

STUMBLING STONES CEREMONY, 11 JULY 2019



**GUTTA MEYER
NÉE ROSENBUSCH**
LIVED HERE
BORN 1865
FLIGHT 1939 BELGIUM
INTERNED MALINES
DEPORTED 1943
MURDERED IN
AUSCHWITZ

ERICH MEYER
LIVED HERE
1887-1935

**MARGARET MEYER
NÉE WALLACH**
LIVED HERE
1892-1946
FLIGHT 1939
AUSTRALIA

**ANNEMARIE MEYER
LATER JACOBS**
LIVED HERE
1918-1982
FLIGHT 1939
AUSTRALIA

LOCATION

The location of the stumbling stone at Hohenzollernstrasse 55 was Gutta Meyer's last address in Hannover, from 1934 to 1938. The stumbling stone was laid at the request of her great-granddaughter Margaret Jacobs. It was sponsored by Peter Rother.

GUTTA MEYER NÉE ROSENBUSCH

Gutta Rosenbusch was born in Nuremberg to a Jewish family on 29 June 1865. She married banker Siegmund Louis Meyer, born on 20 June 1855 in Hannover. The couple had two children – Erich, born in 1887, and Rena, born in 1893. The family lived a spacious villa at Hindenburgstrasse 2 from 1898 to 1922. Siegmund Meyer managed the Ephraim Meyer & Sohn bank, founded by his grandfather Ephraim Meyer in 1797



Gutta Meyer, probably in the 1920s. Source: Margaret Jacobs

Siegmund Meyer died in 1922. Gutta Meyer sold the villa on Hindenburgstrasse around 1930 and lived in a suite in Kasten's Hotel in the city centre for a while. She travelled a lot, including visits to her daughter Rena who lived with her husband Klaus Fränkel and their children Peter and Susanne in Silesia. From 1931 to 1934 she was registered with her son Erich Meyer and his wife Margaret née Wallach at

Seelhorststrasse 6 (today 16) and from 1934 to 1938 in their apartment at Hohenzollernstrasse 55. She continued to travel regularly, especially to the spa town of Marienbad in Czechoslovakia, *“not to drink the healthful mineral waters or enjoy the lovely scenery, but to play bridge. In Marienbad she played bridge from morning to night, with ferocious concentration.”*

She was especially fond of her granddaughter Annemarie (born in 1918), the daughter of her son Erich. Annemarie recalled: *“Grossmutter was in no way the doting type of grandmother – or rather, she hid her doting behind an effective barrage of frequent and un-grandmotherly criticism – and she rarely praised us, least of all did she praise me, her favourite. For years, whenever I was ill in bed she would purposefully storm into my room, pull up a chair, survey me grimly and voice her disapproval of my condition, implying somehow that my sorry state, whether due to influenza, chicken-pox or mumps, was largely my own fault and only to be expected from anyone as silly as I.*

She would slap a parcel down upon my bed, which usually contained a book she had chosen with great care. I loved books and would start reading it straight away. She would yank it out of my hands and shrilly inform me that my manners were atrocious, and would I kindly honour her with my attention seeing she had taken the trouble to come to our house (four minutes walk from hers) especially to see me.



Annemarie Meyer. Source: Jacobs: Alien roots, 2006

I didn't mind her criticism and her sharpness. She may have been a little short on the traditional grandmotherly graces but she was a strong pillar in the structure of my small world ... this little silver-haired lady in black who held herself so straight and rarely laughed. There was a kind of unspoken understanding between us which was very sweet.”

FLIGHT TO BELGIUM

The hyperinflation of the 1920s hit the Ephraim Meyer & Sohn bank hard. The family's shares were taken over by the Z.H. Gumpel bank. Erich Meyer remained employed in a leading position in the bank. After the Great Depression the bank went into liquidation in 1933. Erich Meyer died in 1935 as the result of a chronic illness.

In September 1938 Gutta Meyer moved to Frankfurt, where her married sister Elise Mayer lived. Her daughter Rena Fränkel, now widowed, had fled to Brussels and pressed Gutta to join her there. Early in 1939 Gutta visited her granddaughter Annemarie in Hannover once more, to say farewell before the latter emigrated to Australia via England. The young woman noticed a *“depressing” change in her grandmother: “She had mellowed; she had lost her acid tongue ... She now looked small and shrunken ... though she sat ramrod straight as always ... But the fierceness and the spirit had left her, and I felt cheated and infinitely sad.”* In April 1939 Gutta Meyer finally fled to join her daughter Rena and grandchildren Peter und Susanne in Brussels, in the hope of being safe from the Nazis there.

ARREST AND DEPORTATION

77-year-old Gutta Meyer was arrested in Brussels early in 1943. In April 1945, her daughter Rena wrote to Margaret Meyer, who had escaped to Australia with Annemarie: *“On January 14, 1943, Grandmother was taken when the Gestapo came to our building searching for people named Meyer (people of this name had lived on the first floor but had long since gone into hiding). They came on a morning when unfortunately neither Dad nor I was there and Grandmother was alone with the char-woman. Three men dragged her out of the house (we were told) and we never saw her again.”*

The following day Gutta Meyer was deported via Malines to Auschwitz where she was murdered. Rena, Peter and Susanne survived in Brussels, protected by Rena's second marriage to an American, Temple McHugh (1876-1950).

Edel Sheridan-Quantz, 2019

LITERATURE/SOURCES:

Anne Jacobs: Alien roots. A German Jewish girlhood: From belonging to exile. Victoria 2006.

