

“We learned of the Neighbours who Disappeared from members of the Telč Phoenix association, who initiated and carried out the placement of the natural monument and scenic trails dedicated to painter F. M. NágI and his family near Kostelní Myslová and installed a memorial plaque in Telč.

We commenced work on the project along with a group of pupils and students from Telč. We worked together – the uncovering of a new eyewitness from the last world war generation, of a happy ending to a story or even a positive response to one of the exhibitions were all joyous events.

Our stories featured a number of events and human fates – an illegal flight from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, participation in domestic and foreign resistance (Karel and Jiří Neumann), the issue of “mixed marriage” (the Mikulíček family), an entire family leaving the country in 1941 and returning after the war (the Hahn family), persecution, deportation, concentration camps, the Death March (Mr. Spitzer), extermination camps (the Taub and NágI families).”

The Projects Authors

The Jewish community of Telč vanished during the Nazi occupation. By May 15, 1942, all of the Jews still living in Telč have been deported to the Terezín ghetto. One hundred and five of them became Holocaust victims and their memory is preserved on ceramic memorial plaques placed in October 1994 in the ambit of St. Jacob’s parish church.

For all the fates of the Jews of Telč, we present here the story of the families of two brothers; one of which ends well and the other not so.

Project authors:
Jindřiška Adamcová
Pavel Adamec
Ondra Koubík
Klára Křížková
Katka Opatrná

Teacher supervisor:
Mgr. Božena Kadeřávková

TRIBUTE TO CHILD HOLOCAUST VICTIMS



Members of the national history group at the Children's After-school Activity Center in Telč, together with students of Otakar Březina High school in Telč... worked on this project.



TRIBUTE TO CHILD HOLOCAUST VICTIMS II. Stage of the Project Neighbors Who Disappeared

Officially announced 14 June 2005

by the Education and Culture Center of the Jewish Museum in Prague with the Civic Association The Forgotten Ones as a project partner and under the auspices of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic



About the authors

Pavel Adamec, 13 years old

I'm interested in the history of World War II and this period is inseparably tied to the fates of Jews. I wanted to know more, and I found a lot about what happened right here in Telč from the eyewitnesses.

Katka Opatrná, 15 years old

I first heard of the Holocaust at a session with Mr. Spitzer, who was deported to Terezín when he was my own age. I can't even imagine how I would have fared.

Ondra Koubík, 15 years old

I visited an old forested Jewish cemetery with a history club. Who were these people who had to stay aside even in death?

Klára Křížková, 16 years old

Of several tragic stories that I have learned, at least one had a happy ending. Our search has helped reunite two childhood acquaintances after nearly 70 years – Henry Hahn and Mr. Spitzer.

Jindřiška Adamcová, 16 years old

The Jewish culture used to be very anonymous to me, although I was aware of much of it from literature. Now, I know individual stories; many of them were students my age with similar pleasures, but such a different fate.

Božena Kadeřávková, 59 years old

At the beginning of the "Neighbors who Disappeared from Telč", there was only one window of memories half-open: the Taub family with their three children. Within a year and a half, our knowledge of "our families and our children" has grown so wide that our search will not be over any time soon.

Questions:

- why did Oscar Hahn's family decide to emigrate?
- what made their departure possible?
- what did they have to do in order to get into the USA?
- why do you think Ludvík Hahn's family decided to stay?

The family of Ludvík Hahn

Ludvík Hahn married Marie (Mitzi/Mici) Mannaberg, born in Zakopane, Poland. They lived in what is now No. 125 Svatoanenská ulice (St. Anne's Street) in the upper floor of a house. The lower floor was the company office.

The Hahn family adopted a little girl named Vanda in the 20's. Vanda came from a Polish Jewish family. Soon after the adoption, they had a son of their own named Kamil (Kamillo) and the two grew up together. Vanda was a very pretty girl and she and Kamil spent their time riding a horse named Alan or playing tennis on tennis courts in Lanner's Park. They had many friends in Telč. Kamil studied at a Telč secondary school and later on an English-language secondary school in Prague. He liked to ride a motorbike around Telč with his friends. Vanda married Ernst Kohn, a lawyer, in the 30's and lived with him on a rural estate in Jemnice. They had a son named Alexandr.

The family was a Jewish one and Ludvík was a member of the Chevra Kadisha (a funeral society) and as a member of this brotherhood, he placed two black plaques on the main gate of the Jewish cemetery, which read "Don't we all share one God?" and "Don't we all worship the same God?".

March 15, 1939 came and even since June 1939, the Jewish inhabitants were subject to the race laws and a number of discriminatory directives, which gradually escalated and left no aspect of life untouched. The company was appointed a German supervisor and later, Ludvík was even banned from his own office. Kamil wasn't allowed to complete his studies and became a confectionery apprentice. In 1940, the synagogue was closed and the Hahns celebrated the last holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in the beautiful local synagogue.

Vanda was the first to be deported to Terezín along with the Kohn family and they all perished in an extermination camp in Poland. Ludvík, Mrs. Mici and Kamil were all deported to Terezín along with the other Telč Jewish families and on September 1, 1942, they are placed on the Be transport to Raasika in Eastern Europe. No member of the family survived the Holocaust.



Synagoga v Telči před válkou



The family of Henry and Hanuš Hahn

Henry's parents Oskar and Helena (Heli) Hahn, maiden name Gottlieb, took residence in what is now Svatoanenská ulice in Telč, after their wedding in 1923. Oskar Hahn and his brother Ludvík co-owned a company named "H. Hahn and sons". Heli also often helped out in the company storage and office. The married couple had a son in 1928 and named him Hanuš. They also had a daughter named Suzi a year later, but she died as an infant. The Hahn family had a cook, an English governess, a caretaker, a coachman, a gardener and a maid. The Hahns had many friends in Telč, both among the Jewish families and among the other inhabitants of Telč. The family liked to travel, either to ski in the Tatras or just sightseeing around Europe. They weren't orthodox, although young Henry attended Jewish religion class. Henry attended the public elementary school in Telč and had private lessons in English, German and music – he learned to play the violin.

In November 1938, the Hahns returned from vacation in France. The French airlines couldn't carry them over Germany for their Jewish descent, but they managed to reach Telč by train via the occupied Vienna. The Jewish circles in Telč pretended even among themselves to believe everything was alright before March 15. However, Mr. Hahn brings back his memories of that day: "March 15, 1939 was the breaking point. We had a phone call at four in the morning coming from Prague – Oskar was told that the German occupation has begun and that the German army was to reach Telč at around half past seven in the morning. It was our family that got the call because we were the only ones apart from count Lichtenstein at the château to have a night-time telephone connection. I immediately went to alert the mayor and the police chief in order to prevent panic as the Germans marched into town."



Just before the first lessons started at school, around eight o'clock, the German tanks, armoured vehicles and artillery began to amass on the town square, where they stopped. The teacher sent the children home. The Czech military held guard at the offices at the château and the German soldier had leave to go shopping – some goods were unavailable in Germany. Henry, being fluent in German, pointed the soldiers towards different stores off the main square and assisted in Lauer's shop that sold textiles, coffee and other assorted goods.

A few days later, the school was back in operation and the Germans have left. The town was back to its regular life. A few Czech Nazis showed up at the carpentry wearing black clothes and boots, with swastikas on bands or their sleeves. Slowly, but steadily, life was about to change. Henry had just started at a municipal secondary school along with two other Jewish boys. One of the three was to be accepted to study at the "gymnázium" (a higher standard for secondary schools), while the other two would have to stay at the municipal school. Henry was the one selected. A German inspector was appointed for Oskar and Ludvík's store. Heli started learning English intensively, but Oskar refused to emigrate and believed "it" would pass.

In early September, 1939, the Hahns learned that their relatives from Jemnice had been arrested by the Gestapo and they decided to emigrate to Chile. They obtained passports, but they had to turn in all their property to the Nazis and promise that they would never come back. On 14 January 1940 the family arrived in Genoa, Italy. The Italian administration however found their visas invalid and they were not allowed to board their ship.

Oskar Hahn managed to obtain transit visas to Spain and the family settled in Barcelona in August, 1940. In December, 1940, the family finally received temporary visas to Cuba. The voyage across the Atlantic took about ten days and just after New Year's, 1941, the family disembarked in Havana. The family then boarded an American vessel aiming for New York. They were all welcomed here by uncle Ernst Gottlieb, aunt Margot and their family. They reunited with the children's grandparents Gottlieb, who managed to escape to England and from here to the U. S. in the spring of 1941. A new chapter in the life of the Hahns from Telč began in the U. S....

The Torahs of Telč

“The second life of the Czech Torah scrolls” was the name of an exhibition in the Robert Guttmann gallery in Prague (October 26 through January 28, 2007), which we borrowed for this reason: it displayed original parchment manuscripts, which included five Torah scrolls from Telč. Apart from this exhibition, we also learned of their fate from Henry Hahn from the U. S. and Zdeněk Pošusta from Prague – both originally from Telč. They managed to track these Torahs to their current location.

Jewish communities throughout the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia were compelled to turn in all the Torah scrolls they owned to the central Jewish museum in Prague. Over 1800 scrolls ended up here from the synagogues.

After the war, the scrolls were deposited in the synagogue in Michle, Prague. They were to become a part of an antique library collection, but things turned out quite differently. The communist administration sold the scrolls to an anonymous philanthropist in 1963. They were sent to London in 1964 and the contract stated that they were not to be further traded for financial gain. The Torahs found a safe haven in the Jewish congregation of Westminster. The Memorial Scrolls Trust that was subsequently established lends the Torahs upon request – the undamaged scrolls can be used in ceremonies while the damaged ones are distributed among museums or Shoah memorials all over the world.



The Telč Torah scrolls are located in the congregations and synagogues of Oakdale, NY, Miami Beach, FL, East Brunswick, NJ, Oceanside, NY and Kiryat Gat, Israel.

Our town sent these congregations a letter, in which we introduced Telč and its history, culture and its memories of the Jewish minority, as well as Jewish memorials in the context of spirituality and history.

Thanks to Henry Hahn, the first response came from the Oceanside, NY congregation and its representative Arnold Innerfield. We were sent pictures of their synagogue and the Telč Torah and we established a personal contact. The Innerfields even visited our town on October 31, 2006 during their trip to Europe.

They were genuinely interested in the Jewish memorials – the former synagogue, the Jewish cemetery, the memorial plaques dedicated to the victims of World War II and the memorial plaque of painter F. M. Nágl. They were also interested in the fate of the Jewish families of Telč and the history of the pre war Jewish community.

The Innerfields shared with us their memories and personal experiences they had with the Torah of Telč. Their story of how Arnold went to pick the Torah up at the airport from a British airline company and transport it home was very touching. When they opened the package at home, the entire family cried, as they knew the Torah's history. In a few days, the Torah was taken to the Jewish quarter in eastern New York City and a new mantle was sewn for the Torah, with an embroidery saying "We cry for you" in English and Hebrew. The restoration of the Torah was funded by the religious community, each member contributing a symbolic \$18. The number 18 is composed of two letters in Hebrew – H and J, which spell "cheim", meaning "life". The community thus gave the Torah a new life.

Mr. Innerfield celebrated his 83rd birthday in 2006. On that birthday, he also had his second Bar Mitzvah, as men begin a second life at seventy and 13 years later, they are ready once again to become the "sons of the commandments" ("Bar Mitzvah"). On the day of the ceremony, he chose the Telč Torah to recite from. He admitted to us that he was very touched and the recitation was just as emotional as during his first Bar Mitzvah in his 13 years.



Our search for the stories of our Jewish neighbours under the Neighbours who Disappeared project reached another dimension. We found new friends who, with their memories and experiences, contributed to the deepening of our knowledge of history.

The work schedule of our group

2004:

March:

- the group has 7 members from Masarykova elementary school, Hradecká elementary school and the Otokar Březina secondary school in Telč. We explore the project and attend a session with A. Spitzer from Jihlava; we obtain information on the Taub family from Telč from Mrs. Navrátilová; we contact Henry Hahn in the U. S.

September:

- a history club is opened at the youth centre in Telč – the group is down to five members; we learn of the material memorials of Jewish culture in and around Telč; we attend sessions with eyewitnesses Mrs. Plačková and Mrs. Mikulíčková, who lives in Prague (both are originally from the Neumann family from Telč)

2005:

- the stories of the Neumann family, the Taub family, the Hahn family, the Nágl family, Mr. Spitzer are assembled and recorded; we prepare an exhibition of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia and the Neighbours who Disappeared from Telč – a total of seven panels, the students of the Otokar Březina highschool do the graphics of two panels for the Tribute to the Child Victims of the Holocaust exhibition; we work on the accompanying brochures.

2006:

- Our project acquires a brand new dimension when we find out about the Torah scrolls of Telč – we send letters or emails to congregations and Synagogues in the USA and in Israel. We meet Mr. and Mrs Innerfeld come for a visit to the Czech Republic. They are members of the congregation of Oakdale that has a Torah scroll borrowed from Telč.

Rok 2006–2008:

- a new group of students creates twelve panels and a fold-up brochure about Jewish families from in and around Telč. We cooperate with students of Oakdale, NY and exchange our works.

Nature Memorial to the painter František Mořic Nagel in Kostelní Myslová



Daughter of Moric Nagel
Věra Nagelová *21. 7. 1921
Student of the 8th Grade
of the High school in Telč.
Forced to leave the school 3 months
before her Final Exams.

Son of Moric Nagel
Miloslav Nagel *16. 11. 1922
Student of the 7th Grade
of the High school in Telč.
Forced to leave
the school in 1939.

Project Participants:
Klára Křížková, Ondřej Pelech, Karolína Křepelová.
Students of the 4th Grade of the Otokar Březina High School in Telč.

Project coordinator:
Božena Kadeřávková



Kostelní Myslová (detail),
date unknown



Terezín (detail), 1943

František Mořic Nágł

Before the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was established, painter František Mořic Nágł lived with his wife, violinist Vlasta Nemelová, in Kostelní Myslová a short distance from Telč itself. Mr. Nágł had exhibitions in Telč every year. His children, Věra and Miroslav, helped him set them up each time. After the occupation of the territory by the German army, their estate was confiscated and the family was forced to move to Telč.

Despite the ban on Jewish artists, F. M. Nágł continued to paint, even in public. He was arrested by the Gestapo in 1940, painting on the Telč town square, and held captive for half a year.

In May 1942, he was deported to the Terezín ghetto along with his family and other Telč Jews. In Terezín, he worked in a group of painters employed by the Nazi camp administration to paint propagandistic paintings. He also painted the true ghetto life, although he did this in secret.

His works were found during the construction works after the liberation. He managed to hide them before being deported with one of the last transports to Auschwitz on October 28, 1944. He perished here, as did his wife and daughter, in the gas chambers. His son Miloslav was killed in Auschwitz the year before.

The place where he used to paint in 1940 is now marked with a memorial plaque in 2003.



Terezín (detail),
1943

Questions:

- Do you think F. M. Nágł's actions after the ban on Jewish artists was issued was to be considered courageous? Why?
- What were the consequences?
- Why do you think F. M. Nágł painted the life in the ghetto while he was in Terezín?
- Why did he hide these paintings before being deported east?

List of children, who were victims of the Holocaust

78 Jewish citizens of Telč were held in the Třebíč assembly point in 1942. They were then boarded on transports Av and Aw on May 18 and 25, 1942, respectively, and deported to Terezín and then east. Other people were apprehended and held in concentration camps. The total number of Holocaust victims from Telč is 105, and these among them were children:

Vlasta Furchtová (born June 6, 1935 in Telč), Telč II/116

Deported on May 25, 1942, by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 394

Hanuš Heilig (born March 12, 1928), Telč IV/296

Deported on May 25, 1942, by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 426

Richard Heilig (born September 21, 1931), Telč IV/296

Deported on May 25, 1942, by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 427

Bedřich Holzbauer (born September 15, 1926), Telč I/20

Deported by transport Eb from Terezín to Osvětim, as number 2168

Otto König (born August 13, 1926) Telč I/70

Deported on May 25, 1942 by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 485; died on September 25, 1942 in Majdanek

Olga Lauerová (born November 12, 1924), Telč II/113

Deported on May 25, 1942 from Terezín to Lublin by transport Az, as number 388

Ludvík Lauer (born January 13, 1934), Telč II/113

Deported on May 25, 1942 by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 389

Otto Lauer (born March 7, 1927), Telč II/75

Forced to discontinue his studies in 1940

Deported on May 25, 1942 by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 411

Karel Lauer (born February 13, 1928), Telč II/75

Deported on May 25, 1942 by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 412

Erich Mandl (born August 31, 1924), Telč IV/37

Deported on May 25, 1942 by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 614

Otto Posamenter (born April 10, 1927)

Deported on May 25, 1942 by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 359; died on September 11, 1942 in Majdanek

Ruth Posamenterová (born February 21, 1932)

Deported on May 25, 1942 by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 360

Jiří Schrecker (born June 19, 1939)

Deported on December 18, 1943 by transport Ds from Terezín to Auschwitz, as number 1454

Eva Steinová (born September 4, 1931 in Brno)

Deported on October 23, 1944 by transport Et from Terezín to Auschwitz, as number 286

Charlotta Taubová (born May 18, 1926), Telč II/56

Deported on October 19, 1944 by transport Es from Terezín to Auschwitz, as number 690

Emma Taubová (born April 30, 1930), Telč II/56

Deported on October 9, 1944 by transport Es from Terezín to Auschwitz, as number 689

Arnold Taub (born November 23, 1928), Telč II/56

Deported on October 16, 1944 by transport Er from Terezín to Auschwitz, as number 1209

Ilsa Turnovská (born November 9, 1924), Telč I/105

Deported on May 25, 1942 by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 442

Margita Turnovská (born March 2, 1929), Telč I/105

Deported on May 25, 1942 by transport Az from Terezín to Lublin, as number 443