

About the Exhibit

"A Reason to Remember: Roth Germany, 1933-1942", tells the personal story of 5 Jewish families who lived in the small village of Roth (pronounced ROTE) under Nazi rule. Roth's 31 Jews worked and played side by side with their neighbors. Jews had lived there happily for over 300 years.

The stark contrast between the ordinariness of their lives and the radical way in which their lives were changed by the Nazis and their collaborators through persecution and terror will provoke questions.



a Reason to Remember

Roth, Germany 1933-1942

It's important to note that this transformation was not immediate, and it was full of complexities and contradictions. Even after Hitler became Germany's chancellor, life for Roth's Jews didn't immediately fall into separation and persecution. The destruction of the Jewish community happened in stages, step by step, during the years between 1933 and 1942.



School photo of Roth children and their teacher. Some are making the Nazi Salute. Mid-1930's.

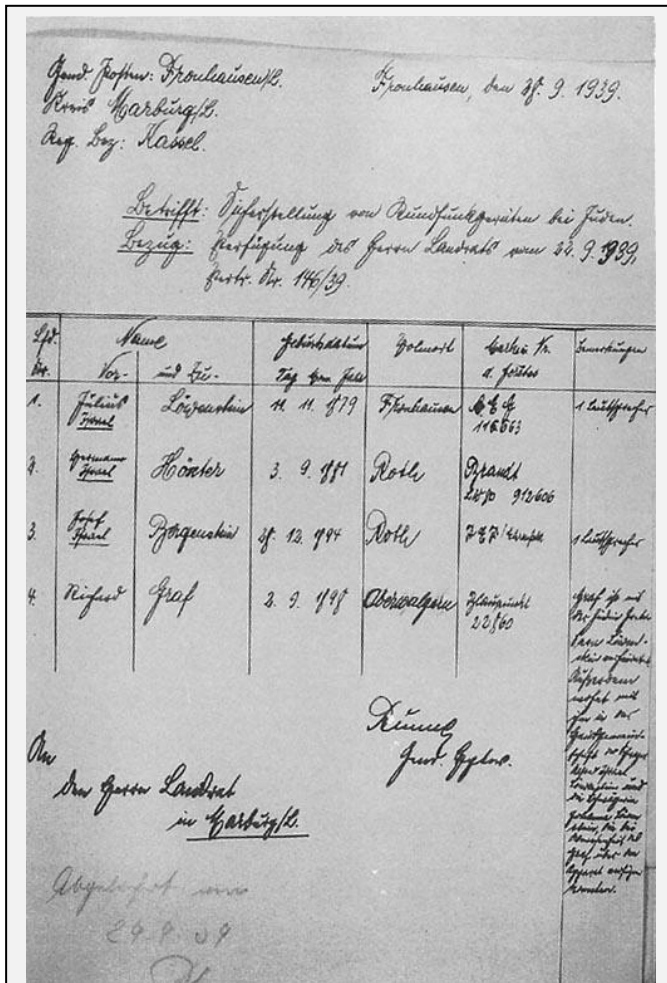
Today there are no Jews in Roth. The stories of these families demonstrate the consequences of racism and genocide fostered by the Nazis. What happened to the Jews of Roth occurred in much the same way throughout Nazi-occupied Europe.

The exhibit includes statistics about the 6 million Jews that were murdered as well as information about the nearly 6 million non-Jewish victims of the Nazi regime including Roma (Gypsies), the physically and mentally handicapped, Polish citizens, Soviet prisoners of war, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, political prisoners and African Germans.

There are documents, photographs and first-hand testimonies showing how some local villagers tried to help the Jews and many more documents showing obstacles that stood in the way of escaping from the Nazis, and the difficulties that those who were able to escape had in rescuing their relatives who were left behind.



DerStürmer was a weekly anti-Semitic newspaper that denounced Jews.



Gestapo record itemizing radios confiscated from Jewish families in Roth, including Bergenstein and Roth families. Without radios, they were essentially cut off from outside contact.

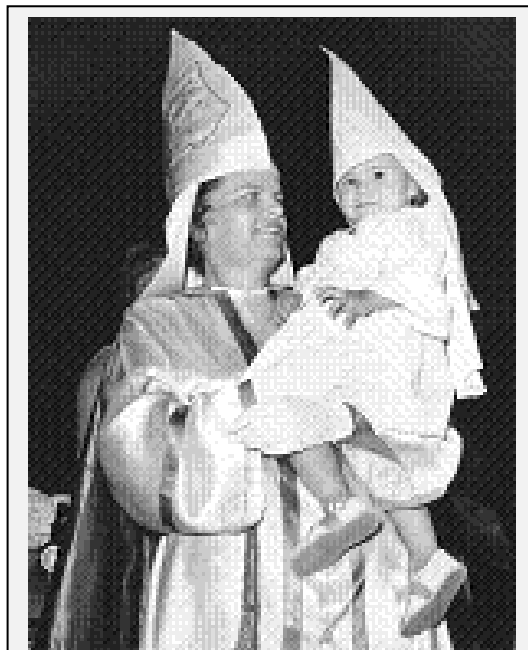
The exhibit closes with a montage of images that illustrates other instances of hatred, intolerance and bigotry that occurred after the Nazis fell from power. These images help us remember that we still need to be aware today of how human rights are lost when racism and genocide flourish.

Exhibit Themes

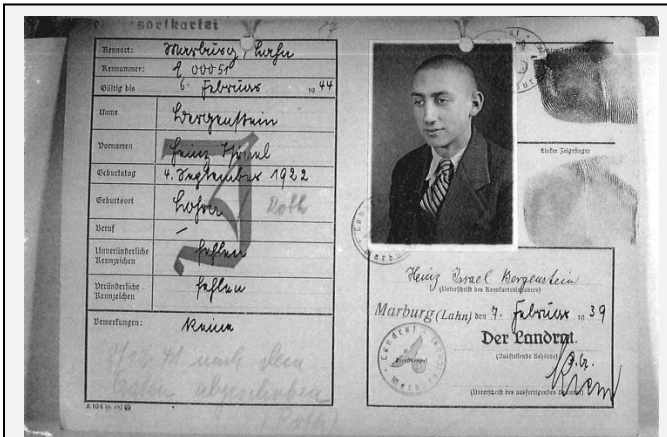
The information in the exhibit is organized around four different themes:

- Racism and Propaganda
- Integration Versus Segregation
- Resistance
- Choice and Responsibility

As you move through the exhibit, look for examples of these themes. Think about your own personal choices and how you have taken responsibility for them. Also take note of the Nazi's use of euphemisms to perpetrate their plans.



Prejudice and hatred are learned at an early age and take place against many different groups of people.



Kennkarte (identity card) issued to Heinz Bergenstein. Cards were stamped with the letter "J" and the middle names, Israel or Sara, were added to clearly identify people as Jewish.

"All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing."

Edmund Burke