

Module programmes ShUM Cities for groups

Mainz

Magenza, Jewish Mainz – one of the three ShUM cities

Price: € 95, duration: 2 hours, max. number of participants: 30 persons

Visit to the Judaica Collection in the Landesmuseum Mainz

Price: € 40 plus € 3.50 admission charge, duration: 1 hour,
max. number of participants: 30 persons

Contact: Tourist Service Centre Mainz, phone +49 (0) 61 31/ 28 62 10,
e-mail tourist@mainzplus.com, www.mainz-tourismus.com

Guided tour: New Synagogue Mainz

Contact: Jewish Community Mainz, phone +49 (0) 61 31/ 2 10 88 00,
e-mail info@jgmainz.de, www.jgmainz.de

Guided tour: Old Jewish Cemetery “BEIT CHAIM” – House of Life

Price € 7, reduced rate € 5, duration: 1½ hours

Contact: Geographie für Alle e.V., Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz
Department of Geography, phone +49 (0) 61 31/ 3 92 51 45,
e-mail info@geographie-fuer-alle.de, www.geographie-fuer-alle.de

Worms

Jewish Worms

Price: € 90, duration: 2½ hours, max. number of participants 30 persons

Contact: Tourist Information Worms, phone +49 (0) 62 41/ 8 53 73 06,
e-mail sandra.kirchner@worms.de, www.touristinfo-worms.de

Speyer

Judenhof with Museum ShPIRA and Mikvah

Price: € 53, maximum number of participants 25 persons

Contact: Tourist Information Speyer, phone +49 (0) 62 32/ 14 23 95,
e-mail rita.nitsche@stadt-speyer.de, www.speyer.de

Synagogue Beith-Shalom: Visits by appointment

Contact: Central office of the Jewish Community of the Rhine-Palatinate,
Community House Speyer – Synagogue Beith-Shalom
phone +49 (0) 62 32/ 9 90 17 61 (daily 9 – 12 hrs)
e-mail juedische-kultusgemeinde@t-online.de



www.mainz.de/magenza

MAINZ

1000 YEARS OF JEWISH LIFE ALONG THE RHINE

Magenza



Landeshauptstadt
Mainz



mainzplus
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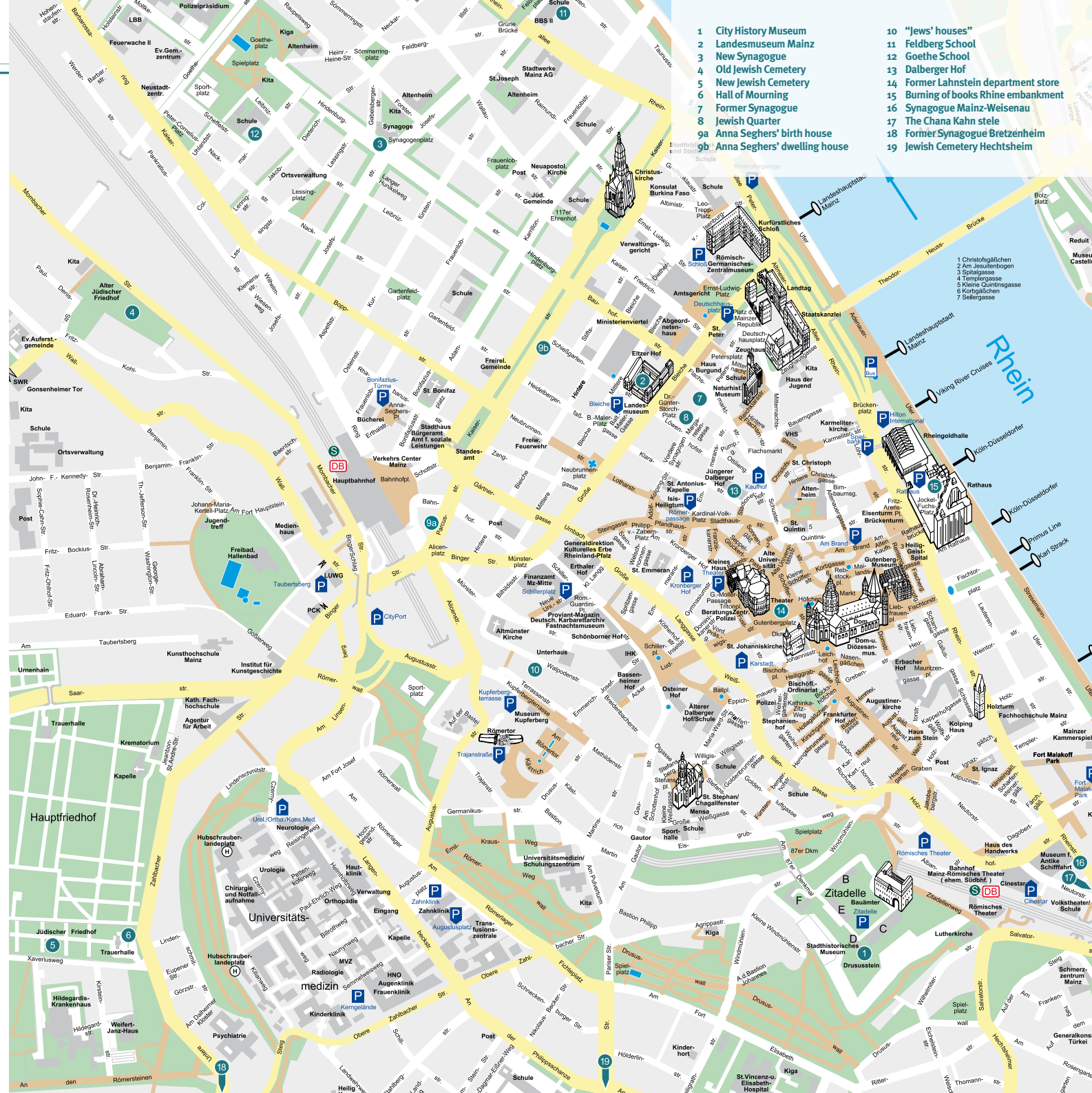


Mainz.

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Magenza

an early centre of Jewish culture

The Jewish community in Mainz is among the oldest in the German-speaking cultural area. A flourishing Jewish community existed here already in the 10th century. It became famous through the work of its scholars who made Magenza into a religious and cultural centre of Judaism in the Middle Ages. With Gershom ben Judah, who already at that time acquired the cognomen “Meor ha Gola” (Light of Exile), one of the most influential scholars of the West worked in Mainz already at the turn of the millennium. His legal opinions and religious regulations are recognised and applied by Jewish scholars around the world down to the present day. A medieval memorial stone still recalls this personality in the old “Judensand” cemetery.

Since the high Middle Ages, the three Jewish centres along the Rhine, Speyer, Worms and Mainz, have been known far beyond the region under the short name “ShUM” as being important, closely interlinked communities. The name “ShUM” is composed of the first letters of the medieval Hebrew names, Shpira – Speyer, Warmaisa – Worms and Magenza – Mainz.

At the beginning of the 13th century, the ShUM cities took a leading role in Ashkenazi Judaism with their decrees and Talmud schools. They also shaped the development of new architectural forms decisively: Outstanding Jewish ritual buildings from the Middle Ages as well as unique evidence of Jewish life and faith have been preserved until today in the ShUM cities. Because of this uniqueness, the three cities together are striving for recognition as a UNESCO world cultural heritage site.

The history of the Jews in Mainz City History Museum

The permanent exhibition “Magenza – 1000 years of Jewish Mainz” in the City History Museum in the Citadel shows the important and chequered history of the Jews in Mainz since the Middle Ages completely: Periods of high intellectual and cultural flourishing of a community rich in tradition, but also phases of persecution, expulsion and destruction through to the Holocaust in the twentieth century. At the same time, the new beginning and reconciliation after 1945 and the development of the Jewish community in Mainz until 2000 are documented here by means of displays and videos.



Chanukiah from the Judaica Collection

City History Museum

Zitadelle Mainz, Bau D, 55131 Mainz, phone +49 (0) 61 31 / 62 96 37
www.stadtmuseum-mainz.de

The Judaica collection Landesmuseum Mainz

The Landesmuseum contains a collection of Jewish cult objects, mainly gold and silversmith works of the 18th and 19th centuries. These come from the collection of the “Association for the Cultivation of Jewish Antiquities in Mainz” which opened the Museum of Jewish Antiquities on 3 October 1926 in a side wing of the Main Synagogue consecrated in 1912 in the new part of Mainz. The museum was closed by the National Socialists in the Nazi period. A major part of the inventory of cult objects, documents and manuscripts was destroyed in the Pogrom Night on 9 November 1938. A large number of the cult objects saved are exhibited in the Landesmuseum on permanent loan from the Jewish community in Mainz.



Judaica Collection at the Landesmuseum

Landesmuseum Mainz

Grosse Bleiche 49 – 51, 55116 Mainz, phone +49 (0) 61 31 / 28 57 - 0
www.landmuseum-mainz.de

The Main Synagogue of 1912 and the New Synagogue of 2010 Synagogenplatz

The Main Synagogue constructed to the design of the Stuttgart architect Willy Graf in 1912 at the intersection of Hindenburgstrasse and Josefsstrasse was looted and set on fire in the Pogrom Night from 9 to 10 November 1938. The centre of the complex was a monumental rotunda with a large dome in which the prayer proper was located. Two lower side wings extended from the rotunda in which the weekday synagogue, community rooms, wedding hall and Museum of Jewish Antiquities were accommodated. There was a portico of columns in front of each of the side wings. After the war, the customs office was constructed on the site. During the course of construction works in 1988, remains of the portico of columns were found and re-erected. 98 years after the consecration of the Main Synagogue in Mainz on 3 September 1912 and some 70 years after its destruction by the Nazis, a visible sign of a new, vital Judaism was erected again in the State Capital of Rhineland-Palatinate. The new community centre, constructed to the plans of the architect Manuel Herz from Cologne, was consecrated on the same site in 2010. The historically portentous location was renamed Synagogenplatz (Synagogue Square). “Kedushah” is the Hebrew word of a blessing for “holiness”, the five letters of which give the New Synagogue in Mainz its form and divide it into five sections. The architecture, with its independent vocabulary of



Main Synagogue



Main Synagogue – prayer hall

form and the facade surfaces covered with green glazed ceramic profiles, turns its back deliberately on accustomed structural forms and materials. The design impresses and avoids conformity and harmonisation. Manuel Herz completes the arch from the Middle Ages to the present without direct reference to persecutions, pogroms and the Holocaust. Rather his architectural work is based on traditional texts from the torah. Through the fragments of the portico of the preceding structure standing on the square outside a link is also created between the destroyed Main Synagogue of 1912 and the present one.



New Synagogue – prayer hall



Old Jewish Cemetery Mombacher Strasse

The cemetery as Bet Olam (House of Eternity) and Bet ha-Chaim (House of Life) is a holy place of recollection and remembrance of the deceased. The repose of the dead in Jewish cemeteries is inviolable for ever. That is also why nothing may be changed. The grave is the dead person's property.

There was probably a medieval Jewish cemetery in Mainz already in the 10th century. The site lay outside of the then city walls in front of the Münstertor (Minster Gate) in the modern suburb of Hartenberg / Münchfeld. In 1286 the area was first designated as "Judensand" (Jewish Sand) in documents. This cemetery is the oldest known burial place of the Jewish community in Mainz. Beside "Heiliger Sand" (Holy Sand) in Worms, it is regarded as being Europe's oldest Jewish cemetery.



Old Jewish Cemetery "Judensand"

In 1438, the Mainz Jews were expelled at the instigation of the guilds and as a result the cemetery was also cleared away and ploughed up. The medieval gravestones were removed and used as construction material in the following centuries, a part of the cemetery site was leased by the city for use as vineyards.



Memorial stone of Gershom ben Judah

From about 1700, a Jewish cemetery was in use again. The grounds of this cemetery adjoined the "old" Judensand in Mombacher Strasse. This cemetery remained in use until 1880. In the course of a stock-taking about 1500 tombstones (from the 17th century until 1880) were counted. In an adjoining extension to this cemetery acquired by the Jewish community in 1864, which was, however, no longer used as burial place, a monument cemetery for tombstones from the period from 1049 until 1421 was laid out in 1926 by the then rabbi, Dr. Sali Levi. Among the tombstones and memorial stones were also those of outstanding personalities from medieval Magenza, such as the scholars Gershom ben Judah and Meshullam ben Kalonymos the Great. Most of these tombstones were uncovered and salvaged in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century during various demolition and earth-moving works. The oldest Jewish tombstone dates from the year 1049 and is regarded as the oldest dated one in Central Europe. Since 1997 it is to be seen in the Landesmuseum Mainz.

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New Jewish Cemetery Untere Zahlbacher Strasse

In 1880, a new Jewish cemetery was laid out by the Mainz city architect, Eduard Kreyssig, in Untere Zahlbacher Strasse adjoining Mainz Main Cemetery. As a result, use of Judensand came to an end. At the entrance to the cemetery is a commemorative plaque with the inscription: “In remembrance of our victims. To the ignominy of the murderers. As a warning to the living.” The graves remained undamaged during the Nazi regime and the war. Members of the Jewish community are buried here until the present day.



Torah Keter

Hall of Mourning Untere Zahlbacher Strasse

The hall of mourning of the New Jewish Cemetery was constructed by the city architect, Eduard Kreyssig, in Moorish style and consecrated in 1881 by Moritz Oppenheim, the chairman of the Israelite Religious Community.

The corner pillars crowned with onion-shaped roofs, unusual multifoil and horseshoe arches and a silver lantern recall that Jewish culture in the Middle Ages experienced an exceptional flowering under the Arab Moors ruling the Iberian peninsula. In its engineered iron construction with craftsmanlike facade facing, the hall of mourning was also intended to contrast with the neoromanticism and neogothic of Christian churches. Between 2004 and 2010, the hall of mourning was comprehensively renovated on behalf of the Jewish community and with the support of the State of Rhineland-Palatinate, the State Capital Mainz and the German Foundation of Monument Protection.



Hall of Mourning

A new, commemorative stele in the “Historic Mainz” series of plaques has stood here since 2011, recalling the time when the Jewish Community emancipated itself, expanded and in which important Jewish cultural monuments, such as this hall of mourning, came into being.

The Orthodox Synagogue Vordere Synagogenstrasse

The synagogue at the corner of Vordere Synagogenstrasse / Margarethen-gasse served the Orthodox Jews of Mainz as a house of prayer from 1856. In 1879, the synagogue was extended and decorated in Moorish style to the plans of the city architect, Eduard Kreyssig. The community was Neo-Orthodox, meaning that it adhered strictly to tradition.



Synagogue at Vordere Synagogenstrasse

The synagogue was entered through a courtyard which was formed by the surrounding buildings, such as the Jewish elementary school, called “Bondi School” after the head teacher. The entrance with three large portals was reached up a flight of steps. Inside there was room for assemblies, lectures and meetings.

The synagogue in Vordere Synagogenstrasse was also devastated in the Pogrom Night in 1938. A commemorative plaque on today’s Landesbank building recalls the destroyed Orthodox Synagogue.

The Jewish Quarter of Mainz Margaretenstrasse

After various persecutions and expulsions in the 14th and 15th centuries, Jewish families settled in Mainz again. In the mid-17th century, the Jewish community had grown so much in numbers that the authorities wanted to limit it with the help of decrees. One decree of 1662 fixed the number of Jews at 20 families, hardly ten years later at ten families, who were allotted an enclosed residential area, the Jewish quarter. This ghetto lay in the area of today’s Landesbausparkasse. At the end of the 18th century, the community was permitted to extend their residential area.

Through the growth of the community and the method of construction of the houses, extremely cramped conditions prevailed. As a result of the restricted space, the plots of land in the Jewish quarter were interlaced with each other, narrow and deep.



Jewish Quarter

Within its quarter, the community had far-reaching autonomy. The Electorate of Mainz was the first German territorial state to initiate emancipation of the Jews. But equal rights for the Jews of Mainz with other citizens came only when the French Revolutionary Army conquered Mainz in 1792. The obligation to live in the Jewish quarter was abolished.

Anna Seghers' birth house Parcusstrasse 5 and dwelling house Kaiserstrasse 34

The author Anna Seghers was born as Netty Reiling in Mainz on 19 November 1900 at Parcusstrasse 5. Already shortly after Netty's birth, the Reiling family moved from Parcusstrasse to the exclusive residential area Kaiserstrasse (Kaiserstrasse 34 1/10, at the corner of Schiessgartenstrasse, 2nd storey). Netty Reiling grew up in this educated upper middle-class milieu of an Orthodox Jewish, socially assimilated, politically liberal-democratic parental home.

Her father, Isidor Reiling, an antiques and fine-art dealer, belonged to the Orthodox part of the Mainz Jewish community. Her mother Hedwig née Fuld, was active on the executive committee of the Jewish Women's League. Hedwig Reiling was murdered in Piaski concentration camp in Poland in 1942.

Anna Seghers' Jewish-Christian origin is recognisable in many of her works. Among her most famous works are "Das siebte Kreuz" and "Transit". She became an honorary citizen of Mainz in 1981 and was active during her lifetime for an anti-fascist Germany. She died in Berlin in 1983. A plaque on Parcusstrasse 5 recalls Anna Seghers' birthplace.



Anna Seghers



The birth house of Netty Reiling
alias Anna Seghers

The "Jews' houses" Walpodenstrasse 17

The Nazi regime restricted the Jewish population's space to live more and more, and made everyday life more difficult for them by prohibitions. From 1939 on, the Jews of Mainz had to live cramped up in so-called "Jews' houses" and "Jews' lodgings". The National Socialists concentrated the Jews in these houses in order to be able to control them better and to deport them later. The doors of the dwellings were marked with a black star of David on white paper. The people there were forced to live under intolerable conditions in a very confined space. In March and September 1942, as well as in February 1943, the Jews of Mainz were deported from here. They were collected from their dwellings and assembled in the gymnasiums of the Feldberg and Goethe schools, in order then to bring them to the goods station. Knowing of their deportation, not a few of them in their desperation took their own lives.

Among the "Jews' houses" were Adam-Karrillon-Strasse 13 and 54, Walpodenstrasse 17, Breidenbacherstrasse 25, Margaretengasse 19, 21 and 28, Kaiserstrasse 32, Frauenlobstrasse 4 and Taunusstrasse 45. A commemorative plaque at Walpodenstrasse 17 recalls the fact that some 40 human beings were lodged and deported from there. In 1945, when the Americans marched in, only approx. 60 Jews were still living in Mainz who had either survived in hide-outs or were married to non-Jews.

Gymnasium of the Feldberg School Feldbergplatz

The gymnasium of the Feldberg School served as an assembly point for the deportation of Mainz Jews in March 1942. From there they were brought to the goods station, from where they were deported via a temporary camp in Darmstadt to Piaski in Poland. All the Jews, who had not died of hunger and epidemics, were murdered in the extermination camps Belzec and Sobibor.

On 10 September 1947, the Jewish New Year festival, a provisional synagogue was consecrated in the gymnasium of Feldberg School with the help of the City of Mainz and the French military government. The gymnasium served as a prayer and assembly room until 1952. The small post-war Jewish community reconstructed the bombed house at Forsterstrasse 2 and fitted out a prayer hall there. This was replaced by the New Synagogue in 2010.

A commemorative plaque on the outside wall of the old gymnasium of Feldberg School recalls the eventful history of this building.



Yellow Star

Gymnasium of Goethe School Colmarstrasse

During the deportations of Mainz Jews to Theresienstadt in Bohemia and to Poland at the end of September 1942, the gymnasium of Goethe School served as an assembly point, just like the Feldberg School gymnasium had done before. The Jewish community was forced to provide mattresses on the floor and to take care of the catering. From here they were brought to the goods station on lorries with nothing more than light hand luggage. The Mainz Jews deported to Poland were probably killed directly after their arrival at the extermination camps Auschwitz or Treblinka, because no further news of them ever reached Mainz.

A plaque recalls the history of the Goethe School gymnasium during the NS regime.



Goethe School

Dalberger Hof Klarastrasse 4

Political opponents were incarcerated in the vaulted cellars of Dalberger Hof during the National Socialist regime, as well as increasingly also Jews, Sinti and Roma, and also foreign forced labourers. The prison was notorious because it was constantly overcrowded and badly bug-ridden. Many of the prisoners were sent to the concentration camps Buchenwald, Ravensbrück, Dachau and Auschwitz, or to the SS special camp Hinzert in the Hunsrück Mountains.

In 1945, Dalberger Hof was so severely damaged by air raids that the prison facility had to be abandoned. The prisoners were moved to camps in the area around Mainz. A commemorative plaque in the cellar of Dalberger Hof today recalls the building's function at the time of the NS regime.



Dalberger Hof (1715 – 1718)

Former Lahnstein department store Gutenbergplatz 13

The Lahnstein department store, as well as the Tietz department store (later Kaufhof), also run by Jewish owners, in Schusterstrasse and Stubs Quelle in Lotharstrasse, was among the largest retail trade undertakings in Mainz. In March 1933, the Lahnstein department store, just like other businesses run by Jewish owners, became the victim of a boycott campaign staged by the SA. In 1942, it was then destroyed by the war. In the night of 9 November 1938, National Socialist hooligans attacked the Lahnstein department store and devastated it. Carl Lahnstein was taken away to Buchenwald concentration camp. After his release, the NS administration called on him “to leave the territory of the Reich immediately, leaving his assets behind”. The building and plot of land were sold by compulsory auction. Carl Lahnstein and his wife Emmy succeeded in fleeing to the USA, however, 14 members of their family were killed by the NS state. A commemorative plaque informs today about the erstwhile building and the Lahnstein family's fate.

Just the same as what happened to the Lahnstein department store was experienced by all Jewish businesses. Apart from the general call for a boycott in 1933, further campaigns were conducted with the result that all Jewish businesses had disappeared from the Mainz business community by 1939. The Jewish owners were compelled to sell their businesses at particularly low prices.

Synagogue in Mainz-Weisenau Wormser Strasse

In 1737/38, the synagogue still standing today was constructed for the Jewish community in Weisenau who made up almost a quarter of the population of the village in the 18th century. It is the only synagogue in Mainz to have survived the period of National Socialism and the bombing raids, and the oldest building still existing in Weisenau.

At the time of the siege of Mainz in 1793, the synagogue was seriously damaged. The damage was not repaired until 25 years later. In the Pogrom Night in 1938, the synagogue was looted and desecrated by National Socialists. However, as it was feared that the flames might spread to neighbouring houses, the building was not set on fire. In 1940, the synagogue and the plot of land were compulsorily auctioned and in the post-war period it was used as a shed and chicken-coop.



Restored Synagogue Weisenau

The synagogue fell into oblivion, only in 1978 was the original significance of the building recognised again through the exhibition “Jews in Mainz”. The building was placed under a monument preservation order, transferred to the ownership of the State Capital Mainz and restored with the help of the supporting association founded in 1993. On 27 May 1996 the synagogue was consecrated, exactly 900 years after Gezerot Tatnu, the day of the massacre in 1096 of the then Jewish community of Mainz committed by crusaders.



Restored Synagogue Weisenau



House with mikvahs

In the forecourt of the synagogue, two mikvahs (ritual baths) have been found dating from different epochs. These mikvahs from the Baroque period and the mid-19th century make the Weisenau Synagogue unique in Germany.

Burning of books Rhine embankment at the City Hall

On 23 June 1933, the National Socialist student body burnt books at Adolf-Hitler-Platz (known as Halleplatz beforehand and later, and now Jockel-Fuchs-Platz), roughly at the present location of the city council chamber. The books burnt were those that had been declared to be “un-German” by the National Socialists. This literature included, among other things, a major part of Jewish authors’ works. For this purpose, books were carted together from the suburbs of Mainz, the origin of which can no longer be reconstructed today. They were probably books in private ownership. The then director of the municipal library, Aloys Ruppel, had been able to rescue threatened stocks of books from the National Socialists’ clutches in an extremely risky action. A commemorative plaque recalls the burning of books in 1933.



Commemorative plaque at the Rhine embankment

The Chana Kahn stele in Weisenau Wormser Strasse

The Jewish girl, Chana Kahn, who was born in Mainz-Weisenau on 21 September 1942, lived at present-day Wormser Strasse 23 – 25. Together with her parents and her brother, she was carried off to Theresienstadt, and in 1944 to Auschwitz, and murdered there together with her brother and her mother. Her father died in 1945 in Dachau concentration camp. With the deportation on 10 February 1943, the Jewish community of Weisenau, which was able to look back on a five-hundred year history, was wiped out by the National Socialists.

A plaque in today’s Wormser Strasse in Weisenau recalls the story of Chana Kahn.

Former Bretzenheim Synagogue Corner of Wilhelmstrasse / Oberpforte

After the Jewish community in Bretzenheim had for a long time to use private living rooms as provisional prayer rooms, in 1786 it was at last able to consecrate its own synagogue in Bretzenheim. However, the new building was short-lived. In 1794 /95, at the time of the French revolutionary wars, the synagogue was destroyed. Around 1820, a new synagogue was erected on the old foundations.

Like all the synagogues in Mainz, the one in Bretzenheim was also destroyed in the November Pogrom in 1938 and the torah rolls were burnt in the street. In the 1960s, a new building was constructed on the site. A commemorative stele at the formed location recalls the Bretzenheim Synagogue.

Jewish Cemetery Hechtsheim Heuerstrasse

The Jewish Cemetery in Hechtsheim was laid out in 1882. The Jewish community in Hechtsheim was not very large, around 1900 there were just under one hundred members. The Hechtsheim Jews probably belonged originally to the larger Weisenau community, as both villages were closely linked with each other. By 1931 the number of the community had dropped to 54 members. In Hechtsheim, too, Jewish dwellings were destroyed and looted in the November Pogrom in 1938. A commemorative plaque at the entrance to the Jewish Cemetery in Hechtsheim recalls the Jewish community annihilated by the National Socialist regime.

You will find further information at www.mainz.de/magenza



Jewish Cemetery Hechtsheim