



BLÄTTER

ZUM LAND

Nr. XX

The Memorial Site of the SS Special Camp/Concentration Camp Hinzert

Place of Remembrance with a European Dimension

When you approach the Hunsrueck village Hinzert coming from Trier to Hermeskeil on the Autobahn A1 near Reinsfeld, you will see signposts for a special historical place. There are signs showing that there is a place of memorial here. If you follow these signs you will see that you have arrived at a cemetery and a modern house, both of which remind

you of a former Nazi concentration camp. If you hadn't made enquiries beforehand, you would hardly notice that more than 13,000 men from over 20 countries had been imprisoned at this historical site between 1939 and 1945. When you first see the idyll of this



countryside you would never think that it was here where prisoners were mistreated by the SS, forced to do inhuman work and, in many cases, cruelly murdered. One of the first information papers issued by the Federal State Central Authority for Political Education in the 1980s bore the justified title "The Peace of this Location is Deceptive." 60 years after the end of the Second World War and after the liberation of Europe from the Nazi tyranny, the documentation and meeting house, under support of the Rhineland-Palatinate State Government, was built next to the memorial of the SS special camp and the concentration camp at Hinzert. The permanent exhibition on display in the new building provides information on the history of a small concentration camp with documentation, photos, films and, above all, numerous reports from contemporary witnesses. With the aid of the exhibition, it is possible for you to form your own first image of what happened in Hinzert during the war years.

The concentration camp received a European dimension due to its function within the Nazi system of concentration camps. This international significance allows this memorial to meet its concerns, primarily by reminding us of the fate of the prisoners from different countries and of the victims who had to die here. It is the second most significant me-

morial within Rhineland-Palatinate which, besides the Rhineland- Palatinate Nazi documentation centre in the memorial in Osthofen, primarily reminds us of the former concentration camp in Osthofen near Worms (1933-34) and provides us with an overview of the Nazi period in our region.

From the Cemetery of Honour to the Memorial 1945 – 2005

The documentation and meeting house in front of the cemetery, the so-called "cemetery of honour" was established in 1946 by the French military administration on the grounds of the former guard accommodation. 217 people are buried here who could not be repatriated in their home countries after the war. It became more and more the beginning of the memorial. Georg Baldy and later his son, Bernhard Baldy, have been taking care of the graves since 1958. Many of the meanwhile deceased survivors of the concentration camp from different countries contacted them whenever they returned to the place of their imprisonment to pay their tributes to their murdered comrades. Until the 1990s, the grounds of the cemetery had a shadowy existence. The character of the furtive place was reinforced by the name "cemetery of honour" which was used until



*Häftlingsfriedhof heute
Quelle: Hans Jürgen Wiehr*

1994 and actually covered up the background of the concentration camp. An open air information tableau in four languages which was installed at the south-east corner of the cemetery in 1997 briefly explains the historical background of the grounds. On the initiative of the Federal State Central Authority for Political Education and the Development Association of the Documentation and Meeting House from the former Concentration Camp at Hinzert, the Rhineland-Palatinate State Government together with support from all four parliamentary parties, decided in favour of an architecture bid in 2002 to build a documentation house. Led by the Civil Engineering Department of the Ministry of Finance and under concurrence of the chamber of architects for Rhineland-Palatinate, an international bid was carried out and included Luxembourg, Lorraine, Wallonia and the German-speaking community in Belgium, Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate. From 28 drafts submitted, an international jury comprised of architects, historians and former deportees from Luxembourg and France, selected the draft by the architect company Wandel-Höfer-Lorch & Hirsch from Saarbrücken. In their draft, the leading architects Prof. Wolfgang Lorch und Nikolaus Hirsch

pursued the fundamental thoughts which portray the ambivalence of the present day idyll and the crimes of the past. They wanted to build a building "that reveals a fault of the countryside which deceives us of the idyll of this place". With this building they wanted to set a "mark of an irritation". The exhibition to be integrated in this building was to be marked by the view to the grounds of the former prisoner's camp. The unanimous vote of the jury was concurred by the State Government and the parliamentary parties of the state. The project was also recognised by the Federal Authority for Culture and Media. The mutual implementation of the project by the Federal and State Governments and with a cost of EUR 3.18m faced no more opposition and the architects were able to begin the preparations with the state company LBB in Trier at the beginning of 2004.

The Documentation and Meeting House

After the brief planning and construction period of two years, the documentation and meeting house will be completed in December 2005. The construction is also being completed in concurrence with the friends of the former deportees of the concentration camp at Hinzert in Luxembourg and France. The "Amicale des Anciens de Hinzert Luxem-



The chapel on the grounds of the memorial site and the crucifix on the grounds above the graves was consecrated on 4 November 1948. Among those present were the Minister of the Rhineland-Palatinate Peter Altmeier, the French military governor Hettier de Boislambert and the Luxembourg Minister of Education Pierre Frieden (from left to right on the photo) Source: Centre de Documentation et de Recherche sur la Résistance, Luxembourg (Centre for Documentation and Research on the Resistance)

bourg“, the French association of the deported and detained resistance fighters and patriots FNDIRP in France, the Federal Archive in Berlin, the State Archive in Rhineland-Palatinate, the Archive of the French occupying forces in Germany with headquarters in Colmar, the museums of the resistance in Besançon and Esch-sur-Alzette, many other institutions and the scientific professional advisory board under the chairmanship of Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Benz from the Technical University of Berlin support the Federal State Central Authority for Political Education in preparing the permanent exhibition. The administrative district of Trier-Saarburg, the municipality of Hermeskeil and the local community of Hinzert-Pöler were involved with the preparations for the building of the house. Next to the large exhibition room, which can also be used for events, there is a seminar and conference room in which workshops for up to 35 persons can take place. There is also an office from the Federal State Central Authority for Political Education within the building.

The house is suitable for school classes and youth and adult groups from Germany and other countries for

the purpose of dealing more closely with the history of the concentration camp.

The Permanent Exhibition

In the middle of the exhibition room there is a projection cube for basic information which is transmitted from the ceiling to the cubes by means of a beamer. Here you can see documentaries on the concentration camp and also electronic cards can be recalled to view the position of the SS special camp within the Nazi concentration camp system. You can also get an impression of the prisoners' barracks on the basis of historical photos. When entering the building, your view will take you to the large window which throws light into the room and which also has a double function for the exhibition. The view to the outside makes the present reality of the grounds visible on which the former prisoners' camp was located from 1939 until closure of the concentration camp in March 1945 and its remain, unused until 1946. You can see meadows and windmill plants built a few years ago. However, the view to the outside is interrupted by the photography of the barracks on the large window taken in 1946 at approximately the site of the current memorial. As such, you have a direct view of the former SS special camp/the

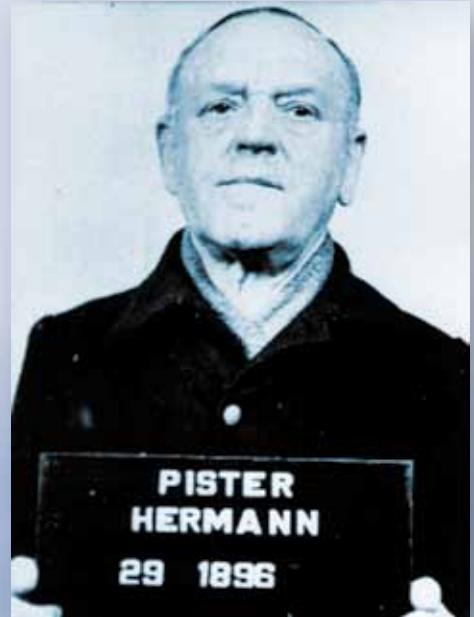
*Outside view of the Documentation and Meeting House
Source: Hans Jürgen Wiehr*

concentration camp at Hinzert and the picture merges into the somewhat idyllic reality of today. You become aware of the fact that, while the camp was in existence, it could be seen directly from the road going past it which connected the towns of Hinzert and Reinsfeld. The accommodation for the guards was on the other, right-hand side of the road opposite the prisoners' camp where the cemetery is now located. The exhibition itself is grouped into seven subject matters. The introductory texts on the individual focal points give you a first impression of the exhibition:

History of the Camp

The SS special camp / Hinzert concentration camp was operated from 1939 to 1945. It was originally set up as a police detention camp, then as a 're-training camp' for workers from the Organisation Todt (OT) who had worked on the west wall and had become delinquents according to the National Socialists' understanding of delinquency. During the Second World War the camp was turned into a concentration camp for deportees from numerous countries occupied by the Wehrmacht. The camp retained its title of 'SS Special Camp' due to the various special functions the camp

assumed over the course of time, although it was run like a concentration camp by the Office for Economics and Administration as of 1942. A total of more than 13,000 people suffered from the terror of the SS in the camp's six year existence.



*Camp commander Hermann Pister after his arrest
Source: Memorial site Buchenwald*

First commander of the SS Special Camp – this title being used from November 1939 on – was Hermann Pister, who assumed the position on 9 October 1939. His successor as of December 1941 was Egon Zill. The position of the camp was 'upgraded' in 1940, when it was placed under the jurisdiction of the Inspector of concentration camps on 1 July 1940. Another 'upgrade' in the concentration camp system took place on 7 February 1942 when the camp was allocated to the SS Central Office for Economics and Administration (WVHA). This re-



mained under Zill's jurisdiction until he was transferred to the Natzweiler concentration camp in Alsace as Deputy Commandant in April 1942. Paul Sporrenberg followed him as the third Commandant of the Hinzert concentration camp. Formally the SS special camp/Hinzert concentration camp retained its autonomy, until it was assigned to the Buchenwald concentration camp on 21 November 1944.

Whether or not the decreed assignment actually took place in practice is however unclear. An air raid on 22 February 1945 destroyed parts of the camp.

The camp remained in operation until March 1945, when most of the prisoners were evacuated and sent with guards to Buchenwald shortly before the arrival of American troops. At least 3 prisoners did not survive the march: guards shot one Frenchman, beat a Luxembourgier to death and killed another Luxembourgier with an injection. The rest of the prisoners who were forced to go to Buchenwald were freed in Langendiebach in Hessian. A small portion of the prisoners did however remain in the camp under the supervision of guards. After the last guards departed, American soldiers liberated them in the middle of March.

Hitherto it has not been possible to investigate all the deaths in the SS special camp/Hinzert concentration camp. Research by the Luxembourg Conseil National de la Résistance has confirmed 321 deaths. One can assume that all the victims could not be found after the end of the war.

The Prisoners

German workers who were initially forced to work on the 'west wall' or later in various factories were sent to the camp as of 1939

on the charge that they had insufficient work discipline or demonstrated 'anti social behaviour'. There they were supposed to be 'retrained' according to the National Socialists' understanding of training. The camp in Hinzert operated as a 'work training camp' not only for German workers, but also for forced labourers from occupied countries during the war. After the armistice agreement in 1940, Germans and foreigners that served in French foreign legions were added. It was in this manner that 437 foreign legions, for example, were transferred from the internment camp Fréjus to Hinzert in July 1941.

Large groups of prisoners came primarily from Luxembourg. The Gestapo had most of the resistance fighters from this country locked up in the Hinzert camp which was close by. Extensive transports of prisoners also arrived at Hinzert from France, Poland and the Soviet Union. The prisoners from Western Europe were mostly political resistance fighters. The Eastern European prisoners primarily consisted

of forced labourers deported to Germany. After the Wehrmacht High Command issued the 'Nacht-und-Nebel' Decree (Night and Fog Decree) on 7 December 1941, almost 2000 Frenchmen, but also Belgian and Dutch members of national resistance groups were



*Camp commander Egon Zill
Source: Rhineland-Palatinate Nazi
documentation centre*



*Camp commander Paul Sporrenberg
Source: Rhineland-Palatinate Nazi
documentation centre*

deported to Hinzert from May 1942 to October 1943. The 'Nacht-und-Nebel' prisoners ("NN" prisoners) were supposed to disappear from their homelands without a trace and be deported to Germany in utmost secrecy, so that they could be assigned to a special court for sentencing. Family members received no information about the location of prisoners. "NN" prisoners were strictly forbidden letter contact. They generally came to Hinzert via the Trier prison. From here they were later brought to other penal institutions (e.g. Wittlich and Diez), which were close to a special court (e.g. Cologne, Wittlich), or to other concentration camps.

In February 1943 the SS regulated the question of what to do with Polish forced labourers that had 'traces of Nordic blood' and had forbidden relations with an 'imperial (reichs-deutsche) German woman'. Polish men to whom this applied were to be reviewed for their 'ability to become German'. The time frame for such a review was set at six months. The instructions issued on

4 June 1943 stated that this group was to be brought to the SS special camp in Hinzert for the length of this 'review'.

Crimes and Criminals

In the beginning, as of autumn 1939, the guard detail in Hinzert consisted solely of members of the SS. Starting in 1943, policemen and soldiers also worked there. Since supervisors were repeatedly delegated to war service or transferred to another concentration camp, staff at the camp changed quite often. Their number also fluctuated significantly: 197 people, for example, belonged to them in 1940, while only 117 were part of it in July 1944. The number of concentration camp guards increased for a time with large waves of incoming prisoners and decreased again after prisoners were released or sent to another camp.

'All members of the SS, irrespective of service level and profession, were boorish, brutal and inherently hard; all this was strengthe-



Portable crates, which the prisoners had to drag while running, were used to transport wood, slates and coal. This is a contrived photo, and originates from an SS guard not known so far.

Source: Rhineland-Palatinate Nazi documentation centre

ned by the firm will to become a type of "Übermensch" (superior human). All of them hated us, although one sensed something like jealousy stemming from their inferiority complex.' André Chauvenet, cloak and dagger deportee from 10. October 1942 until March 1943 in Hinzert.

Murders in Hinzert

Prisoners were shot or murdered by deadly injections both individually and in groups at the SS special camp/ Hinzert concentration camp. Many other prisoners died from the most brutal mistreatment. Trial records and bills of indictment against members of the

SS guards detail contain myriad statements from witnesses of crimes of unimaginable brutality and cruelty to prisoners in the camp. SS guards, for example, tortured the Jewish prisoners Hanau and Baer and drowned them afterwards in a trough. Seven Flemish citizens that fell sick with dysentery died in the spring of 1943 as a result of mistreatment and the refusal to give them medical care.

To date it has not been possible to determine the exact number of victims who died at the SS special camp/concentration camp Hinzert. However, the Luxembourg Conseil National de la Résistance has ascertained 321 deaths. It can be assumed that not all victims could be found after the end of the war.



Murder of Soviet Prisoners of War in 1941

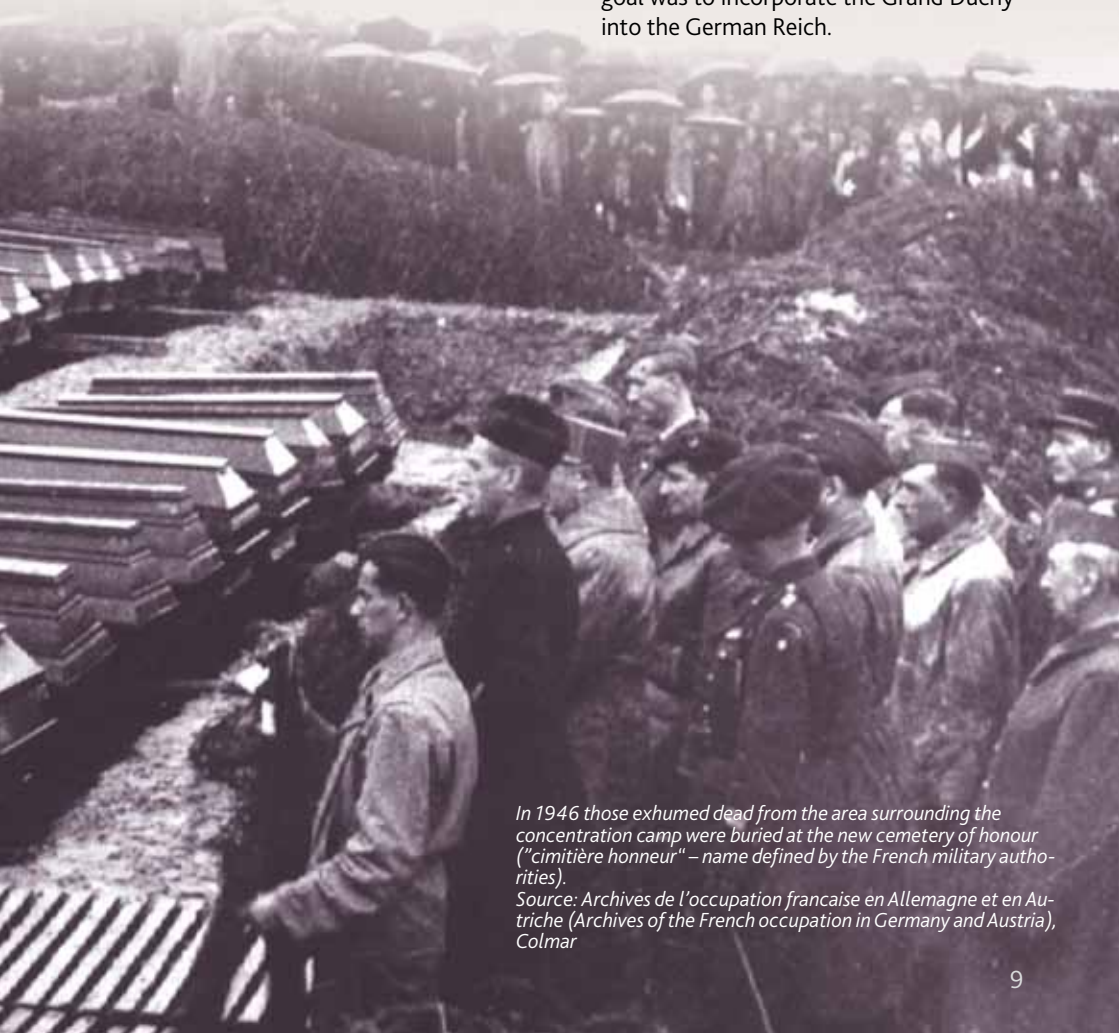
The Trier Gestapo 'picked up' 70 of the 300 Soviet prisoners of war who were working in the commando at the Baumholder troop exercise area and took them away for 'special treatment'. The reason for this was the so-called 'Commissary Order'. This order from Hitler provided for the murder of political officers ('commissars') who were responsible for the communist training of soldiers, after they had been taken prisoners.

Two lorries took 70 prisoners of war to the SS Special Camp/Hinzert concentration camp just after dusk. The uninformed prisoners

were told that they had to undergo a medical examination and be vaccinated before heading out to a new job. Individually they were led to the quarantine barracks, where they were in fact injected with deadly potassium cyanide. The murdered prisoners were then hastily buried in pre-prepared mass graves that lay hidden in the forest.

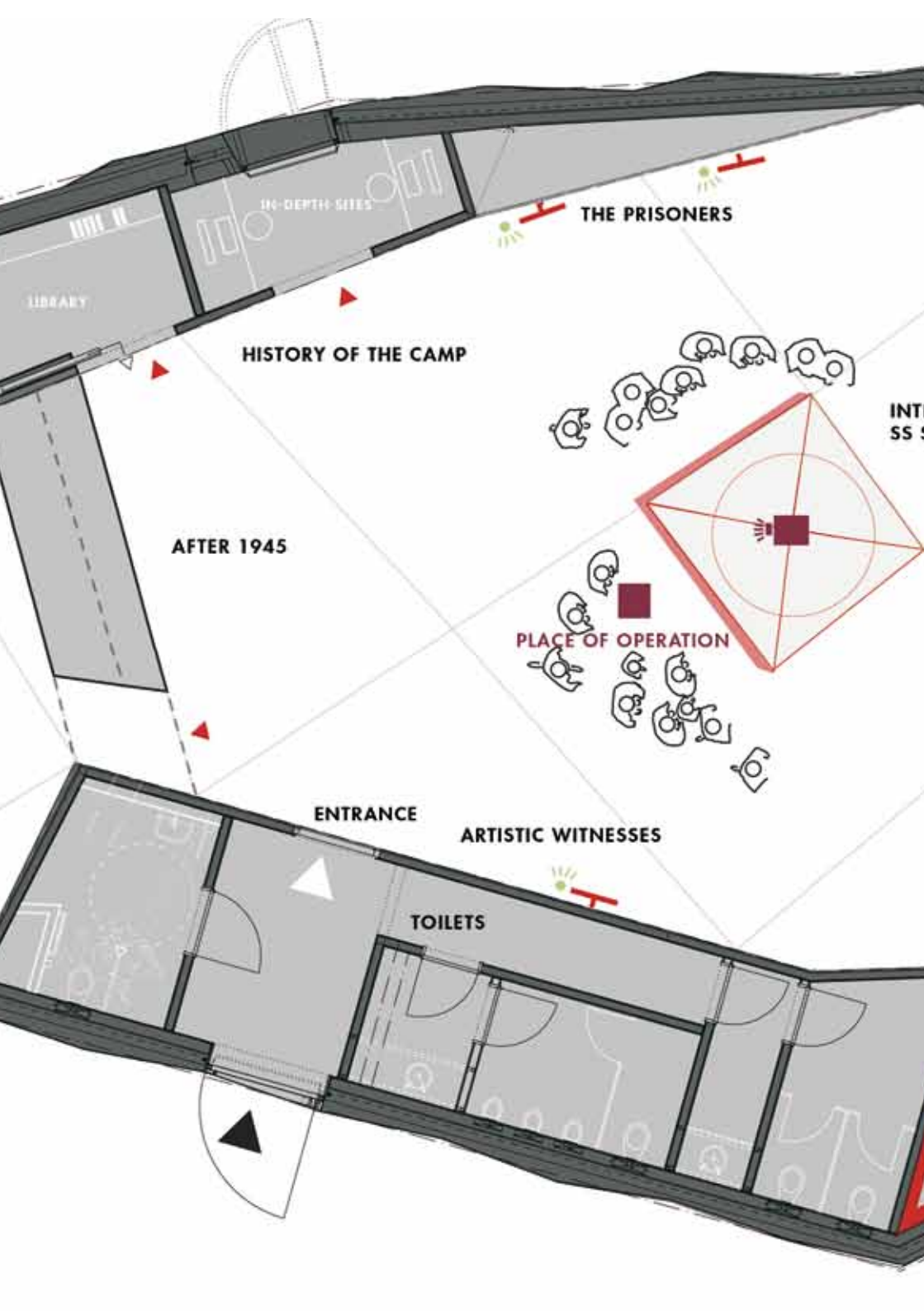
Murder of Luxembourg Citizens after the 1942 Strike

After the German Wehrmacht occupied Luxembourg on 10 May 1940, the Head of Civil Administration, Provincial Leader (Gauleiter) Simon pursued rigorous political aims. The goal was to incorporate the Grand Duchy into the German Reich.



In 1946 those exhumed dead from the area surrounding the concentration camp were buried at the new cemetery of honour ("cimetière honneur" – name defined by the French military authorities).

Source: Archives de l'occupation française en Allemagne et en Autriche (Archives of the French occupation in Germany and Austria), Colmar



LIBRARY

IN-DEPTH SITES

THE PRISONERS

HISTORY OF THE CAMP

AFTER 1945

ENTRANCE

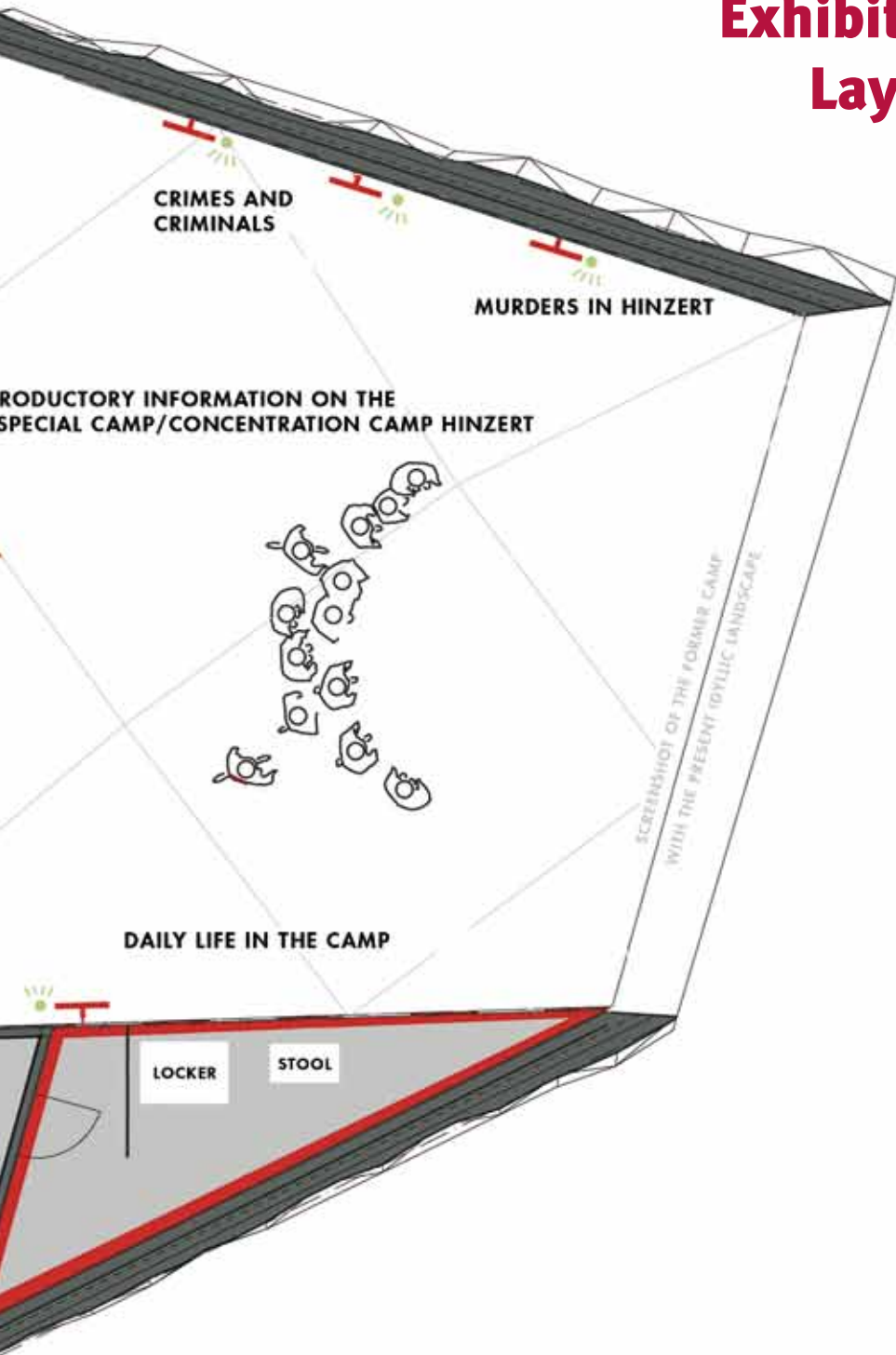
ARTISTIC WITNESSES

TOILETS

PLACE OF OPERATION

INT
SS

Exhibition Layout



The focal point of these political efforts at the end of August 1942 was the introduction of compulsory service in the German Wehrmacht for all citizens of Luxembourg born between 1920 and 1926. The general strike that was called as a result took hold of all of Luxembourg and included workers, officials, students and school children. One day later the Germans called a state of emergency and implemented a summary court martial. It was held primarily at night in the court building in the city of Esch and in Luxembourg, which was presided over by Fritz Hartmann, the head of the Trier State Police Branch Office and Head of the Task Commando of the Security Police and the SD in Luxembourg. The summary court martial issued twenty death sentences to arbitrarily selected strike participants and the executions were carried out from 2 to 5 September 1942 close to the Hinzert concentration camp.

Murder of Luxembourg Resistance Fighters

The German occupying forces arrested approximately 350 citizens of Luxembourg during various raids and round ups in the autumn of 1943 and had them deported to the SS special camp/ Hinzert concentration camp. In the subsequent hearings the Gestapo assumed that there would be 50 death sentences in the coming trials on the basis of the practices of the Special Court hitherto. The Ge-

stapo accused those arrested of being 'gang leaders' of the Luxembourg Resistance. The arrested people were charged with having helped other citizens of Luxembourg who had avoided their compulsory obligation to serve in the Wehrmacht, and having provided aid to allied pilots. On account of this report, the Head of Civil Administration, Gustav Simon, called a meeting in Koblenz at the end of January 1944, which also was attended by the Head of the Task Commando of the Security Police and the SD in Luxembourg, Walter Runge. At the meeting they decided that issuing 50 death sentences would not be politically advantageous at the current time. The investigation was therefore not to be handled by the State Prosecutors Office and the number of death sentences was to be reduced to 25. The agreement was presented to the Main Office of Reich Security (Reichsicherheitshauptamt), which decided that the 25 citizens of Luxembourg were to be shot immediately.

As a warning to the growing resistance of the Luxembourg people, SS Major (Hauptsturmführer) Runge selected 23 people from the prisoners on 25 February 1944 and these prisoners were then shot at the SS special camp/Hinzert concentration camp without a court sentence. Two other prisoners who were supposed to be shot were not in the camp at the time of the action and survived.

View of the deserted concentration camp grounds, March 1946

Source: Centre de Documentation et de Recherche sur la Résistance (Centre for Documentation and Research on the Resistance), Luxembourg



Memorial for the murdered Luxembourg Resistance Fighters in 1944
 Source: Hans Jürgen Wiehr

Memorial for the participants of the general strike in Luxembourg in 1942
 Source: Rhineland-Palatinate Nazi documentation centre



Luxemburger Widerstandskämpfer 1944

Bekanntgabe

Diese Namenliste von Widerstandskämpfern ist eine Gedenkbuchausgabe der Bundesregierung und des Bundespräsidenten, die die Namen der Widerstandskämpfer enthält, die im Zweiten Weltkrieg in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz verhaftet wurden und in den Konzentrationslagern ermordet wurden.

1. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	14. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
2. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	15. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
3. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	16. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
4. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	17. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
5. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	18. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
6. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	19. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
7. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	20. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
8. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	21. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
9. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	22. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
10. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	23. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
11. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	24. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
12. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	25. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel
13. Adolf (Ludwig) Grottel	26. Fritz (Ludwig) Grottel

am 22. August 1944

Standort des Gedenkbuchs

Frankreich

Widerstandskämpfer, die in Frankreich verhaftet wurden und in den Konzentrationslagern ermordet wurden.

Österreich

Widerstandskämpfer, die in Österreich verhaftet wurden und in den Konzentrationslagern ermordet wurden.

Italien

Widerstandskämpfer, die in Italien verhaftet wurden und in den Konzentrationslagern ermordet wurden.



View inside an empty barracks inside the concentration camp, March 1946
Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg (Picture Library of the City of Luxembourg), collection Tony Krier



View inside an the bunker with bunker cells inside the concentration camp, March 1946
Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg (Picture Library of the City of Luxembourg), collection Tony Krier

Daily Life in the Camp

Screams and beatings welcomed the arriving prisoners to the camp. At the same time the guards informed them that everything in the camp was to be done at the double. They received prisoner numbers instead of their names to which they had to react immediately if called. After they were run around the assembly square a few times, all their bodily hair was shaved off, they were showered and given prison outfits. The new arrivals were then sent to the quarantine for a few days. Afterwards the guards sent the new prisoners to their barracks in the camp and assigned them to their respective work group at the morning roll call.

Fear of arbitrary violence, hunger and hard physical labour defined the prisoners' daily life. The prisoners usually had to get up at 5:00 a.m. in the summer and 6:00 a.m. in the winter. After a room check, they went to wash and get dressed, make their beds and then to so-called 'morning sports'. Breakfast which followed consisted of bread, some margarine and marmalade as well as a very thin 'coffee substitute'. The day continued with

a walk on the double to the roll call at the assembly square. Afterwards the prisoners had to go out to work. Those who remained in the camp had a watery soup for lunch at 12:00.

Then they would continue working until 6:00 p.m. They were all subsequently required to appear for the evening roll call. At 7 p.m. they had soup again, but often enough only 'tea'. At around 9:00 p.m. came the room inspection, which was followed by bed time. These times could vary considerably depending on the prisoners' work in the work groups. If the workplace was farther away, the prisoners had to wake up earlier and returned to the camp later.

View from the former prisoners' concentration camp grounds looking towards the commander's house, November 1945

Source: Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg (Picture Library of the City of Luxembourg), collection Tony Krier

Artistic Witnesses

The artistic witnesses have passed on unique impressions of daily life in the SS special camp/Hinzert concentration camp for prisoners who recorded their horrifying experiences during the time of their incarceration or after the war. Their drawings, sculptures, linocuts and plastics offer emotional access to outsiders trying to understand the life and suffering in concentration camps.



Jean Daligault, self portrait, March 1944
Source: Musée de la Résistance et de la Déportation (Museum of the Resistance and Deportation), Besançon

The pictures and drawings from Arthur Michel and Jean Daligault that were created during their incarceration in the SS special camp/Hinzert concentration camp were concealed by co-prisoners and smuggled out of the camp.

The linocuts from Albert Kaiser, the paintings and sketches from Foni Tissen and also the sculptures from Lucien Wercollier were created after the war.

After 1945

The still useable barracks for former prisoners and those for the guards camp were sold at the instigation of the French military government. The terrain of the former prison camp was returned to its owners for agricultural use. The French military government had a cemetery of honour erected in the spring of 1946 on the former premises of the SS guards. A French commission exhumed the victims from mass graves and from graves of the 'camp graveyard' hidden at the edge of the forest, where the SS would and had hastily buried the dead without identifying them. Identified French and Luxembourg victims were moved to graves in their homelands. The dead who could not be identified or could not be transported to their homeland were laid to rest in a newly designed memorial cemetery. Simultaneously, at the initiative of the Beuren priest Fortuyn, work was begun on a chapel that was dedicated to the victims on 4 November 1948.



A bronze plate with the names and birthplace of those who died was added to the cemetery in 1960 where the wooden cross was replaced by a stone cross. The first commemorative plaque was attached to the cemetery chapel in 1982. Over the next few years two more commemorative plaques were added, one from Luxembourg and the other from France. The memorial from Lucien Wercollier was commemorated on October 1986 and is the central memorial at the cemetery. The Förderverein Dokumentations- und Begegnungsstätte ehemaliges KZ Hinzert e.V. (Association for the Site of the Former Hinzert Concentration Camp) was formed in 1989.

Memorial Work in Hinzert

Multiple generations of school children at the Hermeskeil Gymnasium (upper school) under the leadership of Mr. Volker Schneider have engaged in project work related to understanding and confronting the history of the camp. The memorial stone erected in 1986 for the Soviet prisoners of war murdered in the SS special camp/Hinzert concentration camp was the result of an initiative from the school. Together with a Luxembourg youth group, a group from the school used their free time to design the terrain of the former camp graveyard as a memorial place in a symbolic spiral of violence.

*Visit by schoolboys and schoolgirls from Wiltz in Luxembourg, summer 2004
Source: Rhineland-Palatinate Nazi documentation centre*



After the Federal State Central Authority for Political Education, on behalf of the State Government, prepared a concept for the memorial (1991/1992), it installed an information system in 1994 which shows the "Sites of Inhumanity" in the areas surrounding the former concentration camp and explains their historical meaning.

In 2002, the Rhineland-Palatinate State Government made a unanimous decision to establish a documentation and meeting house next to the memorial.



Commemorative plaque for former French prisoners, placed in the memorial site chapel on 27 October 1997

Source: Rhineland-Palatinate Nazi documentation centre

It will be opened on 10th December 2005. The exhibition may be followed in English and French with the aid of an audio guide system. Exhibition texts and explanation of the pictures may be listened to individually in these languages by these audio devices available in the memorial site.

Sites of Inhumanity

In the area surrounding the memorial sites of the SS special camp/concentration camp at Hinzert there are numerous memorials reminding you of the suffering of the prisoners of the concentration camp and the many murders committed on groups of prisoners. Information tableaus in four languages provide information on these "sites of inhumanity" and what happened and arrange it briefly into its historical context. A map of these "sites of inhumanity" within a vicinity of approximately 5 km depicting the routes is available at the memorial site. Groups have the possibility of going close to these sites by

bus in good weather conditions. To date, the following historical locations are shown as "sites of inhumanity":

- Former quarzite quarry (shooting site 1942)
- Memorial for strike victims 1942
- Luxembourg strike victims 1942 (on the former mass grave)
- Murdered Soviet prisoners of war 1941 (information on the memoria)
- Mass grave of Soviet prisoners of war (in a trench)
- Victims of the cloak-and-dagger decree 1942/43 (in a trench)
- Memorial for the resistance fighters 1944
- Luxembourg resistance fighters 1942 (on the former mass grave)
- Former prisoners' cemetery 1942-1944
- Proposed mass liquidation trenches 1944

Part of the nationwide, international significance of the memorial site and the "sites of inhumanity" connected with it was underscored by the Rhineland-Palatinate state parliament in September 2005 by a national law limiting the freedom to meet at these historical sites. The purpose of this was to prevent any disturbances to the memorial to the victims by neo-nazi groups. The sites of inhumanity, along with the exhibition within the documentation and meeting house and the cemetery are incorporated into the historical and political educational activities of the Federal State Central Authority for Political Education, in particular under the aspect of remembering the victims who had to die for freedom and the dignity of mankind.

Text: Dr. Beate Welter, Uwe Bader, Federal State Central Authority for Political Education Rhineland-Palatinate, 1st edition Ostthofen 2005.

Project Management: Dr. Dieter Schiffmann, Director Federal State Central Authority for Political Education Rhineland-Palatinate

Places of Inhumanity

SS-Sonderlager
KZ Hinzer



Ways to the memorial sites:

By bus or private vehicle

Non-secure footpaths

Information tableaux

Distances in meters

0 250 500 1000

Practical tips

Address:

Memorial site for the SS special camp/concentration camp Hinzert
An der Gedenkstätte
54421 Hinzert

Tel: 0049/6586/992493,
Fax: 0049/6586/992494

Opening hours for the exhibition in the documentation and meeting house:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,
Friday 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 2-5 p.m.
Saturday, Sunday, public holidays*
2-5 p.m.

Mondays closed

*please take note of the current regulations:
www.politische-bildung-rlp.de

The documentation and meeting house is closed at Christmas, New Year and Easter Sunday.

The cemetery of the memorial site is opened daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (until 7 p.m. from April to September).

Driving instructions:

In a car or by bus, the best route is from Trier on the B 52 to Hermeskeil or via the Autobahn A1 (Trier – Saarbrücken/Kaiserslautern) via the exit Reinsfeld. From here, the memorial site is signposted.

Further Literature

For the history of the SS special camp/ concentration camp Hinzert, please see:

- Marcel Engel, André Hohengarten: Hinzert. Das SS-Sonderlager im Hunsrück 1939-1945, Luxemburg, 1983;
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