

Stadtmuseum Hofgeismar

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Hofgeismar, 6. Dezember 2011

Reunion of Displaced Persons

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

from late in 1945 to early in 1949, nine hundred twenty-nine babies were born in the Displaced Persons Camp in Hofgeismar, Germany. Their parents were from the great cities, towns and small villages of Poland, Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Romania and Czechoslovakia. Many, millions, had died but these new parents, the survivors, fled their homelands to endure unspeakable hardships in Europe and such disparate places as Siberia and Samarkand. They ran taking only what they could carry.

They didn't know which of their family members, if any, survived nor if they could see them again. For the survivors of the Holocaust, as it is known now, it was the end of what they hoped would be their most difficult years but for nine hundred twenty-nine babies, Hofgeismar meant the beginning. In the small Hessian town it was where their lives began.

Over the intervening years, some of these children, now adults in their sixties, have expressed interest in those years. Some have returned to Hofgeismar to learn more about the place of and circumstances surrounding their birth, the particulars of their early lives and those of their parents. Some have come to Hofgeismar to visit the graves of relatives who died in the Camp. While bound by place, each child has their own unique story about where life would take them. By 1949 all the babies had dispersed, to make their way, with their families, to countries around the world.

From May 12, 2012 through August 12, 2012 the Stadtmuseum Hofgeismar will present an exhibition of Jewish life in the Displaced Persons Camps of Germany. The lynchpin of this exhibit will be a collection entitled A LIFE ANEW—THE ROBINSON ALBUM, DP Camps, Jews on German soil, 1945-1948. This show will also include documents, stories and photographs of the Camp in Hofgeismar. The goal will be to remember a nearly forgotten chapter in the history of our town.

It would be an honor to welcome back some of the nine hundred twenty-nine babies — or even elder camp-dwellers — to the Opening on May 12, 2012. To-date, a handful of people have expressed interest in coming. We are writing you today to see if you were interested in joining us in Hofgeismar next year for this extraordinary event. Please would you kindly let us know whether you are interested in meeting us in Hofgeismar next year – we would do our best for you to spend a wonderful time in the town where your life began.

Please help us to find any sort of track from that time.

A compilation of life-stories will be in the focus of all our activities. Would you be interested in participating in the compilation of documents, life stories, photographs and memorabilia necessary in launching such an ambitious endeavor. This would include not only the First Generation Holocaust survivor's stories but also those of the Second Generation.

To that end, we are enclosing a questionnaire which we hope will be helpful in organizing your information. Finding all the babies is a big job. In case of having some knowledge of their whereabouts, please do pass this information on to them. We hope that they will join us. Please send your stories, questions or comments to: museum@museum-hofgeismar.de

Kind regards

Helmut Burmeister
Leader of Stadtmuseum Hofgeismar

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