

Accompanying Program

Sunday, 3 Nov. 2019, 11:15 am, Schloss Simmern/Hunsrück-Museum: Exhibition opening and inaugural lecture: Das Landjudentum [Rural Jewish Life], Prof. Dr. Stephan Laux (University of Trier)

November 2019, Jewish Commemoration Weeks, Pro-Winzkino: See separate program

Saturday, 9 Nov. 2019, 5:00 pm, Schlossplatz Simmern: “Reichspogromnacht” [The Night of Broken Glass] Commemoration
Musical accompaniment: Irith Gabriely
(Working group - Christian churches in Simmern)
Commemoration to continue in Schloss Simmern

Sunday, 5 Jan. 2020, 5:00 pm, Schloss Simmern/Hunsrück-Museum: Lecture: Jewish life in the country – Exemplified by the village of Gemünden, Dr. Stephanie Schlesier (Berlin, BStU)

Saturday, 1 Feb. 2020, 7:00 pm, Schloss Simmern/Hunsrück-Museum: Readings with music. The poets “Lyrikpfades Laufersweiler” - Maria Finneemann, Inge Kölle, Margit Kuhnle, Maria Jekeli-Halstein (cello), Karl-Gerhard Halstein (piano)

22 to 29 Mar. 2020 „Jewish Hunsrück Reunion“, descendants of Hunsrück Jews gathering from all over the world

Tuesday, 24 Mar. 2020, 7:00 pm, Pro-Winzkino Simmern: Simmern town hall discussion: What is anti-Semitism? With Dr. Meron Mendel (Director, Anne Frank Educational Center, Frankfurt)

Thursday, 26 Mar. 2020, 7:00 pm, Schloss Simmern/Hunsrück Museum: Lecture: Effects of the Holocaust on the descendants of the perpetrators and the victims, Dr. Marie-Luise Conen (Berlin)

Wednesday, 1 Apr. 2020, 10:00 am, Schloss Simmern/ Hunsrück Museum: Inaugural meeting for a coordination centre related to Jewish life in Rhineland-Palatinate

Sunday, 19 Apr. 2020, 11:15 am, Schloss Simmern/Hunsrück Museum: Concluding observations

Information and Contacts



Hunsrück Museum
Schlossplatz 4
55469 Simmern (Hunsrück)
Tel.: +49 (0)6761-7009
info@hunsrueck-museum.de
www.hunsrueck-museum.de



Förderkreis Synagoge
Laufersweiler, Kirchgasse 6
55487 Laufersweiler
Tel.: +49 (0)6762/5269
cpies@rz-online.de
www.synagoge-laufersweiler.de

Exhibition opening hours

Tuesday-Friday: 10 am to 1 pm and 2 to 5 pm / Saturday & Sunday: 2 to 5 pm

Admission fees

Adults: 2.- €, Children: 1.- €,
Adult groups: 1.50 €, Children
groups: 0.50 €

School classes for the Special exhibition: Free admission,

Museum tour: 30.- €

Pictures

Front page: The Frank family (Kirchberg) during the second hay cutting (1932); Employees of Matza Bakery Joseph (Laufersweiler, 1929)

Inside pages: Kiddush goblet; „Star of David“ worn by a Jewish family from Laufersweiler; Music book from Simon Baum, Bruschied (1878); Virtual reconstruction of the Simmern Synagogue (Thomas Schneider)



„Awaken from your long slumber...“

Jewish life in the country
- Jews in the Hunsrück

Hunsrück-Museum Exhibition in
Simmern (Schloss Simmern)
3 Nov. 2019 until 19 Apr. 2020



Jewish life in the country - Jews in the Hunsrück

Gustav Jakob Forst, farmer and cattle trader from Kastellaun, lived at the end of a long, favourable period of rural Jewish life. A period that lasted in the Hunsrück region from the 11th Century up to the time of National Socialism.



Mutual trust: Cattle trader Julius Hirsch at the marketplace in Kastellaun

Virtually all the Jewish families in the Hunsrück made their living as farmers, usually as cattle or horse traders. Other preferred occupations included textile and shoe retailers, innkeepers, butchers and bakers – also for religious reasons.



In the early 1800s, approx. 90% of the Jews in the German-speaking regions lived off the land: the Jewish population in some of the villages located between the Rhine, Mosel, Nahe and Saar rivers was greater than 20%. They tried as best as they could to maintain their religious traditions, but also to open themselves cautiously to reforms.

The many Jewish cemeteries, as well as the few synagogues and Mikwes still preserved give testimony to the distinct and significant lives led by the Jews in our region. They were integral to the agrarian economic structures of the Hunsrück, yet, at the same time, faced perpetual harassment in the mainstream Christian society – by 1919 they were considered „second-class citizens“.



Anti-Judaism, racial anti-Semitism and the all-encompassing, inhuman Nazi-ideology set the stage for the horrific conclusion beginning in 1933 to Jewish life in the country.

Following the catastrophe of National Socialism, a virtual wall of concealment, denial and communal amnesia emerged and endures even to this day. Individual local historians and private initiatives have engaged the subject of their former neighbours and friends, while some have established and maintain contact with the survivors. The synagogues were largely destroyed and only a few sacred and private objects survived the barbarism of the “Reichspogromnacht”, while the Aryanization and plundering of Jewish property occupied victims and courts well into the 1960s. This prolonged the resentment and prejudice felt, especially in the rural areas.



Paul, Marga & Rolf Mayer and Marcel Baum attending to the cattle in Laufersweiler

The objective of this exhibition is to raise a lasting monument to those Jewish families who worked the land and who actively contributed to their society over generations, despite all adversities. The exhibition is organised into three subject areas:

1. Jews in the rural countryside: Historical background
2. Practising the religion
3. Living with a trauma

The call to „Awaken from your long slumber“ by the Kirchberg teacher, Moses Eppstein, illustrates merely one of the levels of conflict under which Jewish life took place. The exhibition attempts to do justice, even artistically, to the many varied aspects of Jewish existence — as part of a living culture of remembrance and commemoration, while imparting, above all, a warning and admonition for the present, as well as for future generations.

