borders, what constitutes them, and their ramifications. It examines the relationship between seemingly natural and human-made borders, focusing on the various forms in which borders are "made" and drawn: physical and immaterial, territorial or social, created through political violence or economic power, or heeding the need for protection from real or imagined dangers. At the same time, there is a growing need to defend spheres of autonomy, of freedom of movement, and of intimacy from being seized by the politically and economically powerful.

On the banks of the Jordan River, in the biblical story that gave birth to the enigma of the word shibboleth at the river that was no longer to be a connecting lifeline but just a "natural border," it would be the wrong dialect that spelled the difference between life and death. Today, too, borders assume many shapes. It is the aim of this exhibition to contribute to a heightened awareness of them. Many thanks to our guest curator, Boaz Levin, all the participating artists, authors, and designers for their inspiring collaboration on this project. Our thanks also to a Brunner family descendant: the artist Fiamma Montezemolo from San Francisco, who contributed marvelous works of commentary on the "wall" between California and Mexico entitled "Traces" and "Nation's Dust" to the exhibition.

The exhibition catalog (in English) – can be ordered through the museum.



Boaz Levin, Hanno Loewy, Anika Reichwald (Ed.),
Say Shibboleth! On Visible and Invisible Borders
Bucher Verlag, Hohenems 2018, 29,80 €, about 250 p.,
With contributions by Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Ovidiu Anton, Francis Alys, Emily Apter, Zach Blas, Sophie Calle, Arno Gisinger, Vincent Grunwald, Zali Gurevitch, Gabriel Heim, Katarina Holländer, Ryan S. Jeffery, Leon Kahane, Boaz Levin, Mikael Levin, Hanno Loewy, Fiamma Montezemolo, Pīnar Öğrenci, Selim Özdogan, Anika Reichwald, Frances Stonor Saunders, Fazal Sheikh, Quinn Slobodian, Marina Warner, Vladimir Vertlib and Najem Wali.

From left to right: Hanno Loewy, Boaz Levin, and Anika Reichwald

Photos courtesy of Hanno Loewy

Other Escape Routes

ANGELIKA PURIN

The November 2017 issue of *InTouch* contained an article by Angelika Purin entitled "To the Border" describing the attempts during the Nazi era to leave Austria through Hohenems. The Museum also has stories of other escape routes. This is a summary of those stories.

In the Feldkirch area, another frequently chosen natural demarcation line passed through Liechtenstein territory. With the aid of local escape helpers, successful escapes were made here in 1938 until the beginning of the war in 1939 mainly via Mauren and Schellenberg. Eventually, this border, too, became heavily fortified. (Editorial note: Gertrude Clark, a Hohenems descendant escaped through Feldkirch.)

Few dared fleeing over the high mountain range of the Alps in the south of Vorarlberg. Mainly political refugees were smuggled along this route into Switzerland and then usually on to France. Following the onset of World War II, a 4-km (2.5-mi.) long prohibited zone was established along the Alpine border and staffed with year-round guard posts, thereby rendering escape de facto impossible. Border crossings succeeded only in exceptional cases. Anyone apprehended by the Swiss army was transferred back to the "German Reich."

Switzerland's attitude

Switzerland's restrictive foreign politics was not new. As early as 1933, the Federal Department of Justice and Police enacted that refugees would no longer be granted permanent residence, work permits, or any financial support. Moreover, Jewish refugees were denied the status of "Political Refugees;" persecution for racial reasons was not recognized. Switzerland considered itself a transit country (at most) for Jewish refugees. In the Federal Council, a "Jewification (*Verjudung*) of Switzerland" and an alleged "excessive foreign influence (*Überfremdung*)" were under discussion. In this period, Heinrich Rothmund was chief of the immigration authorities, a punctilious and diligent civil servant, he was an obvious anti-Semite as a 1939 quote revealed:

> *"We have not been fighting for the past twenty years with the means available to the immigration authorities against the increase in foreign influence and particularly against the Jewification of Switzerland only to now get saddled with the emigrants."* (Keller, S.111)

Still, Rothmund offered free transit for refugees at the Évian Conference in July 1938. However, the conference failed; ultimately, not only Switzerland refused to accept Jewish refugees on a long-term basis, no willingness to speak of could be found anywhere in the world.

Editorial note:
Switzerland was not the only way to leave. Paul Rosenthal's emigration was certainly a more complicated way. He left for Sweden in 1938 after the Anschluss. Then shortly before Pearl Harbor, he traveled via Moscow and Vladivostok to San Francisco. Paul's son, Stephan Rollin and daughter Nini Amler, left Vienna on July 30, 1938 by train for a boarding school in Italy and then after some time traveled to Switzerland where both remained during the war years (*InTouch*, October 2008). The story of Dr. Richard Schüller tells us that there was still another way.

Another Escape

SUSAN ROSENTHAL SHIMER WITH MARJORIE PERLOFF

Quite different was the escape from Vienna by Richard Schüller, who was married to Erna Rosenthal, a Hohenems descendant. Dr. Schüller was an economist turned civil servant, who had led all trade negotiations of the Austrian Republic after World War I. In 1917, he became a member of the Economic Committee of the League of Nations. From 1932 until 1938, he held the post of ambassador and plenipotentiary of the Austrian Government to the League of Nations in Geneva. He continued to serve various Chancellors, primarily as Minister for Trade, including Ignaz Dolfuß, who suspended parliament and ruled autocratically but did defy Hitler and was assassinated in his office by the Nazis in 1934. Schüller served the last Austrian Chancellor, Kurt Schuschnigg (1934-38), writing some of his speeches and trusting in the plebiscite set for March 13, 1938. When it was abruptly cancelled and Anschluss occurred on March 12, Schüller was immediately fired and went into seclusion in his Ringstraße apartment.

His wife Erna and mother-in-law Malvine Rosenthal left as soon as they could and took temporary refuge with Richard and Erna's daughter Susi, who had married an Italian physician, Giorgio Piroli, in 1936 and lived in Rome. But Schüller himself stayed behind, determined to secure his pension and not realizing the danger he was in. Indeed, Schüller had, in the 1920s and early 30s come to know Mussolini because Italy was one of the only nations to trade with a bankrupt Austria and he had spent much time in Rome, making various trade negotiations. Nevertheless, by June the situation looked ominous; the Nazi regime, far from providing this long-time civil servant's pension, appropriated all his bank accounts, and in June the Pirolis decided to take action. In July, by careful arrangement, Schüller took the night train and bus to Gurgl, high in the Austrian Alps in the Italian border, where the Pirolis were waiting for him. All three took a mountain trail up the Ferwaljoch. And, as Schüller tells it in his memoir, which is

Another Escape *(cont.)*

cited by his granddaughter Marjorie Perloff in her memoir *The Vienna Paradox* (2004):

> *"It was a beautiful day. The ascent easy. We lunched, met no one, no Austrian border guards. After about three hours, when we had reached the top, Susi gave me a little shove and said, " now you're in Italy." She and Giorgio turned around and went back. From the frontier on, the trail was bad: the steep ridge that was supposed to have a rope rail, but the rope was broken and hung down. Then a snowfield where two Italian border guards with a police dog came toward me. They said passage on this path was forbidden and I must immediately go back. I said, 'I am fleeing.' They: 'Yes, but you cannot proceed without permission.' I: 'I'm tired, may I rest in your barracks and then explain.' They: 'But afterwards you will have to go back.' They left me, since they knew I couldn't go forward or back. It had become foggy and I had to climb along steep ridges and couldn't see the ground.*
>
> *"In the barracks, I found a dozen soldiers and a lieutenant and sergeant that I met in the snow… An old Tyrolean woman was waiting on them. I had tea with rum, went outside with the lieutenant, told him who I was without mentioning Mussolini, and suggested that he ask his commander what should happen to me. Evidently, he regarded this as an interesting distraction from the boredom of border patrol. He let me sign a protocol that I had been taken a prisoner for forbidden border crossing. I was thrilled. Slept in a room with the sergeant and his dog after I had eaten a schnitzel. In the morning we made our way to Merano, walking rapidly for four hours; I felt it in my legs. The Italians were nice, carried my rucksack, gave me food and drink, photographed our group. Down in the valley, we took a car… and in Merano took me to a hotel and requested that I not go too far away. I went for a walk, ate some onion roast and drank two pitchers of beer. The commander said that the lieutenant should have sent me back. But since my passage was a fait accompli, he would ask the prefect in Bolzano what to do. The prefect, in turn, said he would make inquiries in Rome. At night, he came to me with a friendly smile and said I was free and the guest of the Italian government. A telegram had come from Rome: 'L'amico Schüller e benvenuto- Mussolini.' A police detective accompanied me to Florence, took care of all my needs, and put me on a bus to Vallombrosa."*

There, as Marjorie Perloff tells it, Schüller was reunited with Erna and Malvine Rosenthal as well as the Pirolis and his daughter Ilse Schüller Mintz, who was in Rome with her two children, Walter and Gabriele (who took on the name Marjorie in the U.S.) awaiting their Visa to the U.S.

The Mintz family—father Max met his wife and children in Rotterdam—sailed for New York in August. The Schüllers couldn't stay in Fascist Italy, soon to be an ally of Germany, and went to England to await their Visas, Malvine's taking a longer time because she was on the Hungarian quota, having been born Malvine Bruhl in Budapest, where she met her husband Emil Rosenthal. In London, the Schüllers were helped by their third daughter, Hilde, married to a fellow art historian Otto Kurz, who had obtained a position at the Warburg Institute a few years earlier. Schüller was fortunate to obtain a professor's Visa to the "University in Exile" at the New School and arrived in New York in late 1939; Erna and Malvine followed in 1940.

My Escape from Vienna

MARJORIE PERLOFF (THEN GABRIELE MINTZ)

My own escape from Vienna was less dramatic than my Grandfather Richard Schüller's. As I wrote in my memoir *The Vienna Paradox*, on March 12, 1938, the morning after Anschluss was declared, my mother Ilse Schüller Mintz came into the nursery and told my 9-year old brother Walter and me (I was 6 ½) that Hitler had taken over Austria and that would be leaving our apartment and the country by train that evening. We didn't really understand but later that morning we stood at the window and watched the boys in the Gymnasium across the street on Hörl Gasse making what Walter told me were Heil Hitler salutes. We had visitors all day—relatives who came to say goodbye, and in the evening left our fourth-floor apartment with four suitcases and very little money and set out. On the landing of the first floor, the concierge, surely a Nazi, came out of her apartment and gave us a malevolent smile—I can remember that. We took a cab to the station and met my father's sister Stella Strauss and her husband Otto and twin daughters, aged 10, as well as my paternal grandfather Alexander Mintz, an attorney who had fortunately put some money in a Swiss bank, and my Aunt Gerti Schüller, the widow of grandfather's brother Ludwig. The Ludwig Schüllers were the rich baptized members of the family; he had committed suicide in 1931 when his bank was the first to fail in the Crash.

My Escape from Vienna *(cont.)*

The only borders open at this time were the Swiss and Hungarian and thank God we went to Switzerland. On the train, we children slept but when we got to Innsbruck (the border), we were taken off the train, all of us except Gerti who was allowed to continue. We were taken to the police station where my parents were evidently body-searched and the luggage was taken apart and money confiscated even as the police insulted my parents. Mama tried valiantly to make things seem normal and read my favorite book DIE LUSTIGEN NEUN to me. And we had some ham sandwiches in the railroad restaurant. Fortunately, we got back on the train and arrived in Zurich before morning. We lived in a pensione for 3 months while awaiting our Visa to the U.S., which came through in June. My mother gave us English lessons as best she could. In June we made a brief stop in the suburbs of Rome to say goodbye to my Aunt Susi and Grandmother and Great Grandmother Rosenthal who were staying there at the time, having also gotten out of Vienna, but not yet obtained their Visa because Grandmother was on the Hungarian Quota. Grandfather Schuller was still in Vienna at the time. Then in August we took the train to Rotterdam where we caught the SS Veendam for arrival in Hoboken 9 days later! The cross-Europe journey was harrowing even for me though I understood so little. There were constant stops and police inspections and we watched people being taken off the train so it was a great relief to arrive in New York on a very hot 90-degree day and take the subway to Riverdale, where the cousin who had sponsored us, Heinrich Kronstein (an émigré from Frankfurt in 1935) had rented us a furnished apartment. Welcome to New York!

(Further details in next newsletter).

Others also left as children. This is the story of our former editor, Susan Rosenthal Shimer.

Recollection of Departure from Austria

SUSAN ROSENTHAL SHIMER

Just before my first birthday, the Nazis marched into Vienna. I lived with my parents and my maternal grandmother in an apartment overlooking the Danube Canal. I remember pulling aside the curtains to look out the window for the source of the noise and being reprimanded for doing so. Many years later, my mother told me about her long waits in line at the U.S. Embassy until she finally secured a number on the wait list for Germans, number 42,829. Of course, having a number was insufficient for entry into the United States. One needed an acceptable supporting affidavit, that is an Affidavit from a United States citizen showing the ability and willingness to support you, in our case, three of us. My father's very best friend had left Vienna the day of the Anschluss and he worked to secure the necessary Affidavit. He found three people to support our entry, two of whom were rejected.

Even one good Affidavit did not assure entry. We needed to move up on the waitlist—move to the top. And one also needed to be allowed to leave. Before the visa was secured, my father received a notice from the Finance Office in Vienna that no payments were required to exit the country, but that we were required to do so within three months. More than three months after that date, on January 18, 1940, the U.S. visa was issued. That same day my father was issued a Reisepass by the Nazi government, but this pass, unlike the earlier permit, required him to pay a tax. He did so on March 9, and a Reisekarte was issued, but it was good only until March 10. On that date we left Vienna by train for Trieste. We sat in a separate section of the coach, accompanied by an armed uniformed guard. At some point, the guard approached me and offered me a chocolate bar. I was most anxious to accept it, but my parents were reluctant to do so. I remember that the man carefully showed them the bar and then they allowed me to have it. I ate it happily.

When we arrived in Trieste a full week before our boat's departure for the United States we were cared for by the Brunner family of Trieste. I remember seeing my first orange as we walked down to the sea—an amazing sight to me. And I had a wonderful third birthday celebration—balloons, a beautiful doll to take with me- a memorable day. Then we left on what turned out to be the last boat departing from Italy for the United States. I remember my father showing me the beauty of the wake of the boat and ample food. It was served family style, so that when my parents were seasick and remained in the cabin, I needed to wait for another adult before I could eat properly—I consumed lots of olives as I waited.

I also remember that almost immediately after our arrival in New York, I was placed in a nursery school where no one spoke (or admitted to speaking) German. Six weeks later, I spoke only English. I still could understand German but did not admit to it; so when my parents spoke German to insure that I would not learn certain things, I learned about that anyway.

There are other family escape stories—stories of my maternal uncle for example. Imprisoned in Dachau after Kristalnacht, he escaped from the Nazis after my father bought his release and paid for a Bolivian visa. Over the years, friends have told me of their transit to the south of France and somehow to Cuba and then after the war to the United States. Others fled through Vichy France to Portugal and then on to New York. Of course, many never made it. I was lucky.

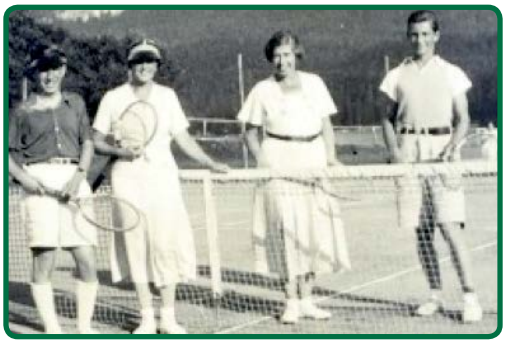
Other descendants left Vienna on the Kindertransport: Sister Hedwig and Father Francis (see *InTouch*, January 2007), and Mark Brunner (*InTouch* October 2008). We told the story of Nini Rosenthal Amler in our issue of *InTouch*, October 2008. Somewhat older was Walter Munk; as the following article relates, he left before the Nazis came to Austria.

Walter Munk

In 1999, Dr. Munk was awarded the Kyoto Prize for "Outstanding Contribution to the Earth Science by the Elucidation of Dynamical Mechanism of Ocean and Its Waves." He told an interviewer at that time:

"I was born in Austria soon after the end of World War I. My grandfather Lucian Brunner was a Viennese banker with political ambitions. … [From 1896 to 1901 he was a member of the Viennese City Council. He also] became a socialist and changed the name of his bank from "Lucian Brunner" to "Österreichische Volksbank" (Austrian People's Bank), but kept all the shares.

Grandfather was intrigued by high technology. He was on the board of the "Südbahn," the railroad that developed the audacious route from Vienna to Trieste, and he built funiculars in the Dolomites. This area is now in Italy, but was then part of Austria. At the time it would have made some sense for an Austrian to become an oceanographer. Austria had inherited the northern Adriatic, down to Venice, from Napoleon, had a Navy and was doing respectable ocean research. But by the time I grew up the country was landlocked, and becoming an oceanographer made no sense at all.



Lucian's daughter, my mother, read botany at Newnham, one of the two women's colleges at Cambridge University. It was then unheard of for a girl from the continent to go to university in England. She married my father at the end of the war. They were divorced when I was very young, and father went to live and ski in Kitzbühl. Mother married Rudolf Engelsberg who became "Generaldirector der Osterreichischem Salinen" (President of the Austrian Salt Mines). My stepfather used to take me on inspection trips deep into the mountains where the salt is mined. This government monopoly is an ancient industry, going back thousands of years. The miners have their own uniform; their traditional greeting is: "glück auf" (literally "luck up," meaning essentially "good luck").

My youth was spent skiing and playing tennis, with no sign of any intellectual curiosity.

We spent summers and Christmas near Salzburg in a 300-year-old farm house that had been renovated by my grandfather. To save me from further inaction, mother sent me to New York at the age of fifteen, where, after a year at a preparatory school, I went to work in a local bank that had been associated with grandfather's bank. I hated every minute of it.

To keep my options open, I lived at the International House and attended night school at Columbia University. After three years in New York I drove to Pasadena, California to get admitted to the California Institute of Technology. I was unbelievably naive. When I showed up at the Dean's office and he said "let me see your files," I had to reply "there are no files." In my junior year I took some courses in geology and geophysics, and at the age of 21 abruptly transformed from an acceptable student to a good student. The combination of out-of-doors fieldwork with the challenges of the fantastic geology of California was irresistible.

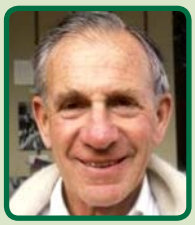
In summer 1939, at the end of my junior year, I found a summer job in La Jolla, a sea-side village a hundred miles south of Pasadena, where a girlfriend was spending the summer with her grandparents. The only available job was at a sleepy Marine Station with a staff of 15 people (including the gardener). The romance did not last, but today, sixty years later, I am still working at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography

[After Hitler invaded Austria] my family left Austria in time; my stepfather had been a senior member of the Schuschnigg government that had opposed the Austrian Nazi party, and my mother was Jewish. I completed a master's thesis on internal waves in the Gulf of California (a horrible paper) and then enlisted in the Field Artillery as a private, expecting to see early action in Europe. I served for almost two years (some of it in the ski troops), but no American troops were sent to Europe."

A Brief biography of Prof. Munk:

ANNAMARIA STEPHENS

Recently in honor of Dr. Munk's 100th birthday, the Triton, the Alumni magazine of the University of California at San Diego published an article, "100 Years of Walter Munk" by AnnaMaria Stephens. **We want to thank the Triton and Ms. Stephens for granting us permission to reprint that article and photos below.**



Curiosity and discovery go hand in hand, especially when it comes to science. Whether in the lab or deep in the field, it takes a profound sense of wonder and relentless spirit of adventure to methodically seek answers to our vast and mysterious world.

At nearly 100 years old, Walter Munk, PhD '47 has completely embraced this spirit of adventure. He has spent eight decades at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, first as one of its original graduate students, then a highly distinguished researcher and professor.

Munk is a living legend whose big, bold ideas have advanced ocean sciences immeasurably. And along the way, he's braved treacherous seas, radioactive rain and the ever-present threat of epic failure, all in the name of scientific exploration. Even now, as he's about to hit the century mark, his curiosity isn't even close to being satisfied.

Ironically, "the world's greatest living oceanographer" grew up nowhere near the ocean. Born into a banking family in landlocked Austria, Munk found his first calling in the country's steep, snow-covered mountains where he spent more time skiing than studying. Dismayed by her 15-year-old son's outdoor activities, Munk's mother sent him packing to a prep school in upstate New York. Afterwards he began a preordained career in finance, he stuck it out for just two years until he drove cross-country to California, where he charmed and tested his way into Caltech to study geophysics.

The next chapter of Munk's life began as so many young men's do: by following a pretty girl. She was headed to La Jolla to stay with her grandparents for the summer. Although their romance didn't last, Munk's love affair with the quiet seaside community was just beginning. In the summer of 1939, Munk approached Scripps Oceanography director Harald Sverdrup, the renowned Norwegian physical oceanographer and Arctic explorer, for a job. Sverdrup agreed and Munk became a student assistant, making $50 a month and plucking abalone off the old Scripps pier for food.

Today Munk lives on a bluff in La Jolla not far from where that pier stood. He meets me in his home office, with floor-to-ceiling windows framing a verdant canyon and a glittering stripe of deep blue that fades to the horizon. From his desk, Munk enjoys an unspoiled view of what he's spent a lifetime trying to understand.

He moves more slowly than he did as a strapping young oceanographer, but he's still spry, working daily, giving regular talks and traveling abroad. Today Munk wants to sit outside, and he shuffles out to a sun-dappled patio, settling at a table next to a garden dotted with succulents and sculptures made by his late wife, Judith, an artist and architect who played a tremendous role in his life story and career success until her passing in 2006. He points out Judith's nearby sculpture of UC San Diego founder Roger Revelle as something very special to him. Part of her inscription reads: *This task was done with more enthusiasm than knowledge.*

"More enthusiasm than knowledge," Munk repeats, a lilting trace of his Austrian accent still audible. "That's been the key of my career—to get excited before I understand it." …

During WWII, after a stint in the U.S. Army Ski Battalion, [Walter] was dispatched to South Carolina to explore the issue of detecting German submarines.

Yet Munk noticed something else as he stood on the shore watching troops training on amphibious landing vehicles: they were being battered by waves as they approached the beach. Munk, then an unknown doctoral student, called his well-respected mentor, Sverdrup, who flew out immediately. With the Navy gearing up for an on-shore invasion of Northwest Africa, Munk and Sverdrup were charged with finding a method to predict waves.

Munk pored over three years' worth of archived weather maps from Pan Am Airways, searching for patterns and determining how waves were affected by storms both near and far. The Sverdrup/Munk theory proved so accurate that the men were authorized to establish a school at Scripps for meteorological officers from both the Army and the Navy, graduating 100 students as part of the war effort. Some of those former students would play a crucial role in the D-Day landings in Normandy, which helped usher in the end of the war.

A Brief biography of Prof. Munk *(cont.)*

"For me, that was the beginning of a long collaboration with the Navy," says Munk, who even today remains the Secretary of the Navy/Chief of Naval Operations Oceanography Chair at Scripps and still holds a top security clearance. "I've flunked retirement," he says with a chuckle. "I like to work."

Munk's work earned him a PhD in 1947, and soon he was off on his next adventure. In the early '50s, he consulted for the Navy again, this time on a series of nuclear tests in the American Pacific. Munk was there for the granddaddy of all blasts, which took place in 1952 at Enewetak Atoll in the Marshall Islands. The military's new hydrogen bomb was estimated to be 1,000 times more powerful than the atomic weapons that had ended the war. Munk worried that the H-Bomb would trigger underwater landslides, leading to a tsunami, flooding low-lying areas of nearby islands and potentially killing thousands.

"We invented a warning test," explains Munk. He and his team from Scripps set up a buoy system with lines that ran from the seafloor to surface platforms. Pressure on the buoy lines would indicate a tsunami. Munk watched the test explosion floating on a 5'x5' raft about five miles away from the blast. No tsunami followed, but the principles of his warning system are still in use today.

"I'm probably the person who's been closest to an H-bomb and is still alive," recalls Munk, who was soaked by radioactive rain. "Back on the ship, a safety officer tested us. The Geiger counter was off the charts. People still ask me if I was irradiated. I say, "no, I haven't been affected. Been affected. Been affected. Been affected." Munk chuckles at his well-polished joke, as does everyone on the patio, rapt by his story.

Soon after, on one of many expeditions with Revelle in the deep Pacific, Munk was part of the first oceanographic team to scuba dive in the field, part of a multifaceted approach to research.

Asked whether his love of scientific adventure factored heavily into his career choices, he smiles broadly. "I think so. Yes, I think so." In 1953, Munk married Judith Horton, who would travel with him to the most remote corners of the world. She became a vital member of UC San Diego community at Scripps, where she lent her considerable talents and made contributions to architecture, campus planning and the renovation of historic buildings.

The couple also hosted frequent social gatherings during which students mingled with professors, artists with academics, and where casual conversations would turn into the next great adventure.

The idea for Munk's most groundbreaking endeavor arose in one such conversation during the late '50s, over drinks with Revelle. "What if," he asked, "we were to drill a hole to the mantle of the earth?" Remarkably, they were able to secure funding for Project Mohole (the name derived from the Mohorovičić discontinuity, the boundary surface between the crust and the mantle).

Before Munk, deep-sea drilling was considered impossible. Without GPS or any other way to determine position, there was no way to keep a drilling ship stationary. Munk got around this problem by developing a system using sound for triangulation. The ship sent and received sound impulses from the ocean floor, offering an exact location. This method proved highly successful.

Project Mohole intrigued the world. Even writer John Steinbeck accompanied Munk and his crew on the drilling ship to document the expedition for Time magazine. "He was wonderful," recalls Munk. "He really worked for us, instead of being a distant reporter."

In one sense, Project Mohole failed. Munk and his crew were forced to call it quits before boring through the Earth's crust. But the ability to fix a drilling ship in place was a game changer.

"It was extremely important for the deep-sea drilling of oil," says Munk. As a result, oil companies continue to invest considerably in ocean research. For scientists, Munk's methods unlocked access to the deep-sea floor, which 50 years later continues to be a major source of geologic research.

Failure, says Munk, should not be avoided. "I've failed so many times," he says. "People are so afraid of doing something that doesn't work. We ought to encourage students to experiment and make mistakes. We ought to give degrees for experiments done very well that have failed."

Yet for all his scientific and historic achievements (and failures), Munk's true legacy lives in those who've received his generous mentorship and instruction. "He doesn't have any students now, but he's had a steady stream during his career," says Peter Worcester, PhD '77, research oceanographer emeritus at Scripps and Munk's doctoral student in the '70s. "He gives his students great latitude and responsibility," says Worcester. "I was a chief scientist on a cruise while I worked on my thesis. Nowadays, that's unimaginable."

Italian marine biologist Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara, PhD '85, who considers Munk a second father, paid tribute to his friend and mentor in an exceptional way. In 1987, when he discovered a rare devil ray, a captivating creature that leaps through the air in acrobatic displays, he named it Mobula munkiana, or Munk's devil ray. The magnificent animals, which glide through the water so elegantly, face grave threats ranging from unsustainable fisheries to climate change.

Munk believes climate change is the most important issue we face today by far. "The challenge is enormous," says Munk, who has seen the evidence mount for decades. "There really are

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no good solutions yet. It's going to take people who are interested and qualified. They'll have a very exciting role."

In 2015, Munk went to the Vatican for a four-day workshop on climate change, which was attended by Pope Francis. "My work with Walter [has dealt] with the interface between science and religion," says Veerabhadran Ramanathan, a distinguished professor of climate and atmospheric sciences at Scripps and one of the organizers of the Vatican meeting. Ramanathan and Munk have also discussed climate change with the Dalai Lama.

"Many people assume Walter has stepped back significantly from daily interactions with oceanography," says Margaret Leinen, director of Scripps Institution of Oceanography. "Nothing could be further from reality. Walter is working on multiple publications, and he attends seminars and events almost every day. Those of us at Scripps are privileged to see how extensively Walter still contributes to the oceanographic community."

Back at his home, Munk reflects on his career with modesty—his stories never fail to mention those who were integral to his success. "I've worked with so many good people," he says. "I've been lucky that things I started, which used to have one or two people worrying about it, now have a large group of people working on them."

As we wrap up our interview, Munk heads back to his home office and sits at his desk, eager to get back to work. "Every time you learn something about the world, it's exciting," he says. And, if Munk has proven anything, it's that excitement and enthusiasm can lead to vast knowledge.

Recently in honor of Dr. Munk's 100th birthday, the Triton, the Alumni magazine of the University of California at San Diego published an article, "100 Years of Walter Munk" by AnnaMaria Stephens. We want to thank the Triton and Ms. Stephens for granting us permission to reprint that article here.

And there are more stories of travels to a new world to tell—stories from the Nazis era and stories from times earlier. Please do send your family story to our editor Jennifer Shimer Piper-Rosenthal. ***Jennsp500@gmail.com***

Letters to the Editor:

[We] just received the Nov. 2017 edition of *In Touch* and want to express to you our admiration for your excellent publication. As some of you know, we consider ourselves "cousins" of the Hohenemsers. We travel annually in Austria by rental car, and we have gotten to know the country intimately from Neusiedlersee to Bregenz. And so, circa 1994, we discovered your new museum by sheer accident while attending an opera performance at the Seebuehne in Bregenz. We and some non-Jewish friends have visited the museum and cemetery several times since and seen the great renovations and the erection of the Salomon Sulzer Saal. Your exhibitions on the Jews' love of the Alps and Streetcar Named Desire particularly stand out in our minds. In fact, as supporters of our own wonderful Michigan Holocaust Museum we have suggested that some of your shows would be very much appreciated here also, but the costs involved are prohibitive. Our last visit was in 2015, and we were also particularly impressed by the street signs in Hohenems and the Autobahn directing us to the museum complex. Having a car we were thus able to get to know the area more thoroughly. [I took this] particularly interesting image of a large billboard-type sign celebrating the 200th birthday of Salomon Sulzer… in 1994.

Best of success to you! In these tumultuous times (Trump-multuous, i.e.) the importance of Jewish museums as bulwarks against evil becomes especially vital.

Eric and Doris Billes

We welcome and encourage letters to this newsletter; we would love to hear from you! Please send your thoughts to ***newsletter@afjmh.org***. Thanks in advance!

New Editor

I took the newsletter from my mother, Hon Susan Rosenthal Shimer, as she wanted to step aside, but we are still looking for someone who can take this on by themselves or work with me on it.

Best,
Jennifer Shimer Piper-Rosenthal

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