

**A Paper Monument**  
The History of the  
*Arolsen Archives*

Catalogue of the permanent exhibition,  
edited by Henning Borggräfe,  
Christian Höschler and Isabel Panek  
on behalf of the *Arolsen Archives*

# Imprint

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# P r e f a c e

It is a new chapter for the *Arolsen Archives*. The international center on Nazi persecution is taking a critical look at its own past through this exhibition and publication on the history of what came into existence as the *International Tracing Service* (ITS).

Why was the ITS founded? How and where were the documents collected? What inquiries have, to this day, been sent to the ITS by over three million people around the world? This publication answers these and many other questions.

The *Arolsen Archives* hold more than 30 million documents on Holocaust victims, concentration camp prisoners, forced laborers and survivors. The sheer size of the collection is overwhelming, and every single document bears witness to the incomprehensible scope of persecution under the Nazis. The last signature of a murdered prisoner on a concentration camp registration card, the passport photo of a surviving child in a post-war file – these are intimate and personal traces of individual lives in the huge machinery of bureaucracy. For me, this is what the *Arolsen Archives* are about. They are about death, but also about life.

The archive of the ITS was created to document the crimes of the Nazis and the fates of their victims. Today the archive is a place where evidence of the Nazis' atrocities is safely preserved. The *Arolsen Archives* are a "paper monument," to borrow an expression from survivor Thomas Buergenthal. They are a monument to all victims of Nazi persecution, both those

for whom we have found original documents and the many others for whom we have not – but whose memory is preserved in the letters we receive from relatives asking about them. This, too, is characteristic of the *Arolsen Archives*. They are living collections that continue to grow.

When we look to the future, we see changes in society and new challenges to tackle – in a Europe shaped by migration and growing intolerance. Reckoning with our own history is the prerequisite for acting responsibly in the future. For this reason, we want to actively approach people and spark their interest, particularly young people with no personal connection to the history of National Socialism. We do not know what questions future generations will ask, but we must ensure that they keep asking.

The exhibition will be temporarily displayed in a rented space in Bad Arolsen (Germany) until this collection, belonging to the UNESCO Memory of the World, is finally brought together under a new roof. I hope that the exhibition raises awareness of the potential of the *Arolsen Archives* to play a new role, to address socially relevant issues and to strengthen democratic values.

I would like to thank the curators of the exhibition, Isabel Panek, Henning Borggräfe and Christian Höschler. I also want to thank those who have supported this endeavor from the start, especially Rikola-Gunnar Lüttgenau, our curatorial advisor whose help has been invaluable, as well as Yehudit Shendar,



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Floriane Azoulay,  
Director of the *Arolsen Archives*



# A Paper Monument: Introduction

Henning Borggräfe,  
Christian Höschler,  
Isabel Panek

Millions of people were deported and murdered under the Nazi dictatorship from 1933 to 1945 in Germany and the territories it occupied during World War II. The victims included Jews, Sinti and Roma people, political opponents, people with disabilities, homosexuals, social outsiders, foreign forced laborers and many others. Soon after the war ended, the world's most comprehensive collection of documents on victims of Nazi crimes was assembled in Arolsen with the aim of finding missing persons and clarifying their fate. Kilometer upon kilometer of files, index cards and lists are stored next to each other on shelves – millions of documents about Holocaust victims and concentration camp prisoners, foreign forced laborers and survivors. There are more than 50 million cards in the *Central Name Index* alone, and over three million case files hold correspondence on the fates of individual victims of Nazi persecution. The collections of the *Arolsen Archives*, which were created for the *International Tracing Service* (ITS) and have grown through decades of tracing and documentation work, are a unique place of remembrance: a *paper monument*.

The exhibition on the history of the *Arolsen Archives* focuses on this paper in order to address three central perspectives spanning the systematic and chronological narrative. *First*, the documents represent the almost unimaginable scale of the Nazis' crimes while making them tangible at the same time – through countless individual stories of persecution, deportation and murder, but also survival, reunions and new beginnings. For many relatives of the victims, this paper stands for memory. It holds more than “just” information – it is often the last trace of a lost loved one's life.

*Second*, the documents testify to the many different consequences and effects of Nazi crimes on individuals and society alike: living with uncertainty or the loss of family, searching for a new home, suffering from serious injuries and existential crises, and experiencing support and recognition but also ongoing exclusion. Tracing and documentation was one of the areas in which Nazi crimes were dealt with after 1945. This played out in conflicts between the Allies and Ger-

mans and in fierce battles over legal punishment and compensations in the first decades after the war, but also in new social efforts to come to terms with the past and in waves of compensation since the 1980s.

The *third* perspective reveals the profound changes in how the documents have been handled. Over the decades, documents that had once been used for Nazi persecution and then for Allied aid became the everyday working materials of the ITS, which adapted them in a variety of ways – by specially sorting and labeling them, for example. But these documents have also become increasingly valuable to memory culture. This can be seen in the growing interest of memorial initiatives, scholars and journalists, as well as in the new status that was conferred on this documentary heritage when the collections were added to the UNESCO Memory of the World register in 2013. The actual process of working with the documents and questions of access are therefore an important part of the story.

This examination of the history of the *Arolsen Archives* not only explains how the search for missing persons and clarification of their fate developed over time, leading to the creation of this unique *paper monument*, it also illuminates the changing approaches to dealing with historical evidence and the victims of Nazi crimes.

## *Early Tracing and Documentation*

After the end of World War II, the Allies faced a humanitarian crisis on a historically unprecedented scale. In the wake of the Nazis' crimes, millions of people were missing – both by family members and friends as well as the governments of different countries. Searching for these missing people and clarifying their fate became an important task, but one that was strictly divided along the lines of friend and

foe. Separate tracing structures were established for German war victims, prisoners of war, refugees and expellees, while the Allies focused on victims of Nazi persecution. Although there were historical forerunners to these activities – such as the tracing programs developed by the *International Committee of the Red Cross* (ICRC) in Geneva during World War I which primarily dealt with prisoners of war – the process started off in fits and starts. In the first postwar years a variety of organizations carried out tracing, information and documentation activities in parallel and in different ways.

Some of the earliest efforts were made by survivors themselves, many of whom were neither silent nor passive after 1945. For example, prisoners liberated from Dachau concentration camp founded the *International Information Office* (IIO). The IIO issued certificates of imprisonment based on concentration camp documents that the prisoners themselves had saved shortly before liberation. These certificates enabled survivors and those left behind to receive welfare benefits, such as food and clothing. IIO employees also wrote one of the first histories of Dachau concentration camp and contributed to a memorial book documenting the names of the dead. For employees such as Walter Ciešlik, the head of the IIO who had been a political prisoner himself, this work was an expression of solidarity with other former prisoners and their families. The activities of the survivors were limited, however; the US Military Government put restrictions on the IIO, which was disbanded in 1946.

Previously established aid organizations also participated in the search for missing persons. One example was the *American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee* (AJDC), a Jewish aid organization that had been founded in 1914. Unlike the IIO in Dachau, the work of the AJDC was not locally limited. The organization had



tracing offices all over Europe and overseas which exchanged information about Holocaust victims and survivors in order to resolve tracing cases internationally. Although the AJDC played an important role in early tracing activities, the organization did not follow a standardized process. Individual AJDC offices were involved to varying degrees and developed their own tracing methods, something that was not always conducive to efficiency. Nonetheless, the AJDC often managed to reunite missing persons and secure important documents as evidence.

Besides these aid organizations and smaller survivor initiatives, the Allies had begun developing ideas for a standardized tracing system as early as 1943. The first major institution to emerge in the autumn of 1945 was the *Central Tracing Bureau* (CTB) under the direction of the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNRRA), the biggest and most important aid organization in the postwar period. The CTB was initially based in Frankfurt-Höchst in occupied Germany. It moved to Arolsen in Northern Hesse in early 1946, primarily due to the town's favorable location between the four occupation zones and its relatively intact infrastructure. The tracing bureau quickly took over several buildings there, including the old and new palaces and the barracks previously used by the SS.

Parallel to the CTB in Arolsen, the Allies ran individual zonal tracing bureaus in their respective occupation zones. One of their tasks was to secure and collect documents, and at the end of 1945 they began sending orders and instructions to German authorities as part of a large-scale foreigner tracing campaign. Documents from the concentration camps were an important basis for tracing individuals and clarifying their fate, as were lists from the police, judiciary, municipal administrations and other offices. The zonal

tracing bureaus sometimes communicated through the CTB, but they were often also in direct contact with numerous national tracing offices. The activities of the CTB in Arolsen were largely limited to the overall coordination of tracing activities and the circulation of inquiries. As a result, while the CTB represented a large-scale tracing structure, it was at the same time a rather decentralized network with long lines of communication which did not always function efficiently.

UNRRA had a time-limited mandate, and when it wrapped up most of its work in Europe in mid-1947, a question mark hung over the future of the tracing service in Arolsen. It was clear to everyone involved, however, that the search for missing persons would continue for many more years. The CTB was ultimately taken over by the *International Refugee Organization* (IRO) – the successor to UNRRA at the United Nations – and it was renamed in early 1948: from that point on the institution was known as the ITS, the *International Tracing Service*. This also heralded a period of reorganization. The zonal tracing bureaus were closed one by one, and their documents and employees were moved to Arolsen. This laid the foundation for centralized tracing activities and for today's archive. One defining feature of this centralization was that numerous documents from other tracing offices, including the IIO at Dachau and papers from AJDC offices, were also transferred to Arolsen.

In the late 1940s, the still young institution began to professionalize and expand its work. The first director of the ITS, Maurice Thudicum from Switzerland, was a tracing expert who had previously led tracing activities conducted by the *Red Cross* in Geneva. In terms of international connections, too, an important change took place – though it actually hindered the organization's tracing work: due to its growing conflict with the Western powers, the Soviet Union no longer



participated in the ITS. This brought an end to the exchange of inquiries and documents between East and West.

Meanwhile, the number of ITS employees rose rapidly, from 80 people in 1945 to 1,758 just four years later. The first employees came from 20 different countries and comprised Allied military personnel and civilians as well as many Displaced Persons (DPs), people who had been liberated from the camps and from forced labor and either wanted to return to their countries of origin or find a new home elsewhere. At the ITS, these DPs were housed in their own camp in the former barracks in Arolsen. The ITS soon began employing local Germans as well, which led to tension since some of the men had previously been active in the SS or other Nazi organizations. When the employees' backgrounds were reviewed in the early 1950s, at least 45 people were dismissed. After most of the DPs emigrated in the 1950s, they were succeeded by younger locals from different professions who lacked the necessary historical and archival knowledge. However, through decades of specialized work at the ITS, they became extremely knowledgeable about specific parts of the ITS archive.

The first half of the 1950s brought some important organizational changes as well. When the IRO ended its work in 1951, the leadership of the ITS temporarily passed to the *Allied High Commission for Occupied Germany* (HICOG). Under its representative Hugh G. Elbot, now head of the ITS, even stronger connections were established with the West (in a speech, Elbot referred to the ITS as a “shop window of democracy”). At the same time, many activities were stopped and the staff was reduced dramatically. From this point on, the tracing service acted mainly as an information office.

Even the HICOG leadership was only a temporary solution, however, because HICOG itself was dissolved when the occupation period ended. The idea of handing over the collections to the Germans was viewed critically by many survivors' associations as well as Elbot himself. Eventually the ICRC put itself forward as a neutral organization with the relevant experience to manage the ITS. With the signing of the Bonn Agreements in 1955 by German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, ICRC President Paul Ruggier and representatives of Western states, the ICRC took over the ITS and appointed its directors from then on. Additionally, an *International Commission* was formed to act as a supervisory body and guarantee the protection of the collections. The core mission of the ITS, as defined by the Bonn Agreements, was to collect, organize, and safeguard the documents, as well as make them accessible. This established an institutional framework that would remain in place until 2012.

#### *Tracing Methods and Information*

Tracing methods and the information provided by the ITS have changed dramatically over the decades. The institution initially focused on searching for missing children, adolescents and adults. From the mid-1950s, however, the ITS also became a central point of contact for authorities, courts and lawyers representing victims of Nazi persecution who needed documentary evidence mainly for compensation claims, but also for immigration proceedings, naturalization procedures and pension applications.

In its daily work, the ITS was able to draw partially on knowledge and techniques that had previously been created in Geneva. At the same time, however, new processes had to be developed to cope with the scale of the Nazis' crimes. In the immediate postwar period, tracing victims of Nazi persecution involved the

following steps: the creation of a *Central Name Index* (CNI) and the search for information in the archived documents on Nazi crimes, actively searching in the field, contacting local authorities and, finally, *mass tracing* through the media.

The CTB had started creating the name index in the autumn of 1945. Employees transferred all important information from search inquiries to index cards, especially personal details and references to an individual's path of persecution. When new cards were filed in the index, inquiry cards from people seeking missing persons and information about the persons being sought would ideally collide – a *meeting of cards* that would enable the tracing office to bring the two parties together. This happened in very few cases, however, because many missing persons had never submitted an inquiry themselves – or were unable to do so because they were no longer alive.

For this reason, documents from the concentration camps and those collected through the Allied foreigner tracing campaign were another important foundation of the name index. These documents contained information about individual paths of persecution and often provided clues about a person's last known location and fate. Starting in 1946, these personal details were also transferred to reference cards and filed in the CNI. This process, which continued in this way for decades, was known as *carding* at the ITS. Cards were arranged in the CNI following an alphabetical-phonetic system that took into account how the names were pronounced. This system had previously been used for the prisoner-of-war index of the ICRC in Geneva. It offered a solution to dealing with the name variations and misspellings that often arose due to the many different nationalities of the victims of persecution registered by the Nazi authorities and the DPs registered by Allied administrators. With this



system, all reference cards relating to the same person are filed together, regardless of how the name is written.

Parallel to establishing the CNI, the employees in Arolsen began creating case files in 1947 – known as *T files* (“T” for *tracing*) – for each person being traced. All correspondence and findings about an individual were kept in these files. If the ITS later received another inquiry about the same person, it would be added to the file. If no clues could be found in the CNI or the archive, the ITS would contact other tracing offices and local authorities. Immediately after the war, active searches were also conducted in former places of imprisonment and persecution.

Additionally, the ITS carried out *mass tracing* campaigns in the media until 1950. Employees would compile lists of missing persons, which were circulated in DP camps, published in newspapers and broadcast on the radio. In Germany and other countries, radio stations would set aside regular slots for reading out these tracing lists. The lists were usually published and broadcast where the ITS thought readers or listeners might have information, such as the last known residence of missing individuals.

But the search for missing persons was often a search for the deceased. A Special Registry Office was therefore established in Arolsen in 1949. This is the only office permitted to certify the death of concentration camp prisoners. To this day, death certificates are issued to the family members of former prisoners whose death in a concentration camp can be confirmed based on material in the *Arolsen Archives* or through research in other registry offices and memorials.

The Allies set up separate tracing structures for children and adolescents which were expanded at the

ITS in 1948 to form the *Child Search Branch*. This department had initially been based in Esslingen at the US zonal tracing bureau and moved to Arolsen in 1950 when the zonal tracing bureau closed. The ITS Child Search Branch had two main responsibilities: it searched for foreign children who had been reported missing by their families, and it traced and registered unaccompanied children in order to find their parents or other relatives. Employees combed through German registry offices and orphanages in the search for clues about missing and abducted foreign children.

The language skills of the many DPs working for the ITS were tremendously helpful in all of these tracing activities. But when most of the DPs emigrated in the 1950s, the inquiries received by the ITS also changed in nature. The bulk of the hundreds of thousands of inquiries sent to Arolsen in the 1950s and 1960s were requests for confirmation of imprisonment or residence, which were needed for compensation claims in West Germany. Most of these inquiries were not from former victims, however, but from lawyers or officials who wanted to support or review such claims.

From 1954, these requests began to outnumber tracing inquiries. As a result, the search process increasingly involved research in the archive, and the work of the ITS became more administrative. This was reflected in the new name given to the *T files*, which were now known as *tracing/documentation files*, or *T/D files* for short. These files are still created and updated (digitally) each time an inquiry is received about a person. For information applicable to compensation proceedings, the ITS introduced a standardized certificate providing details about an individual’s places and periods of imprisonment and reasons for persecution. ITS employees literally copied this information from the Nazi documents word for word, without offering any historical context. This was problematic for

many former victims because, according to the German Federal Law for Compensating Nazi Victims, only people who had been persecuted on political, racist or religious grounds were entitled to compensation. The information supplied from Arolsen often gave the authorities a basis for withholding benefits from Sinti and Roma people, homosexuals, so-called “anti-social elements” and nearly all non-German victims of persecution.

Following the Final German Federal Law for Compensating Nazi Victims of 1965, the number of inquiries received by the ITS continually declined. It was not until the late 1980s that a fresh wave of inquiries reached Arolsen. This was the result of new debates about forced laborers and other groups of “forgotten victims”, as well as the introduction of previously non-existent compensation payments made by Germany to Nazi victims from Central and Eastern Europe after the end of the Cold War. Hundreds of thousands of inquiries reached the ITS each year, leading to enormous backlogs and waiting periods that sometimes lasted for years. The situation worsened in 2001 when payments began to be made to former forced laborers through the *Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future”* (EVZ). These applications were reviewed by seven international partners of the EVZ Foundation, who asked the ITS for confirmation in over 800,000 cases. To handle the immense backlog of cases, the ITS management introduced a CNI fast-track process, among other things. But despite these and other measures, the waiting times remained extremely long – a situation that was widely lambasted in the media and posed a major problem for elderly survivors.

Most of the inquiries received today – around 20,000 per year – come from the descendants of former victims of Nazi persecution, primarily from Poland, Rus-

sia, Germany, the USA, France and Israel, who want to find out more about the fate of their relatives and reconstruct their family history. To answer their questions, research is conducted in the archive and digital copies of the archival documents are sent together with explanatory information. But even today, new tracing processes are sometimes initiated and families are reunited.

### *Collecting and Organizing*

For the purposes of tracing and documentation, it was essential to collect, index and evaluate the paper evidence of Nazi crimes. Important information was also found in documents drawn up by the Allies after the war to register and assist DPs. All of these documents, together with the *Central Name Index* and the *T/D files*, make up the *Arolsen Archives*.

But looking back to the origins of this unique archive, what we find first are the investigation documents produced by the ITS itself. Since many Nazi crimes were documented poorly or not at all, the ITS set out on its own search for evidence in the second half of the 1940s. For example, to gather proof of the death marches endured by many concentration camp inmates in the last weeks of the war, the ITS sent questionnaires to thousands of municipalities and former prisoners. Based on the responses, ITS employees were able to reconstruct the march routes and places where prisoners had died. Exhumations were carried out locally to find clues to the identity of the victims – such as prisoner numbers taken from their clothing, which could be compared with information from concentration camp documents. Many death march victims were identified in this way. Some of the first documents in Arolsen included these investigation documents as well as a similar collection of thousands of questionnaires in which former prisoners

provided information about little-known places of imprisonment.

The second pillar of the archive was the name index mentioned earlier. The vast majority of documents referred to in this index were not initially stored in Arolsen, however, but in the zonal tracing bureaus. It was only after these bureaus closed – when the task of tracing was joined by the documentation of persecution for compensation purposes in the early 1950s – that the ITS began to develop into an archive and be referred to as such. The *Concentration Camp Documents Section* was created first. Valuable documents that the Allies and survivors had secured from Buchenwald, Dachau, Mauthausen and other camps were stored here. This section additionally held many other materials relating to concentration camp prisoners that had been produced by various offices – ranging from documents from top Reich authorities to lists of liberated survivors drawn up by aid initiatives in the early postwar period.

Until 1952, the ITS also received hundreds of thousands of lists of foreign forced laborers from the closed zonal tracing bureaus. These lists had been produced by German offices during the foreigner tracing campaign and they formed the core of the new *Wartime Documents Section*, along with registration documents for foreign forced laborers from hundreds of companies and authorities. Finally, at the end of 1952, over 30 tons of Allied DP registration forms, lists, and files were sent to Arolsen – a huge accumulation that made it necessary to create a *Postwar Documents Section*. The same organizational structure was soon established in all three sections: documents about individuals were stored in large alphabetical indexes, while lists of names were placed in series of files which were internally organized by subject matter, geography or chronology.

The archive therefore did not follow the principle of provenance that governs most of the archival world, according to which records from a particular source should be stored together as a unit by the responsible archive. Instead, records were arranged with the goal of ensuring the greatest possible efficiency when evaluating documents on the basis of individual names. This peculiarity poses a major challenge today for professional archival management and for researchers wanting to use the documents.

The name-based evaluation of the documents results in yet another peculiarity of the *Arolsen Archives*. Archival materials are traditionally defined as resources that are unique. Unlike printed books, they are usually only available at a single location. But along with original documents, the ITS also included millions of copies in its archive. The ITS had started searching for documents as soon as it was established. This activity intensified in the 1980s when it became apparent that the archive lacked information about many former forced laborers and Holocaust victims from Central and Eastern Europe in particular.

Equipped with microfilm cameras and eventually digital technology, ITS employees traveled all over Germany and the rest of Europe and made millions of copies of documents. This preserved valuable collections and provided important evidence needed for the compensation claims of tens of thousands of elderly victims of Nazi persecution. But the activities had a dark side as well. In the documents they acquired and copied, ITS employees often blacked out the names of all prisoners who did not belong to the target group of foreigners and victims of Nazi persecution. Their decision was based on the German Federal Law for Compensating Nazi Victims from the 1950s, even though this legislation excluded large groups of victims and had therefore been the focus of public criticism since

the 1980s. This shows just how much the institution in Arolsen had isolated itself, and how new public discussions and research into “forgotten victims” had passed by the ITS and its employees.

At the time, the ITS claimed that the archive had a purely “humanitarian mission,” so it was interested almost exclusively in information about individuals found in its own collection. This was clearly reflected in the continual expansion of the CNI and in the creation of the *T/D files*, which have become valuable historical documents in their own right over the decades, as they often include personal testimonies and important information about paths of persecution and postwar life which are not recorded anywhere else. These materials, like the historical documents to which only ITS employees had access, were tools that were used intensively every day but were not given much protection.

This gave rise to two large, connected tasks that continue to occupy the *Arolsen Archives*: digitization and archival preservation. The digitization of the archival material in Bad Arolsen started in the late 1990s. Over 85% of the collections have now been scanned – a higher proportion than almost any other archive. Nonetheless, this is a major process that changes all the time due to new technologies and requirements and is nowhere near complete. While digitization initially served to speed up the process of supplying information, today it allows the documents to be accessed in a whole new way – not just in the reading rooms in Bad Arolsen or the facilities of selected partners, but on the internet as well.

Digitization is also an important element of document preservation, not just because once they have been digitized, the fragile documents themselves only need to be used in exceptional cases. Additionally, during

the scanning process, harmful metals are removed from the paper and the documents are repacked. Many documents require more complicated treatment, however, such as deacidification, which protects the poor quality paper of the 1940s from further decay. These digitization and preservation processes are the most vivid proof of how the awareness of the value of these historical documents has changed. The paper-based evidence of the Nazis’ machinery of persecution, which later served as a daily work tool for tracing individuals and clarifying their fate, is now recognized as cultural heritage of global importance and a foundation of remembrance that must be permanently protected and publicly accessible.

#### *Openness versus Isolation*

A debate raged for decades over whether the archive should be accessible for the purposes of research, education and remembrance. Phases of openness alternated with periods of isolation. The orientation of the ITS was determined largely by its directors, who established specific cultures of leadership during their time in office.

Until the early 1980s, under the management of the Allies and the first directors appointed by the ICRC, the ITS conducted a number of internal research projects based on its central mission of clarifying the fates of individuals. The ITS often lacked the specific information it needed to respond to inquiries about particular sites of imprisonment or types of crimes, such as medical experiments on concentration camp prisoners. To acquire this knowledge, employees reviewed documents regarding specific topics, conducted research at the sites of crimes, and questioned survivors. Their findings were recorded in special card indexes, on maps and in registers, such as the *Catalogues of Camps and Prisons* compiled by



the ITS. Surveys conducted in the late 1940s and early 1950s produced contemporary accounts that are important sources for scholars today. In this way, the ITS established itself as the central point of contact for authorities when it came to evaluating and recognizing individual camps for the purposes of compensation proceedings. This expanded remit embroiled the ITS in debates about Germany's reckoning with the past. Tensions frequently arose with the German Federal Government, which insisted that the ITS only include sites of imprisonment in its registers which the government was willing to recognize for compensation purposes – i.e. concentration camps, but not the tens of thousands of camps for forced laborers.

Parallel to this, survivors, scholars and memorial initiatives were able to conduct research themselves at the ITS from the late 1960s. The institution in Arolsen also supported large projects, particularly the Memorial Book of the Federal Archives for the Victims of the Persecution of Jews in Germany. This phase of openness was closely associated with the director at the time, Albert de Cocatrix. He had come to Arolsen as the deputy director in 1955 and led the ITS from 1970 to 1977. He positioned the institution on the side of the survivors and engaged intensively with victims' associations.

This phase of openness was brought to an abrupt end by the subsequent director, Philipp Züger, and his deputy, Charles-Claude Biedermann, who took over in 1985. Together they gradually closed the archive to researchers and wound down its historical projects. They justified this closure by referring to the self-perception of the ICRC as a neutral humanitarian institution and by adopting a narrower interpretation of the mission of the ITS as defined by the Bonn Agreements of 1955. They also employed arguments based on issues of data protection and personal privacy, which

had become politically important in West Germany in the early 1980s. This new sensitivity to handling personal data affected the collection of further documents by the ITS. Social security authorities grew very cautious, and many companies were willing to release records only if the documents would not be accessible to third parties – such as critical historians. This new direction taken by the ITS administration was protested right from the start. The 1980s in particular were a time of fierce debate over the Nazi past in West German society. Following the motto of “dig where you stand,” memorial initiatives explored local aspects of Nazi history that had fallen into oblivion and expressed solidarity with “forgotten victims.” They accused the ITS of preventing a reckoning with Nazi history and of “protecting the perpetrators.” Nonetheless, the *International Commission* – the governing body of the ITS – supported the administration's strategy. In 1984 the commission decided that collecting additional documents for the humanitarian mission of the ITS took priority over the interests of scholars and the public. The German Federal Government, which funded the ITS, strongly supported this policy.

New protests against the isolation of the archive were launched in the mid-1990s by victims' associations, the directors of various concentration camp memorials, scholars and concerned individuals. They published numerous resolutions emphasizing how valuable the documents stored in Arolsen were to research and commemoration, and they harshly criticized the long waiting periods for information needed for compensation claims. The ITS responded in 1996 by partially opening the archive and making it possible, in principle, to view some documents containing no personal information – though actually using the documents proved difficult. But this step did not bring an end to the protests. From the late 1990s, the question of whether the archive should be opened

appeared on the agenda of the meetings of the *International Commission* every single year. But it was not until 2007 that the archive finally reopened. This late turnaround was thanks largely to the tireless work of Paul Shapiro from the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* (USHMM), who spent years building up political and media pressure.

As a result of the opening, the ICRC withdrew from its leadership of the ITS in 2012. The *International Commission* then took responsibility for appointing the directors, and it forcefully pursued a new course of modernization, openness and networking at the ITS. In the same year, the ITS collections were included on the UNESCO Memory of the World register. Since then, the institution has fundamentally changed. The archive and its process of providing information have been professionalized, and research and education have become a part of its mission. One important goal is to make the collections accessible online worldwide, and another is to explore new forms of remembrance and education together with partners. These changes are reflected in the institution's new name, which was introduced in 2019: *Arolsen Archives – International Center on Nazi Persecution*. In a Europe where the social and political solidarity established so painstakingly in the decades after World War II is disappearing, the documentation of Nazi crimes and their victims is still an urgent responsibility. And the fewer survivors there are to speak out and bear witness to the persecution, the more important this mission becomes.



# A Paper Monument

## The History

### of the Arolsen

### Archives

Under the Nazi dictatorship from 1933 to 1945, millions of people were deported and murdered. In order to search for missing persons and clarify their fates one of the largest archives on Nazi crimes was founded in Arolsen. It contains over 30 million documents, index cards and lists, on Holocaust victims and concentration camp prisoners, as well as foreign forced laborers and survivors.

Tracing offices had already been established in World War I, in light of the new dimensions of 20th century warfare, involving mass murder, deportation, imprisonment and flight. But the devastation of World War II was even greater. New structures were therefore set up by the Allies in 1945 to search for the missing victims of Nazi persecution. And for documents that would help clarify their fate.

As a result, the *International Tracing Service* was founded in 1948. Originally a temporary measure, it became a permanent institution when new responsibilities were added to its tracing activities. Since 2019 the institution has been known as the *Arolsen Archives*. It is an international center on Nazi persecution.

The collections in the *Arolsen Archives* are a *paper monument*. Millions of fates are recorded in millions of documents, all cataloged within a huge *Central Name Index* – and listed on the UNESCO Memory of the World register.

But how did tracing and providing information develop over time? How was the archive created? Who used it and who had access? This exhibition enables answers to these questions and also describes the development of dealing with historical evidence and the victims of Nazi crimes themselves.



Destroyed Documents, Auschwitz Concentration and Extermination Camp, 1945

“A turbulent day. An order came from the SS camp headquarters to burn all the camp records, immediately and with no exceptions.”

R. Busch-Waldeck, Prisoner of the Wiener Neudorf Subcamp, 30.3.1945

“Letters ... are beginning to pour in ... asking whether ... a daughter, husband or wife last known ... to be in some concentration camp(s) is still there, and alive and well.”

R. D. McClelland, American Legation, 20.4.1945



Letters from Relatives, Shanghai, circa 1945





Searching for Relatives, Indersdorf, Autumn 1945

“My only child, a six-year-old girl, was taken by the Germans in 1944, and all I know is that the child is supposed to have been in the Birkenau camp.”

Sarah Talvi, Athens, 16.11.1948

“Many of the camp records were removed or destroyed by the authorities just before liberation and we therefore have to rely on the co-operation of ex-prisoners of the camps.”

Roman Flohr, International Tracing Service, 5.2.1948



Securing Documents, Warsaw, September 1946



Registering Survivors, Hamburg, 18.5.1945

“After I arrived [in Krakow], I was registered by the Soviet authorities. The only proof I had of my identity was my tattoo from Auschwitz.”

P. Schaffer, Holocaust Survivor, 1945

“I tried many ways to find my wife and my daughter ... without any result. I myself saw them for the last time 5.9.1939.”

G. Langer, Kinross, 16.11.1945



Posters Listing Missing Persons, Paris, 1947





**Personal Objects or So-Called Effects from  
Concentration Camp Prisoners**

Shortly before the concentration camps were liberated, the SS burned the files in many camps to conceal the traces of its crimes. The prisoners' personal belongings – the so-called effects – which they had been forced to hand over when they arrived at a camp, were also destroyed in many places.

The largest collection of preserved effects in the *Arolsen Archives* comes from the Neuengamme concentration camp, whose commandant had the effects of around 5,000 prisoners sent to Lunden in Schleswig-Holstein at the end of April 1945. They were found there by British soldiers.





# Animated Videos



**From Inquiries to Cases to Information:  
Animated Videos on the Practice of Tracing  
and Documentation**

The animated videos in the exhibition look at specific cases to explain the process of handling inquiries and documents, such as the search for former forced laborer Augustyn Apanasewicz or the information provided for the compensation proceedings of Holocaust survivor Esther Bejarano.

Historical archive working tables are used to present the videos. For years, archive cartons were placed and transported on these tables.



You can view the videos here:  
[www.arolsen-archives.org/exhibit](http://www.arolsen-archives.org/exhibit)





# Early Tracing and Documenting

Spring 1945: the Nazi regime had been defeated. Now the Allies were confronted with many new challenges, including the care for millions of victims of Nazi persecution. Many people were concerned about their relatives and friends some of whom they had lost contact with years ago. The Allies only searched for the victims of Nazi persecution. German war victims and prisoners of war, refugees and expellees, however, had to turn to German tracing services.

Tracing missing victims of the Nazis was difficult at the start. The Allies were overwhelmed by the scale of the persecution, and information could often only be found in Nazi documents, millions of which had to be gathered and studied first. Therefore, survivors also took matters into their own hands by actively engaging in postwar search and documentation work with the support of both new and experienced organizations.

The victorious Allied powers made every effort to coordinate the search for Nazi victims and documents. They created the *Central Tracing Bureau* (CTB) for this task. This was the root of the *International Tracing Service* (ITS), founded in 1948 as the central tracing and information office.



# Self-Organization by Survivors

In the spring of 1945, prisoners liberated in Dachau established the *International Information Office* (IIO). It supported former prisoners and their relatives by issuing certificates of imprisonment in Dachau which could be used to claim relief services. The IIO also documented the horrors of the Dachau camp with lists of people who had been imprisoned and died there. They were based on concentration camp records saved by prisoners. Today they are kept in Bad Arolsen, alongside original IIO files.



Passport Photos for IIO Imprisonment Certificates, circa 1945/1946

The IIO issued individual certificates of imprisonment in Dachau concentration camp, which former inmates could use to acquire food, civilian clothing, shelter and medical care. These certificates required passport photos, around 2,100 of which are still preserved in the *Arolsen Archives*.



Imprisonment Certificate Issued by the IIO for Dawid Eiger, July 4, 1946

Dawid Eiger was a Polish Jew born in 1922. He was imprisoned in Dachau shortly before the liberation in April 1945. After the war the IIO issued this certificate of his time in the camp, which enabled Eiger to claim relief services.

4487

erfahren, ob mein Vater damals als poln. Hinder-  
 hälftling oder polnischer Repressionshäftling. Ich hoffe,  
 dass Sie diese mit den Dokumenten über die  
 Haftverfahren oder Verurteilung vorhanden sind.  
 Ich würde gerne alle diese polnischen Dokumente  
 persönlich in den Händen, um meine Vater-  
 hälftling in K.2 Lager war. Es ist mir sehr  
 wichtig die große Wichtigkeit welche Personen  
 mein Vater zu dieser letzten Krieg wurden.

Ich bitte Sie weiterhin um Ihre Hilfe  
 bei der Dokumentation. Haben Sie ein persön-  
 liches Exemplar des Buchs. Ein solches Buch  
 bitte ich per Postzustellung zu bekommen.

Respektvoll  
 Ilse Voigt

P.S.V.

4413

Excerpt of a Letter from Ilse Voigt from Warnemünde to the IIO, June 12, 1946

In March 1946, at the request of Ilse Voigt, the IIO had issued a certificate confirming that her father, Otto Riebe, had been a prisoner in Dachau. However, this certificate did not reveal his prisoner category. Ilse Voigt therefore wrote to the IIO again to ask for this information.

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Den 28. 6. 1946

Ilse Voigt  
 Warnemünde - Ostrow  
 Am Strome 52

Betreff: Otto Riebe  
 geb. 3. 5. 1899

Hiervon teilte wir Ihnen mit, dass wir die Haftort und die Einzel-  
 kategorie der ehemaligen Häftlinge nur an die zuständigen Behörden  
 angeben können. Deshalb ist nicht an Ihre Behörde, welche und  
 diese soll die gewünschten Angaben bei uns anfordern.

Walter Cieslik  
 IIO  
 Dachau  
 CHEF DER STÄBEN

Letter from Walter Cieslik (IIO) to Ilse Voigt, June 28, 1946

This letter from Walter Cieslik, head of the IIO, informed Ilse Voigt that only the municipal concentration camp prisoner support office responsible for Voigt was authorized to provide information about her father's prisoner category.

194

Rostock, den 18. Juli 1946  
 Gr./De.  
 Rathaus, Zimm. 52-53

K

Antwort an:  
 Der Oberbürgermeister  
 "Opfer d. Faschismus"

Titel:  
 International Information Office  
 Dachau

Betr.: Dep./Abt. 80 - Gr ref: 2516 / Ky / 16, dort. Schr. v. 28.6.46.

Der Rostocker Kreistagsausschuss, der Ihr Schreiben vom 28. v. Mts. (obiges  
 Aktenschild) weitergeleitet wurde, bittet, den Wunsch der  
 Frau Ilse Voigt - Warnemünde - Am Strome 52  
 zu entsprechen, und auszusagen, was ihr von dem vergangenen Naziregime  
 ersorderter Schaden in dem früheren KZ Lager Dachau für  
 eine Haftart erlitten wurde und  
 was derselbe für einen Winkel getragen hat.

Ihr geschätzte schnelle Erledigung wäre der Ausschuss "Opfer des Fa-  
 schismus" sehr dankbar.

I. A. J. J. J.

5. Aug 1946  
 Nr. 2781-1 k

Riebe Otto  
 Nr. 33279  
 1.5.39 bis 27.8.39  
 P.S.V.

Inquiry from the Victims of Fascism Committee (Rostock City Council) to the IIO, July 18, 1946

In response to the prior correspondence between Ilse Voigt and the IIO, the concentration camp prisoner support office in Rostock also inquired about Otto Riebe's prisoner category in July 1946. In this letter, Otto Riebe is mistakenly referred to as Voigt's husband, not as her father.

193

Den 12. 8. 1946

Der Oberbürgermeister  
 "Opfer des Faschismus"  
 Rostock  
 Rathaus, Zimmer 52-53

Betreff: Otto Riebe  
 geb. 3. 5. 1899

Auf Ihr obiges Schreiben teilen wir Ihnen mit, dass der Vater von Frau  
 Ilse Voigt in der Zeit von 8.5.1939 bis 27.8.1939 in dem KZ  
 Dachau unter der Haft.-Nummer 13 279 Polizeiliche "sicherheitsverweh-  
 rung" eingewiesen war und einen grünen Winkel getragen hat.

Walter Cieslik  
 IIO  
 Dachau  
 CHEF DER STÄBEN

Response from Walter Cieslik (IIO), August 12, 1946

Walter Cieslik of the IIO informed the Rostock city council in August 1946 that Otto Riebe had been in "police protective custody." He therefore belonged to the group of so-called "professional criminals" not eligible for relief services. To this day, they have neither been recognized, nor have they received compensation as victims of Nazi persecution.



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**UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND REHABILITATION ADMINISTRATION**

UNITED STATES ZONE  
BUREAU OF DOCUMENTS AND TRACING  
APO 757, U.S. ARMY

27 September 1946

SUBJECT: Preparation of Official Bureau Tracing Registry  
on Dachau Concentration Camp Inmates

TO: Mr. G. B. Fromageot  
Branch Chief  
South Bavarian Branch  
MUNICH

1. It is my understanding that the inmate records of the Dachau Concentration Camp are as complete as humanly possible at the present time. The excellent work of the staff of the former International Information Office deserves full credit for this achievement. Cieslik

2. In view of paragraph one above, we must prepare an Official Registry of the Dachau Concentration Camp Inmates for the utilization of Allied Government National Tracing Bureaux in their tracing of United Nations Nationals.

3. You are directed to engage in this activity immediately.

4. You are encouraged to delegate the responsibility of this project to Mr. Walter Ciealik in view of his previous status with the International Information Office. However, you will be held responsible for the progress and accuracy of the work.

5. The Official Registry shall contain a brief history of the camp, officially recognized photographs, selected human interest stories and a complete listing of inmates according to nationalities and alphabetization.

6. The Official Registry shall contain the following information concerning each inmate :

(a) Surname, Christian name  
(b) Camp serial number  
(c) Reason for detention  
(d) Date of birth  
(e) Date of entry in the camp  
(f) Previous location prior to Dachau  
(g) Date of departure from Dachau  
(h) Destination at departure from Dachau  
(i) Reason for departure (e.g. liberated,

/6. (3)

Compiling one of the First Prisoner Lists for Dachau Concentration Camp, August 23, 1946

In the summer of 1946, the IIO merged with the Munich branch of the UNRRA tracing and documentation department. This office was asked to compile a list of all former prisoners of Dachau concentration camp based on the camp documents preserved by the IIO. Walter Ciealik initiated this project.

UNRRA  
BUREAU OF DOCUMENTS AND TRACING  
South Bavarian Branch

INVENTORY OF DACHAU CONCENTRATION CAMP  
INDEX CARDS

GERMANS

Surname: Christian name Camp ser.no.	Birth date: Birth place (Prev.resid.)	Reason for arrest (Occupation)	Admission date: From where (Previous location)	Depart date: Reason for dep. Destination:
ABB Wilhelm 39644	7.12.00 Altomünster Aschaffenburg	crim.pris. locksmith	15.Sep.39	27.Sep.39 trans to CC.Nauthause
ABE Ferdinand 7451/4	20.9.11 Münberg Munich	pol.pris. plumber	13.5.35	15.Jan.41 released
ABEL Andreas 91580	22.6.94 Spiesen Spiesen	work ev. baker	14.Aug.44 14.Sep.44 fr. Nataweiler	24.Aug.44 trans to Nataweiler 29.Sep.44 trans to Flossenbürg 20.April 39 released
ABEL Christoph 11218	4.5.91 Heidsheim Würzburg	pol.pris. worker	21.12.36	20.April 39 released
ABEL Karl 16664	27.9.05 München München	crim.pris. baker	30.Aug.40	7.Sep.40 transp. to Sachsenhausen
ABELEIN Richard 30592	14.3.15 Stuttgart Stuttgart	work ev. garden worker	24 June 42	7.8.42 transp. to Neuengamme
ABELES Walter 18201	6.10.87 Wien Wien 2 Bez.	crim.pris. renter	6 Sep.40	5 Juli 41 trans to Buchenwald
ABELMANN Paul 23236	28.7.14 Ahaus/Westf. Nordenham	pol.pris. sailor SAB SA/ 4	22 Jan.41 fr. Neuengamme	died 24 July 41
ABERL Johann 35001	28.8.90 Allershausen München	pol.pris. clergman	21 Aug.42	19 Sep.42 trans to Buchenwald
ABEL Franz 16391	21.1.92 Walkwitz Vienna 8	pol.pris. editor	17.6.38 1.2.39	25.1.39 transp. 26.4.34 - to Vienna
ABLER Jacob 64879	23.2.07 Oberdettingen Hamburg	crim.pris. bookkeeper	4 March 44 fr.Nataweiler	deliv red in out-detail by U.S.Army

Excerpt from Overview of Dachau Prisoners Compiled by Walter Ciealik, circa 1946

This list, alphabetically ordered by name, was based on a card file from Dachau concentration camp, saved by prisoners at the end of the war. It noted the prisoners' places and dates of birth, information about their profession and prisoner category, and the dates of their imprisonment in and release from the Dachau concentration camp.

# Walter Cieślík

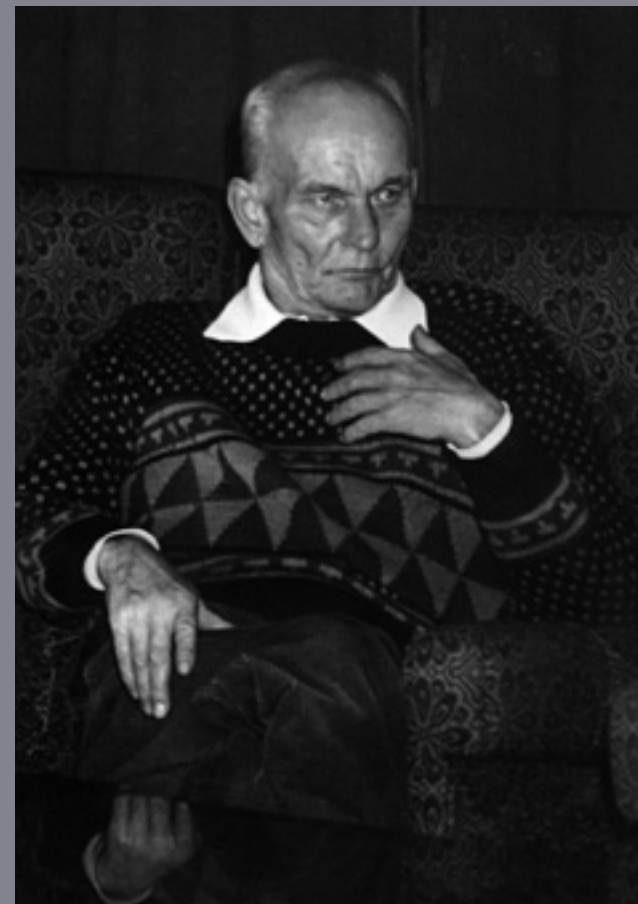
## 1914-1998

Before Walter Cieślík worked for the IIO after the war, he spent five years as a prisoner in Dachau concentration camp. The persecution of the Polish bank clerk began in 1940, when the Gestapo arrested him in Zabrze, Silesia. Cieślík was taken to Dachau as a political prisoner. The SS assigned him to work in the registry office, which gave him access to the camp's prisoner documents. Two years after he was liberated, Walter Cieślík decided to return to Poland, where he passed away in 1998.



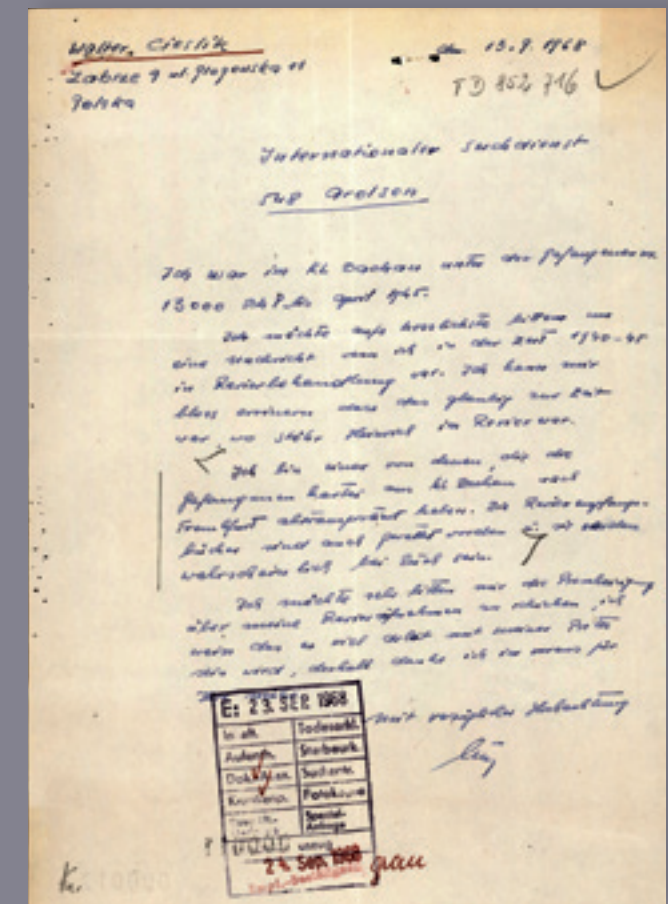
Walter Cieślík in Prisoner Clothing at his Desk at the IIO, Dachau, June 5, 1945

Cieślík returned to Poland in 1947, taking many IIO documents with him. But it was his express wish for the documents to return to Dachau after his death. Since 1999, they have been preserved by the Dachau Memorial. The files provide a valuable insight into the work of the IIO.



Walter Cieślík, Private Photo, Location unknown, 1986

After his time at the IIO, Cieślík stayed in close contact with other survivors of Nazi persecution. In the 1990s he worked with humanitarian organizations in Germany to support former inmates of the concentration camps and ghettos.



Inquiry from Walter Cieślík to the ITS, September 13, 1968

In 1968, Walter Cieślík contacted the ITS and requested a certificate of his time spent in the sick bay of Dachau concentration camp. He also mentioned his activities at the IIO and his role in transferring the documents which today are stored in the Arolsen Archives.



# Tracing Activities by Experienced Organizations

Experienced relief organizations also took part in the search, such as the *American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee* (AJDC), which had been founded in 1914 in the context of World War I. It had tracing offices all over Europe for clarifying the fates of missing persons and survivors of the Holocaust. Many of its employees had been persecuted by the Nazis themselves. Searching for documents with information about Nazi crimes was another important activity which the organization carried out. Many documents from the AJDC later went to the ITS and are now preserved in the *Arolsen Archives*.

AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE  
C O 615 MIL. Gov. Det.  
(British Army on the Rhine)  
HOHNE-BELSEN CAMP

Enquirer / Nadawca / Anfrage

Name/Name: BURGENTHAL Mrs. First Name/Name: SERIA Nationality/Nationalität: Czech

Place of Birth: Lutzschau/Czechia Date of Birth: 11.5.24

Name of parents: Mrs. BURGENTHAL SERIA Occupation: School teacher

Present Address: Ursprungstr. 10, Göttingen, Niedersachsen Relation: Mother

Original Home Address: Göttingen, Niedersachsen

The enquirer desires copy of the address: Yes/Bitte senden Sie mir die Adresse. No/Bitte nicht senden Sie mir die Adresse.

Particulars of Person Sought  
Angaben fehlender Personen

Name/Name: BURGENTHAL TOMMY First Name/Name: TOMMY

Place of Birth: Lutzschau/Czechia Date of Birth: 11.5.24

Father's name: Mrs. BURGENTHAL SERIA

Date of Immigration or Departure: January 1945

Last known Occupation: School teacher

Date of last Communication: January 1945

Last known Address: Göttingen, Niedersachsen

Further useful Particulars: Mother has seen photo of her son in newspaper Berlin dated 12 July 1945, crossing street in Berlin with British S.P. and was told by S.P. that he was in Berlin.

Inquiry Form for Thomas Buergenthal, AJDC Office in Belsen, August 4, 1946

Thinking she had seen her missing son Thomas in a newspaper photo, Gerda Buergenthal, who lived in Göttingen, intensified her search for him. One of her inquiries reached the AJDC tracing office near the former Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. She had last seen her son in January 1945.

AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

199, PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1. ENGLAND

Oct. 23, 1946.

TO: A. J. D. C. BELSEN.

FROM: A. J. D. C. LONDON.

RE: YOUR LETTER 1.10.1946 RE TOMMY BURGENTHAL.

With further reference to your letter as above, we have to-day received the following report from Warsaw Office in reply to the cable sent at your request:-

"We beg to notify you, that the Manager of the Orphanage in Otwock wrote us, that Tommy BURGENTHAL was informed by cable of the location of his mother just before receipt of the J.D.C. Letter. Tommy BURGENTHAL lives in this Children's Home since 7.11.1945. He was in a camp in Sachsenhausen; after the liberation he was taken by the 1st Division of the Polish Army as a regiment's child and was brought by a soldier to us. He went through many hardships. Tommy is a nice, pleasant, good and brave boy and is very liked by his teachers and colleagues. Simultaneously his uncle from the USA takes an interest in Tommy. To his mother and uncle, Tommy will write himself."

Faithfully yours,  
Margot Feil,  
A. J. D. C. LONDON.

Tommy's parents appear to be located at 55 Search Bureau, Göttingen, N.S.G.B.

Tel 4254  
Göttingen  
Burgenthal

Letter from the London AJDC Office to the AJDC Office in Belsen, October 23, 1946

Nearly two months later, the London tracing office of the AJDC confirmed Thomas Buergenthal was alive. He was freed from Sachsenhausen concentration camp at the end of the war. A Polish soldier eventually took him to an orphanage in Otwock, Poland, where he learnt that his mother was looking for him.

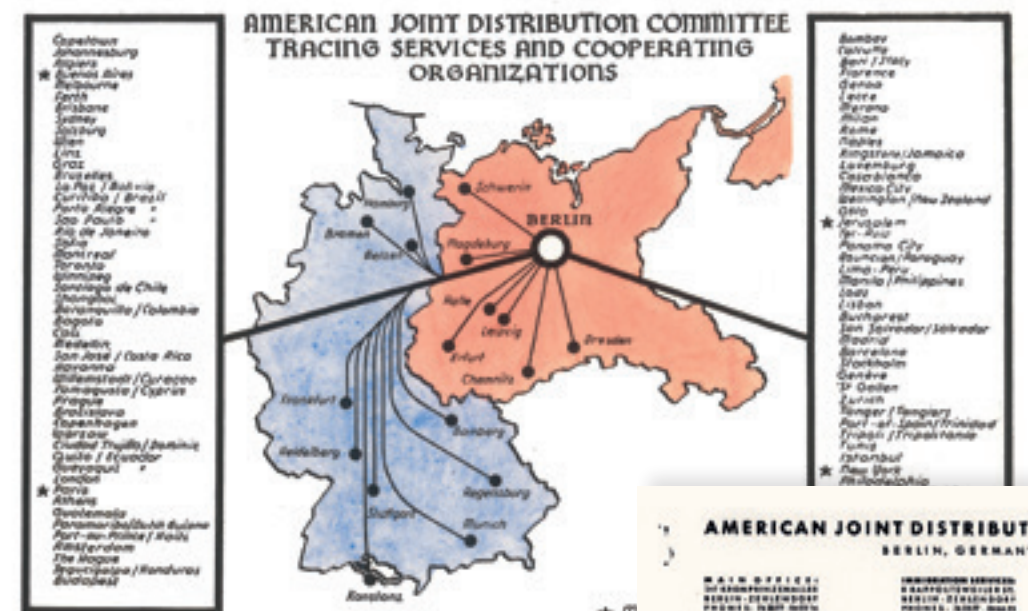
### Transportliste

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Lin. No.	Name	Versand	geb. am	Ort	Beruf	rel.	sta.	and.	and.	Wohnung	Identifiz. No.	Identifiz. No.	Bemerkungen
1	Roos geb. Wagner	Ilse Rosa	5.2.02	Syrmagrad	ohne	ja	60	ja	ja	N. 54, Grenzstr. 25	701-7	6471	✓
2	Kaschitsky	Hildegard Rose	13.3.06	Gleiwitz	ohne	ja	36	ja	ja	Elm. Kottbusstr. 8	27075/1/36	6530	✓
3	Amstel	Gertraud Leberl	16.1.77	Gomitz	ohne	ja	65	ja	ja	Charl. Ind. Friedri- str. 70	4553341	9070	✓
4	Friedberg	Ann Leberl	2.8.95	Berlin	ohne	ja	47	ja	ja	Carl. Grenzstr. 25	1/26967	10130	✓
5	Auerbach geb. Lippmann	Katharina Rose	29.7.96	Hilpenstein	ohne	ja	46	ja	ja	Ind. Fr. Grenzstr. 25	AA46964	11249	✓
6	Leberl geb. Carlitzki	Ilse Rose	6.7.91	Vischitz	ohne	ja	54	ja	ja	N. 50, Lychnenstr. 26	0005	11604	✓
7	Leberl geb. Leberl	Hildegard Rose	11.9.30	Berlin	ohne	ja	17	ja	ja	Reichsh. Allee 162		11891	✓
8	Leberl geb. Leberl	Hildegard Rose	16.7.35	Berlin	ohne	ja	7	ja	ja	do.		11892	✓
9	Leberl geb. Leberl	Hildegard Rose	17.2.38	Berlin	ohne	ja	4	ja	ja	do.		11893	✓
10	Vorhoff geb. Wagner	Ilse Rose	15.2.04	Torun	ohne	ja	36	ja	ja	N. 54, Lottenstr. 13	7107797	13543	✓
11	Leberl geb. Greiner	Hildegard Rose	14.6.60	Leberl	ohne	ja	62	ja	ja	N. 54, Weinbergweg 6	100000	13960	✓
12	Kretschmer geb. Leberl	Ilse Rose	6.5.09	Berlin	ohne	ja	53	ja	ja	N. 50, Klotzstr. 29	1504080	13981	✓
13	Sinn	Ilse Rose	26.12.79	Syrmagrad	ohne	ja	63	ja	ja	Charl. Ind. Friedri- str. 15	1371019	13640	✓
14	Kleinberger geb. Wagner	Ilse Rose	26.11.60	Breslau	ohne	ja	62	ja	ja	Charl. Ind. Friedri- str. 97	AA94496	13935	✓
15	Goldberg geb. Lichtman	Charlotte Rose	11.6.04	Breslau	ohne	ja	58	ja	ja	Ind. Fr. Grenzstr. 25	AA77743	13790	✓
16	Weyer geb. Weyer	Ilse Rose	13.6.79	Berlin	ohne	ja	63	ja	ja	N. 50, Weinbergweg 6	AA40079	13910	✓
17	Weyer geb. Weyer	Ilse Rose	9.11.72	Breslau	ohne	ja	63	ja	ja	Ind. Fr. Grenzstr. 25	AA45321	14064	✓
18	Weyer geb. Weyer	Ilse Rose	26.5.02	Berlin	ohne	ja	60	ja	ja	do.	AA45507	18765	✓
19	Kleinberger	Gertraud Leberl	19.11.06	Berlin	ohne	ja	56	ja	ja	Charl. Ind. Friedri- str. 5	1049024	15104	✓
20	Steinberg	Ilse Rose	29.6.06	Berlin	ohne	ja	36	ja	ja	N. 54, Grenzstr. 25	AA45178	15410	✓

Transport List of Jews Deported from Gestapo District I, September 5, 1942

The Gestapo documents found by the AJDC in the Berlin Finance Department included transport lists like the one shown here. They reveal the names of Jewish men and women from Berlin who were deported to Theresienstadt, Riga and "the East." Most transports went to Auschwitz.



The Network of AJDC Tracing Offices and Cooperating Partners, circa 1948

This image, produced by the AJDC office in Berlin highlighted here, illustrates the worldwide search for missing persons and documents conducted by a single established organization like the AJDC. However, this work was not fully coordinated: the individual AJDC offices used varying approaches to carry out their search activities.

### AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE BERLIN, GERMANY

\* III

**SEHR GEHRTE HERREN,**  
wie Ihnen bekannt sein dürfte, war es uns möglich in den Texten der von der Gestapo separat angelegten Kartei über die von Berlin erfolgten Deportationen von jüdischen IPK-Personen zu gelangen. Dadurch sind wir in die Lage versetzt, den Transport sowie den Tag der Deportation von fast allen Berliner Juden anzugeben.

Insbesondere dieser Transporte, d.h. von den aus der Deportation Zurückgekehrten, haben wir vollständige Listen erstellt.

Es ist uns aber auch bekannt, dass viele Juden sich in anderen Gemeinden niedergelassen haben, um auch darüber unterrichtet zu sein, benötigen wir von sämtlichen Gemeinden Deutschlands Listen, aus denen diejenigen Personen ersichtlich sind, die dort angekommen sind, und wir bitten Sie, uns solche Listen, welche für jüdische Personen, die letzte Anschrift vor der Deportation und die jetzige Adresse enthalten müssen, zuzuschicken.

Außerdem benötigen wir auch eine Liste sämtlicher Gemeindeglieder mit genauen Personalien und jetziger Adresse, auch die inzwischen ausgewanderten Mitglieder bitten wir noch zu versenden.

Wir hoffen, dass es Ihnen möglich ist, uns recht bald solche Listen zuzuschicken und sehen Ihrer Rückmeldung entgegen.

Nachschuttenvoll  
LARRY LUBETSKY  
Tracing Officer  
AJDC Berlin

Sachbearbeiter  
11.100

ARMY ADDRESS: APO 742A, POSTMASTER NEW YORK, N.Y.

Circular from Larry Lubetsky about Documentation Efforts, Berlin, June 5, 1947

In 1946, the AJDC found Gestapo documents in the Berlin Finance Department which proved the deportation of Jews from Berlin. In this circular addressed to Jewish communities in Germany, Larry Lubetsky from the Berlin AJDC office asked for support in the further documentation of Nazi crimes.



# Thomas Buergenthal

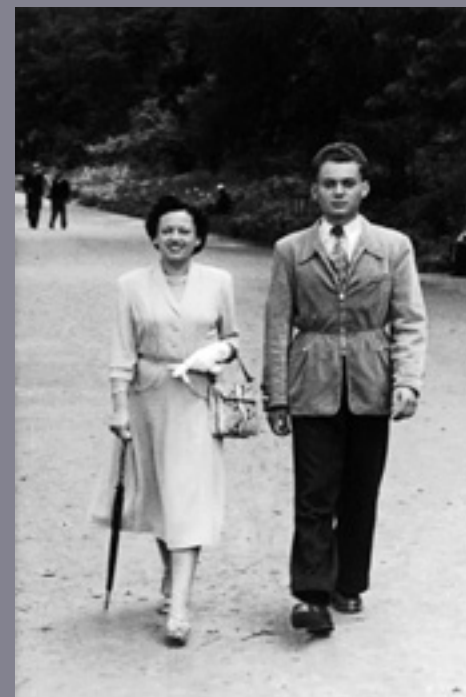
\* 1934

After the liberation, Gerda Buergenthal searched for her son. She also asked an AJDC tracing office for help. Thomas Buergenthal was born in Czechoslovakia in 1934, one year after his parents had fled from Germany. The family went to Poland in 1939 where the Germans arrested them. They were then deported from the Kielce ghetto to Auschwitz. The family was separated. In 1945, the father died in Buchenwald. In December 1946, mother and son were reunited. At the end of 1951 they emigrated together to the USA, where Thomas Buergenthal studied law and became a judge.



**Thomas Buergenthal as a Judge at the *International Court of Justice*, The Hague, circa 2003**

Thomas Buergenthal specializes in human rights and international law. He was co-founder of the *Inter-American Court of Human Rights* and has taught at many universities in the USA.



**Thomas and Gerda Buergenthal, Shortly before Emigrating to the USA, Location Unknown, circa 1951**

Thomas Buergenthal documented his family's persecution by the Nazis and the dramatic search after 1945 in his autobiography *A Lucky Child: A Memoir of Surviving Auschwitz as a Young Boy*.

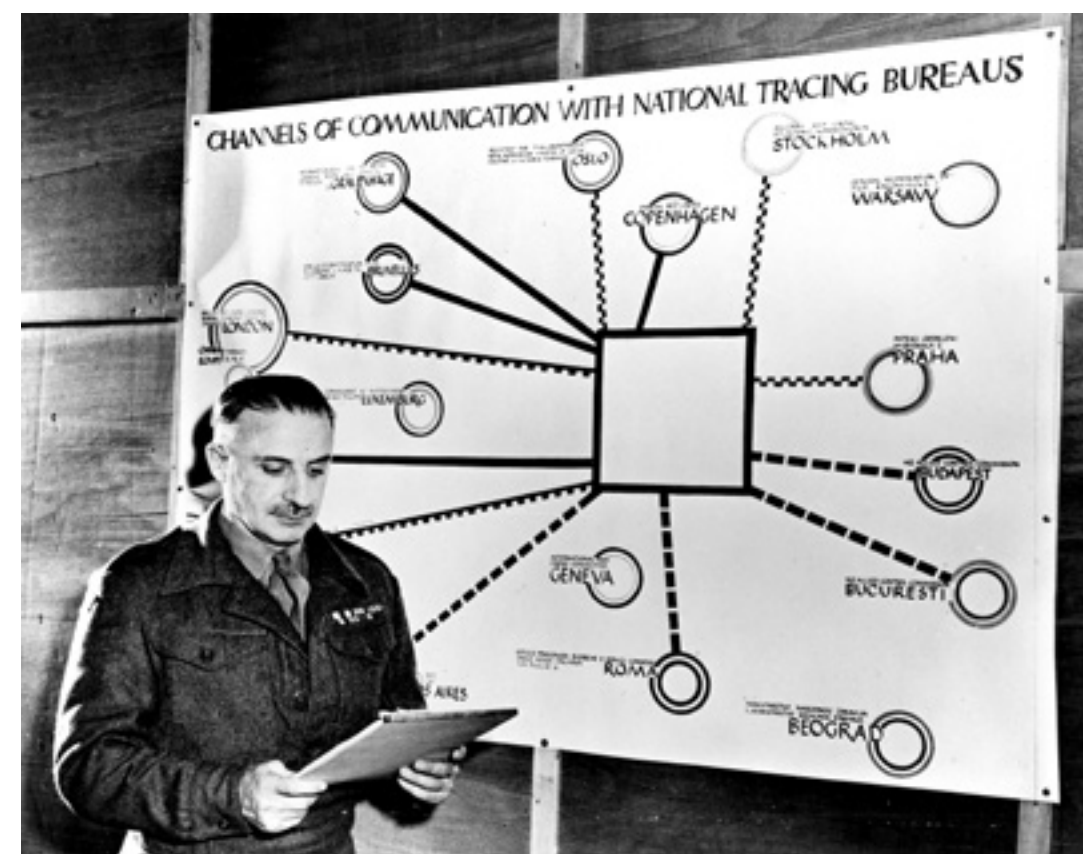


**Buergenthal Family, Czechoslovakia, circa 1937**

It was through the ITS that Buergenthal discovered his father's place of death: he died in January 1945 in Buchenwald concentration camp. For Buergenthal the *Arolsen Archives* are a "memorial of my father. There are no others, not even a marked gravestone in a cemetery."

# The Central Tracing Bureau (CTB)

In 1943 the Allies began developing a system for searching civilians from UN states who were missing and documents that would help clarify their fate. This gave rise to the *Central Tracing Bureau* (CTB), run by the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNRRA). It was first located in Frankfurt-Höchst, then Arolsen from 1946. The Allies also ran bureaus in the individual occupation zones. These zonal bureaus handled inquiries and secured documents. The role of the CTB, in turn, was to coordinate the activities of the zonal tracing bureaus and many national tracing bureaus.



**John R. Bowring, Head of the CTB, with an Overview of Communication Channels, Frankfurt-Höchst, 1945**

The CTB worked with national tracing bureaus to collect documents about Nazi persecution and to handle individual inquiries. When the national tracing bureaus needed support, the CTB was able to assist in many cases through referral to its zonal tracing bureaus.





CTB Incoming Mail Room, Frankfurt-Höchst, November 19, 1945

In the months after the war, the number of search inquiries sent to the CTB continued to rise. Every day thousands of letters arrived. This photo shows CTB employees sorting the mail before individual cases were forwarded to be handled by other units.



CTB Employees Working on Individual Cases, Frankfurt-Höchst, circa 1945

Incoming information was recorded on index cards which were filed in a tracing index. Ideally, inquiries and existing information about a missing person would collide here in a *meeting of cards*. Many of the employees had been persecuted themselves. Their language skills were a pillar of the CTB.

Name:	KRUPKA, Szlamek	No.:	84817
Nee:		Nat:	Polish/Jew
B. D.:	5. 5. 1908	X Ref:	
B. P.:	Lodz, Poland		
Address:			
Occupation:			
Last news:	Deported from Lodz, Poland, to the		
Date:	Auschwitz Concentration Camp.		
Enquirer's name:	Rosia Krupka-Birenbaum (Wife)		
Address:	c/o The British Red Cross Society,		
Relation:	29, Belgrave Square, London, S. W. 1.		

Library	
SEARCHED	Date 5. 9. 46
Name: KRUPKA SCHLAMA	Registr. No.
Nationality: POL/JEW	Date of birth 5. 5. 08
	Pl. of birth LODZ
Last known Address LODZ	(Date when known to be there)
Camp DACHAU	Prison No. 57570
	Arrived 6. 8. 1944
Transferred to	On POL. PRISON
	Liberated on 29. 4. 1945
Date of death	Cause of death
Place of Burial	Grave Number
Remarks:	LIBERATED BY MÜHLDORF
	Initials:

Inquiry Card for Szlamek Krupka, circa 1946

After the war, Rosia Krupka-Birenbaum searched for her husband, Szlamek Krupka, a Polish Jew. She submitted a search inquiry to the Red Cross in London. Her case was forwarded to the CTB, where all the important basic information was recorded on the card shown here.

Checking Report for Szlamek Krupka, September 5, 1946

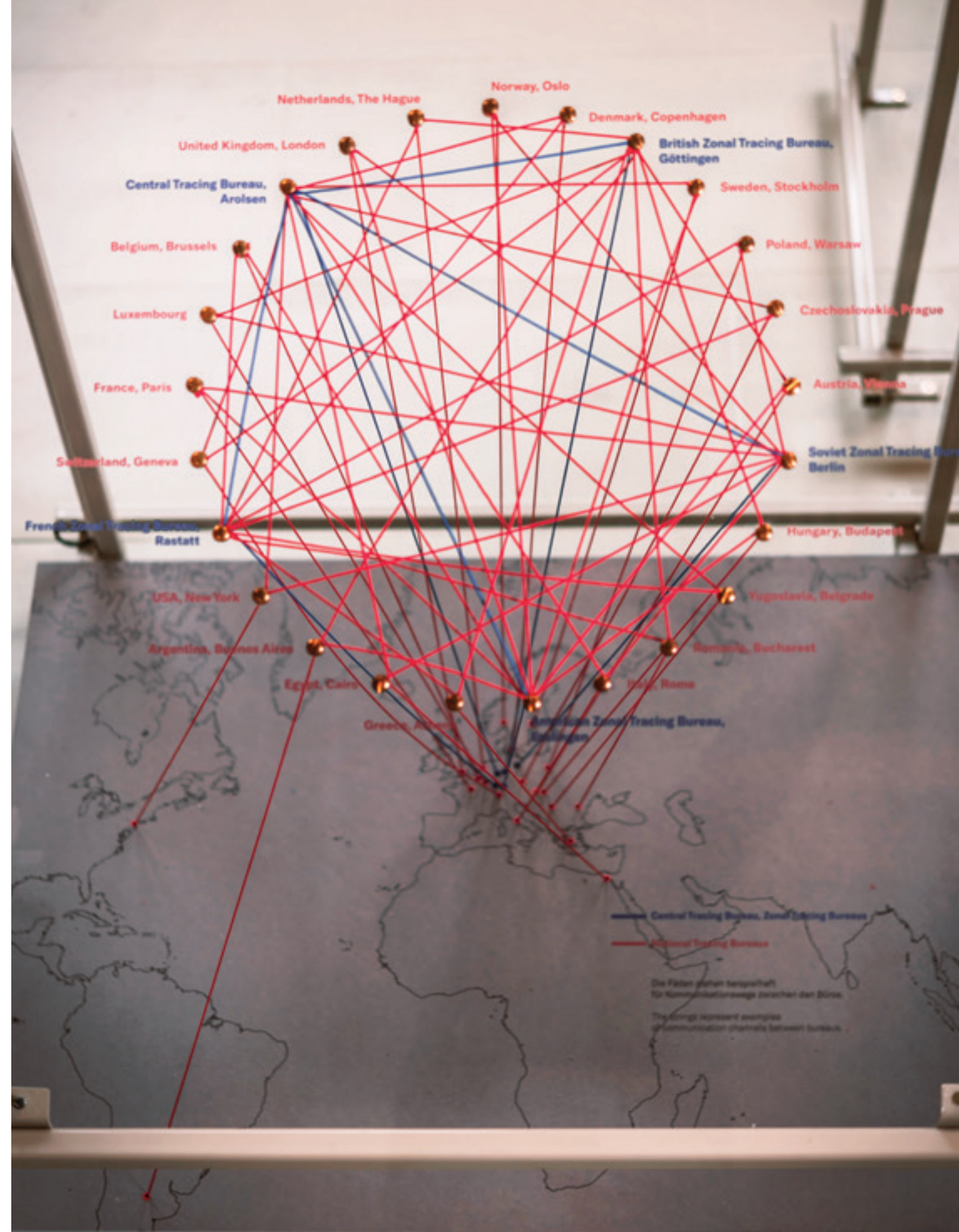
Based on the information submitted with the inquiry for Szlamek Krupka, the documents at the CTB were checked. The CTB determined that Krupka had last been imprisoned in Dachau concentration camp and was liberated in the Mühlendorf subcamp at the end of the war. This was noted in the checking report.







# Infographics

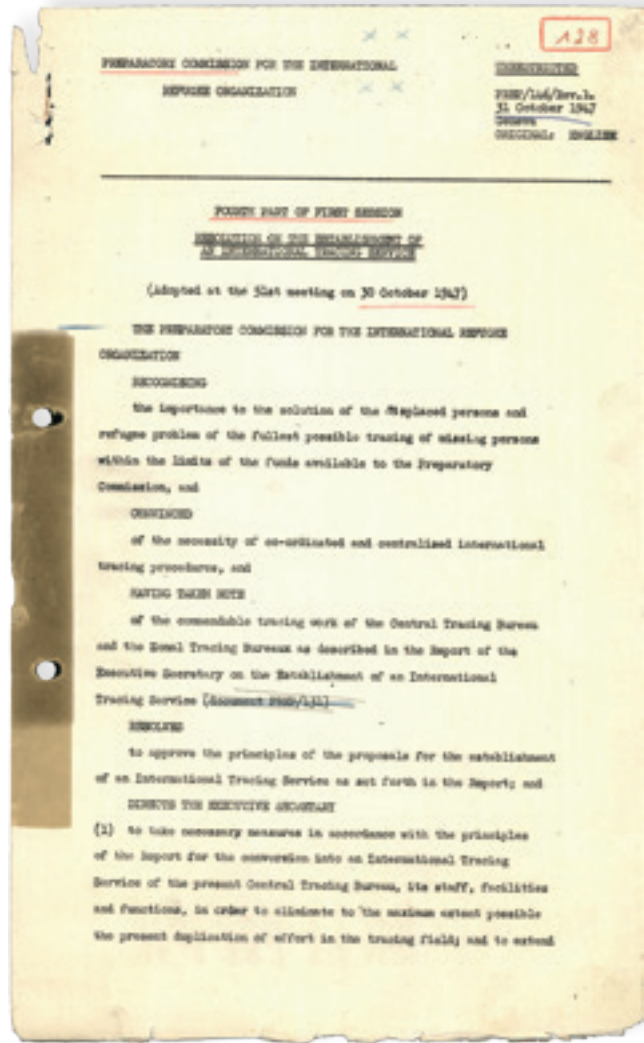


## Links between the Central Tracing Bureau (CTB) and the Zonal and National Tracing Bureaus

Despite its name, the CTB alone did not play a very central role. In many cases, its job was to circulate search inquiries. During this time, the zonal tracing bureaus were more active. They searched locally and worked directly with the national bureaus. The CTB was often not involved in this.

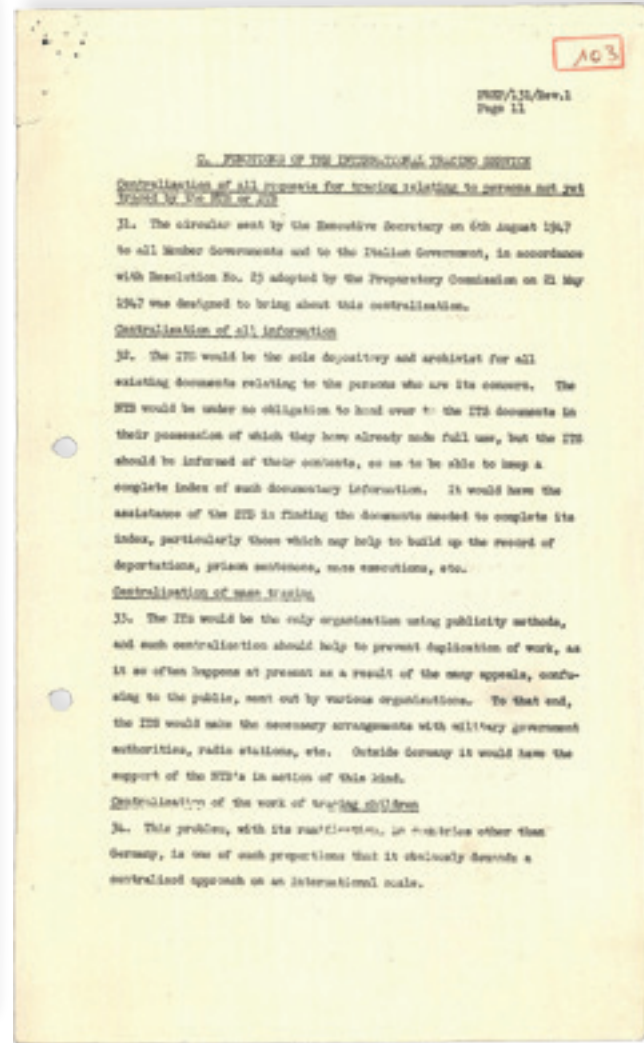






Resolution on the Founding of the ITS, October 30, 1947

The resolution on the founding of the ITS was passed just months before it officially began work at the start of 1948. The minutes shown here document the decisive meeting of the IRO, when it was acknowledged that the search for missing persons and the documentation of Nazi persecution had to be continued centrally.



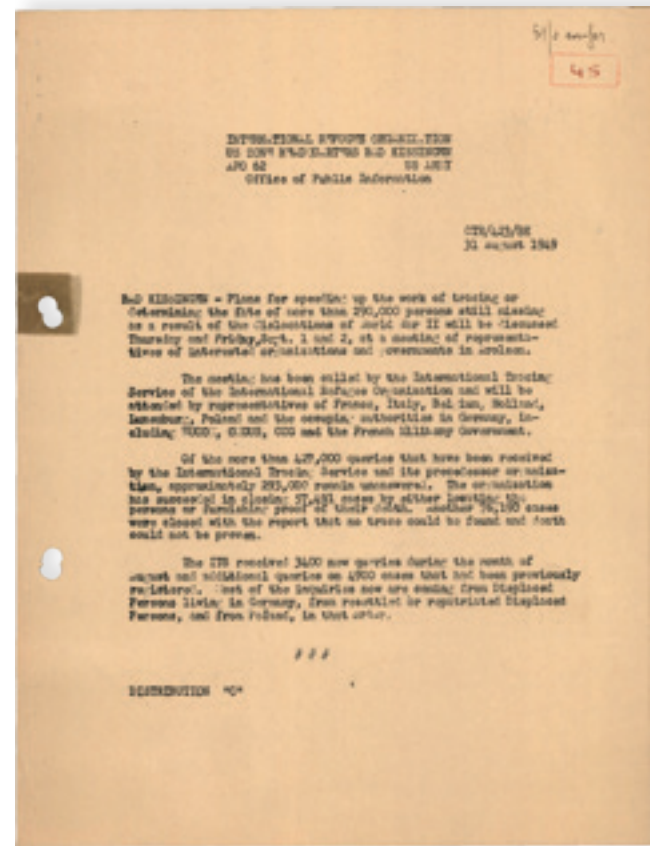
Excerpt from an Overview of the Reorganization of the ITS in Arolsen, November 6, 1947

When the tracing service was reorganized, Maurice Thudicum of the International Red Cross in Geneva first acted as a consultant. In a memo on the institution's future structure, he recommended centralizing the ITS documents and processes in Arolsen for a more systematic approach to the tracing and documentation of missing persons.



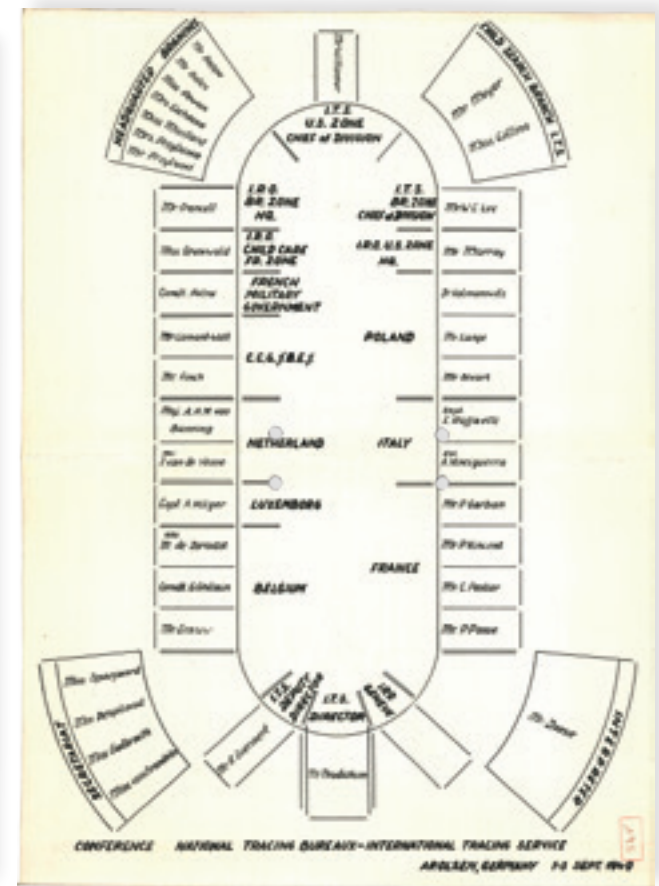
Maurice Thudicum, First Director of the ITS, Arolsen, circa 1951

Maurice Thudicum was the first director of the newly founded ITS, after being involved in its creation as a consultant. His prior leading position within the Central Agency for Prisoners of War of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva qualified him for the new role.



Press Release about an International Tracing Conference at the ITS, August 31, 1949

In autumn 1949, delegates from various national tracing bureaus met with representatives of the occupying forces at the ITS in Arolsen. They discussed methods of work as well as the future cooperation between the ITS and the various national tracing bureaus.



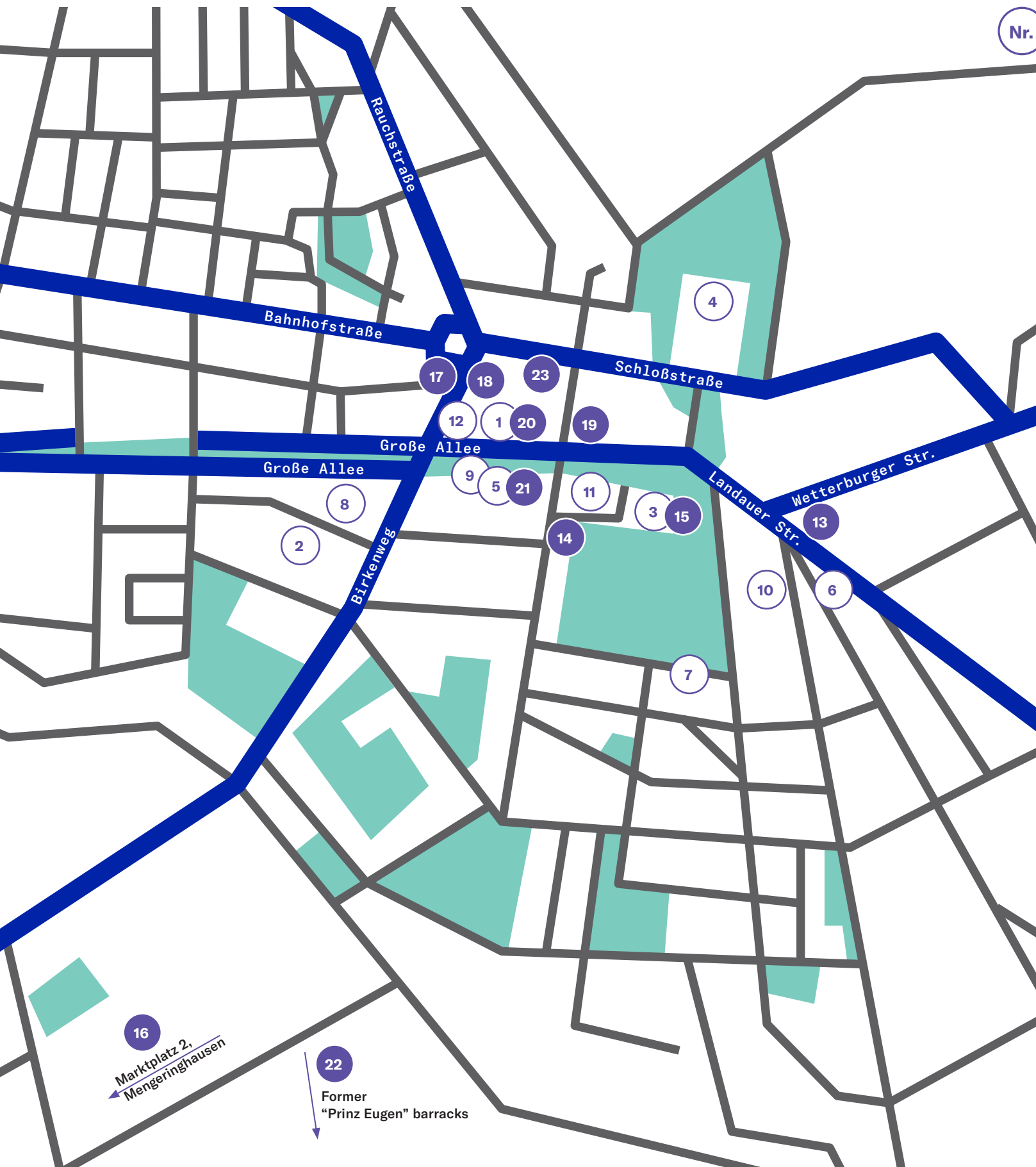


# Why and Where in Arolsen?



The *Central Tracing Bureau* (CTB), predecessor of the ITS and the later *Arolsen Archives*, moved to Arolsen in early 1946. There were various reasons for choosing this location. Arolsen was in the geographic center of the four occupation zones, so it could be easily reached by all parties of interest. Furthermore, the city had hardly been damaged in the war, so it had functioning telephone lines and intact buildings. The ITS was initially spread across sites all over the city, including the old school, both the Old and New Palace, and the barracks previously occupied by the SS. In 1952 the ITS moved into a main building on the Große Allee. Because the ITS was considered to finish its work soon, there were plans to later turn this building into a hotel. But the temporary measure turned into a permanent solution.





Nr.

**1940s/1950s**

Before moving into the former barracks in 1949, the ITS and its predecessor, the *Central Tracing Bureau* (CTB), were scattered across buildings throughout Arolsen. But these premises were too small for a constantly growing staff of well over 1,000 employees and the document collections.

- 1 Former school building | Große Allee 24**  
01/1946 – 07/1947  
Temporarily housed all CTB departments
- 2 Block E | former SS barracks**  
1945 – 1949  
DP camp for employees
- 3 New Palace | Große Allee 1-3**  
06/1947 – ca. 1949  
Temporarily housed all departments and quarters for DP employees
- 4 Old Palace | Schloßstraße 27**  
1947 – 1949  
Temporarily housed the administration and executive office
- 5 Kurhaus | Große Allee 23**  
1947 – ca. 1949  
Offices
- 6 Unter den Eichen 2**  
Autumn 1947 – ca. 1952  
Temporarily housed the executive office, cafeteria, guesthouse, and employee quarters
- 7 District administrator residence | Parkstraße 19**  
Autumn 1947 – ca. 1952  
Temporarily housed the cafeteria, staff management section, photo workshop, employee quarters
- 8 Former SS barracks**  
05/1949 – 10/1952  
All ITS departments and quarters for DP employees
- 9 Große Allee 25**  
ca. 07/1952 – 10/1952  
Infirmary for ITS employees, for some time housed quarters for DP employees
- 10 Brauser Weg 8**  
1952  
Offices
- 11 Main building | Große Allee 5-9**  
since 10/1952  
Various departments of the ITS and the *Arolsen Archives*
- 12 Town hall | Große Allee 26**  
since 1971  
*Arolsen Special Registry Office*; only institution in the world which issues death certificates for concentration camp prisoners; has worked closely with the ITS and today's *Arolsen Archives*; was established in 1949 and initially also located in the former SS barracks.

Nr.

**From the 1980s**

From the late 1980s the ITS rented many offices and storerooms in and around Arolsen. The intensified search for documents led to an increase in collections and staff. In this period, the ITS received hundreds of thousands of inquiries from former Nazi victims in Central and Eastern Europe who needed proof for pension or compensation claims.

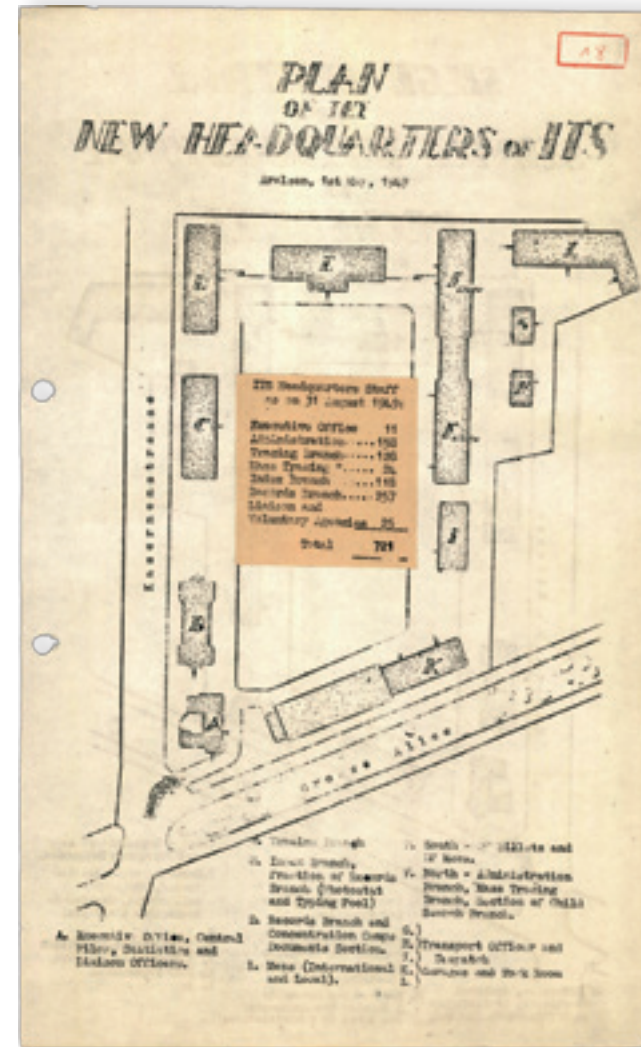
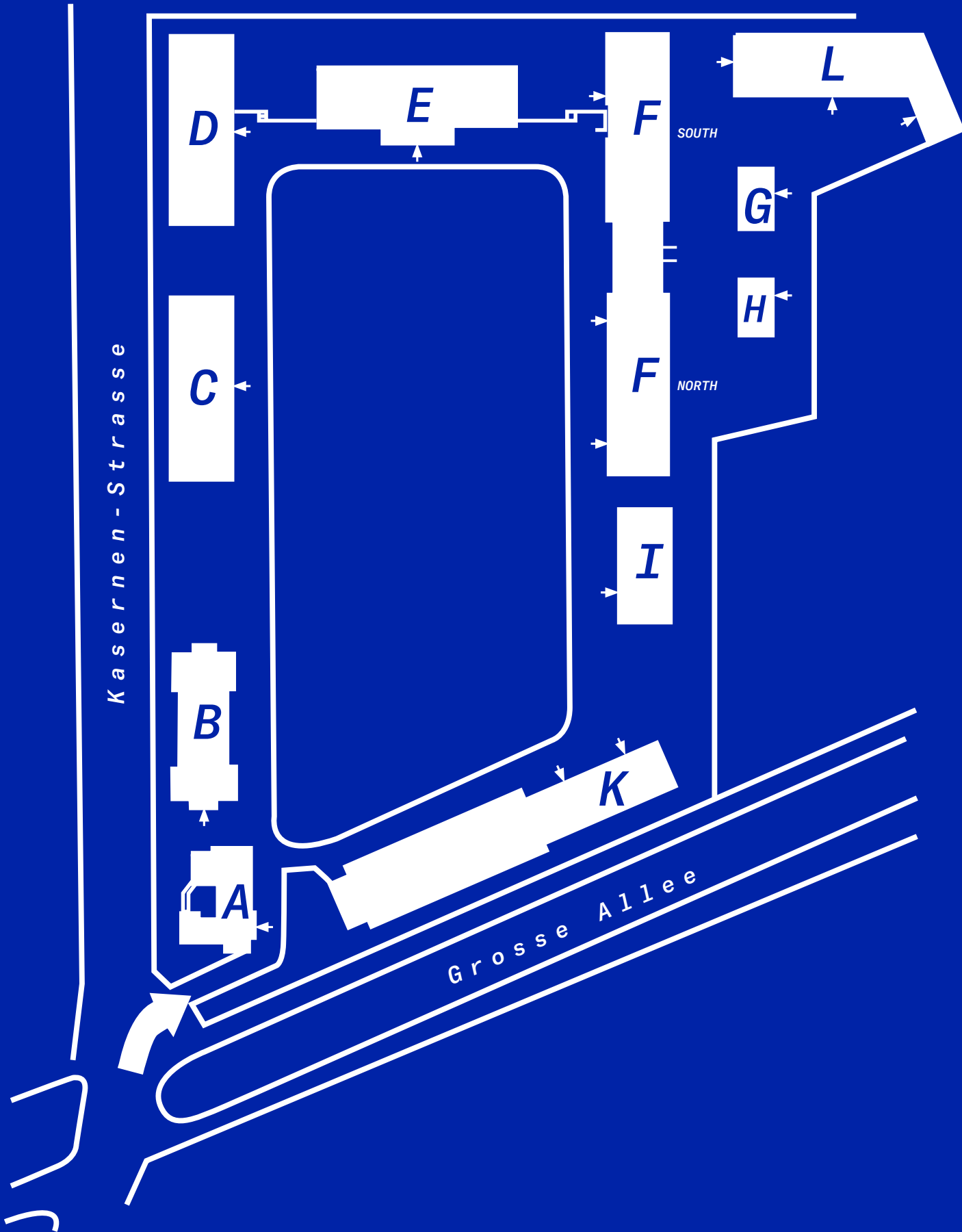
- 13 Wetterburgerstraße 4**  
1978 – 1980  
Card indexing department
- 14 Haus am Park | Jahnstraße 7**  
01/1980 – 2019  
Temporarily housed various archival departments, general documents department, research room, indexing department
- 15 Kurmittelhaus | Große Allee 3**  
03/1989 – 01/2007  
Storage of 250,000 *T/D files*
- 16 Town hall, Marktplatz 2 | Mengerlinghausen**  
07/1989 – 1993  
Indexing department, mail room
- 17 Haus Liebach | Kirchplatz 2**  
10/1989 – 1996  
Russian and Polish translators
- 18 Haus Köbberling | Rathausstraße 1**  
10/1989 – 2000  
Wartime documents section
- 19 Haus Füllgraf | Kaulbachstraße 4/6**  
12/1991 – 2010  
Temporarily housed indexing department, mail room, document acquisition office, central data processing unit
- 20 Former elementary school | Große Allee 24**  
04/1997 – 2009  
Temporarily housed digitization department, general documents department, staff from the wartime and postwar documents section, Russian and Polish translators
- 21 Kurhaus | Große Allee 23**  
since 1999  
Temporarily housed the indexing department, Russian and Polish translators, research and education department, library
- 22 Former "Prinz Eugen" barracks | Hagenstraße 25**  
January 2007 – March 2010  
Storage of *T/D files*
- 23 Former department store | Schloßstraße 10**  
since 2009  
Digitization department, storage of *T/D files*, exhibition space

16

Marktplatz 2,  
Mengerlinghausen

22

Former  
"Prinz Eugen" barracks



Map of the *International Tracing Service (ITS)* in the Former Barracks, 1949

ITS Access Card for Isolde Matzner, Issued on September 1, 1949

The location of the ITS was often discussed in the early days. Its previous premises were too small, so it moved into the former SS barracks in May 1949. The SS unit "Germania" had been housed there from 1935 to 1939, and from 1943 to 1945 it was the site of an SS leadership school and a Buchenwald subcamp known as "Arthur."

ITS employees had to show identification when entering the former barracks. This access card allowed Isolde Matzner to enter and leave the area. An Arolsen resident, she worked for the ITS from 1949 to 1952.





**Employees Crossing the Former Exercise Yard on their Way to Work, Arolsen, circa 1950**

Some DP employees lived right in Block E of the former SS barracks. The canteen there was used as a function room for dances, bingo and games nights.



**Sites and Operational Areas of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in Occupied Germany, May 8, 1946**

After World War II, the Allied powers divided Germany into four occupation zones. UNRRA had already been created in 1943 to care for Displaced Persons (DPs): civilians from UN states, including former concentration camp prisoners and forced laborers, who were outside their countries of origin when the war ended.



**ITS Headquarters, Arolsen, 1952**

The entrance to the consolidated ITS site was the former staff building, with its conspicuous "International Tracing Service" sign above the main gate. Behind the gate was the building where employees signed in.



**Records Branch Employees next to Concentration Camp Documents, Arolsen, circa 1950**

The former barracks buildings had enough space for storing and clearly arranging the documents on shelves. This greatly reduced the time it took to handle inquiries.



**Records Branch Employees next to Concentration Camp Documents, Arolsen, circa 1950**

Shortly before the ITS moved in, the former barracks buildings were crudely renovated in April 1949. But this too was an interim solution, and documents were stored in a provisional way. In some places, it actually rained inside the work and storage rooms.





**Dedication of the Building Shell with International Guests, Arolsen, August 20, 1952**

A cake shaped like the new building was made for the dedication ceremony, which was attended by many international guests, including representatives of the French and British High Commissions, the head of the DP Branch of the *Allied High Commission* and the German Federal Minister for Refugee Affairs.

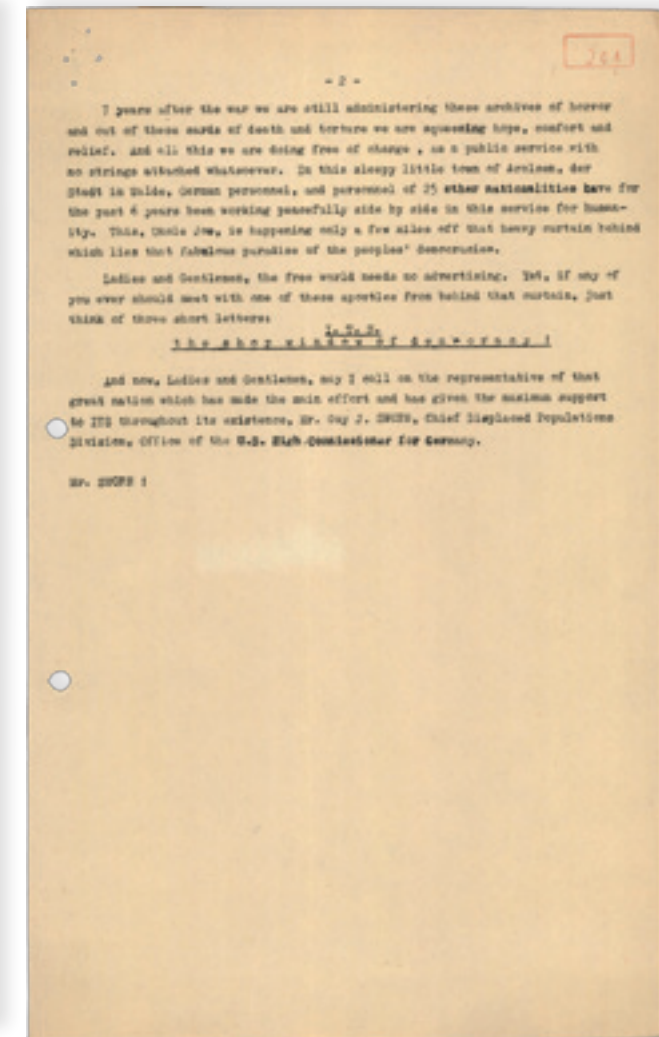
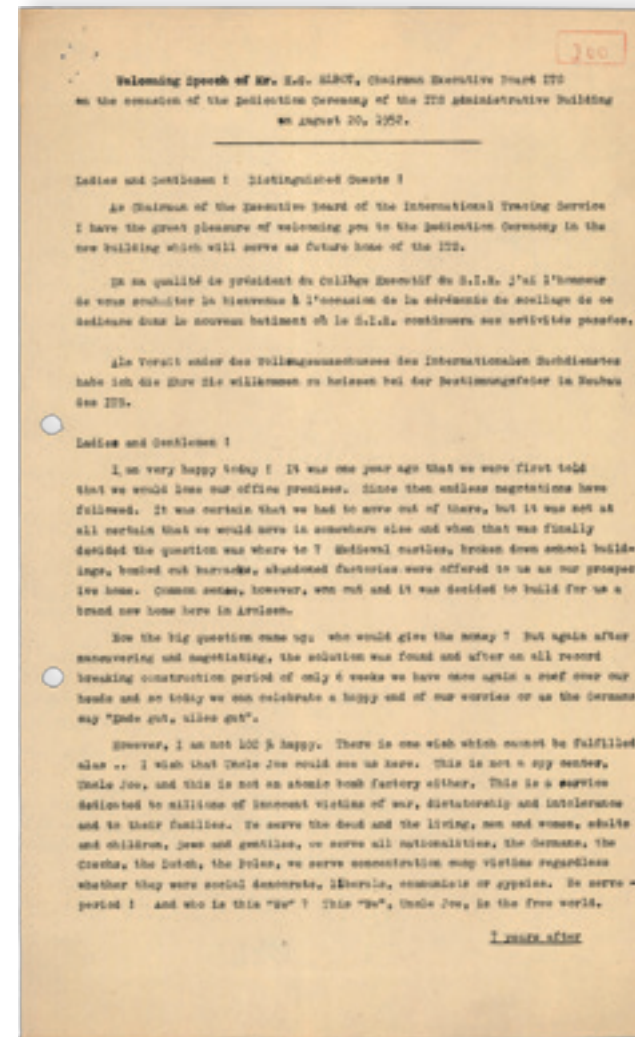


**Dedication of the New ITS Main Building on the Große Allee, Arolsen, August 20, 1952**

The ITS had to move out of the barracks in 1952, where Belgian NATO soldiers were soon stationed. A new building was erected in barely two months. At the end of October 1952 the employees moved into their new offices. The move from the former barracks to the new main building was partially carried out on bicycles.

**ITS Main Building on the Große Allee, Arolsen, circa 1960**

Because the future of the ITS was uncertain, the building was designed in a way that it could easily be turned into a hotel at a later time. But this temporary measure ultimately became a permanent solution. From the 1980s staff numbers rapidly increased and the ITS once again moved into several other buildings in Arolsen.



**Dedication Ceremony Speech by Hugh G. Elbot, Chairman of the ITS Administration, August 20, 1952**

Against the backdrop of the Cold War, Hugh G. Elbot described the ITS as a "shop window of democracy". He stressed that the ITS was "a service dedicated to millions of innocent victims" and served "the dead and the living, men and women, adults and children, Jews and gentiles."



*Central  
Name Index*







Employees Working with the *Central Name Index* (CNI), Arolsen, circa 1950s

Work on the CNI began as early as the fall of 1945, at the CTB, predecessor to the ITS. Employees first transferred important information from all inquiries to index cards, particularly personal data and the details of a person's fate. When they were filed, there was to be a *meeting of cards* between search inquiries and the cards of missing persons.



Employees Checking Inquiries in the *Central Name Index* (CNI), Arolsen, 1952

There often was no *meeting of cards* because many missing persons had not submitted inquiries themselves or were no longer alive. For this reason, from 1946, personal information was also transferred from the preserved documents to reference cards which were filed in the index. The CNI thus became the key to the archive.



So-Called *Postwar Card Index* for Documents about Displaced Persons, Arolsen, circa 1972

Besides the CNI, the archive has other indexes, for example with documents about Displaced Persons, forced laborers and concentration camp prisoners. Searching the files therefore was and is time-consuming. Sorting errors in an index could make it impossible to find information on a person. The tracing system was thus very prone to error.





**Repacking the CNI in Special Archive Boxes,  
Bad Arolsen, 2017**

In 2017 all of the CNI cards that had been stored in open slipcasses for decades were repacked in special archive boxes for better protection. The CNI was digitized in 1998/99. Searches are now conducted on the computer, not in front of the shelves. New information from inquiries and documents is only documented digitally today.



**CNI Slipcase for the Last Name Akermann**

The CNI holds over 50 million index cards referring to more than 17.5 million people. Thanks to the alphabetical-phonetic system, all information about a person is filed consecutively in the index – regardless of how a name is spelled (here for example Akerman/ Ackermann).





# Tracing and Information

Over the past decades, the nature of inquiries received by the ITS and today's *Arolsen Archives* have changed continually, and so have tracing methods and the kind of information provided. At first, the everyday work of the ITS revolved around the search for children, adolescents and adults who were missing. But how does one find the missing when millions are searching and the events are receding farther into the past?

The ITS itself used to search locally or through the media. Today, however, each search starts in the collections on site. If needed, tracing organizations around the world are contacted, as well as registry or youth welfare offices, authorities, and courts. Some of the tracing methods are like detective work, with clues continually being assembled like pieces of a puzzle. To this day many people are still missing, their fates unknown.

From the mid-1950s the ITS became the central point of contact for authorities, courts and legal representatives of Nazi victims. They all requested various certificates on the basis of documents to support compensation or pension claims, as well as for naturalization issues, immigration and emigration proceedings. Most of this information comes from the archival collections.



# The Last Hope: Mass Tracing 1945–1950

Several steps were involved in tracing a person: searching for information in the existing documents, actively searching the sites of imprisonment and persecution, and communicating with authorities and other tracing offices. If this did not provide any clues about the person's fate, the CTB – and the later ITS – would initiate a *mass tracing*. Employees compiled lists of persons who were missing, which were published in newspapers or broadcast on the radio. Tracing lists were also circulated in Displaced Persons camps in the hope of finding clues about the location of the missing.

7. 57604 KL

C.L.J.

Mr. NACHMANN  
 Charlotte  
 bD 14.5.1902  
 bF Berlin

Reg. No. 20445  
 Nat. unknown  
 I No. Ed.

Ad Berlin-Neukoelln, Pflaumerstrasse 26.  
 Date January 1942.

Req. Mrs. M. W. Lewin  
 At 5459 So. Everett Ave., Chicago 15, Ill.

Remarks

CLOSED

Inquiry Card for Charlotte Nachmann, circa 1946

Else Lewin was looking for her sister, Charlotte Nachmann. The last information about her was her address in Berlin from 1942. The "CLOSED" stamp on this inquiry card means the search for Charlotte Nachmann was ended. The outcome of the search is not noted on the card.

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S.J. NO. 1014

476. MEY Hans; 24.1.1892 in Stuttgart geboren; wuchs ab 6.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt und am 25.5.1944 von hier in das KZ Auschwitz deportiert.

477. MEY Hermann und Eugenie; 70 Jahre alt; wohnen in Dorisstraße 10, Berlin-Neukölln; wuchs ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

478. MEY Hans; 1895 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

479. MEY Adolf; 1905 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

480. MEY Adolf; 1907 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

481. MEY Adolf; 1908 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

482. MEY Adolf; 1909 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

483. MEY Adolf; 1910 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

484. MEY Adolf; 1911 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

485. MEY Adolf; 1912 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

486. MEY Adolf; 1913 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

487. MEY Adolf; 1914 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

488. MEY Adolf; 1915 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

489. MEY Adolf; 1916 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

490. MEY Adolf; 1917 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

491. MEY Adolf; 1918 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

492. MEY Adolf; 1919 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

493. MEY Adolf; 1920 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

494. MEY Adolf; 1921 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

495. MEY Adolf; 1922 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

496. MEY Adolf; 1923 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

497. MEY Adolf; 1924 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

498. MEY Adolf; 1925 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

499. MEY Adolf; 1926 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

500. MEY Adolf; 1927 geboren; wuchs in Dorisstraße, Berlin; ab 11.7.1934 nach Theresienstadt deportiert.

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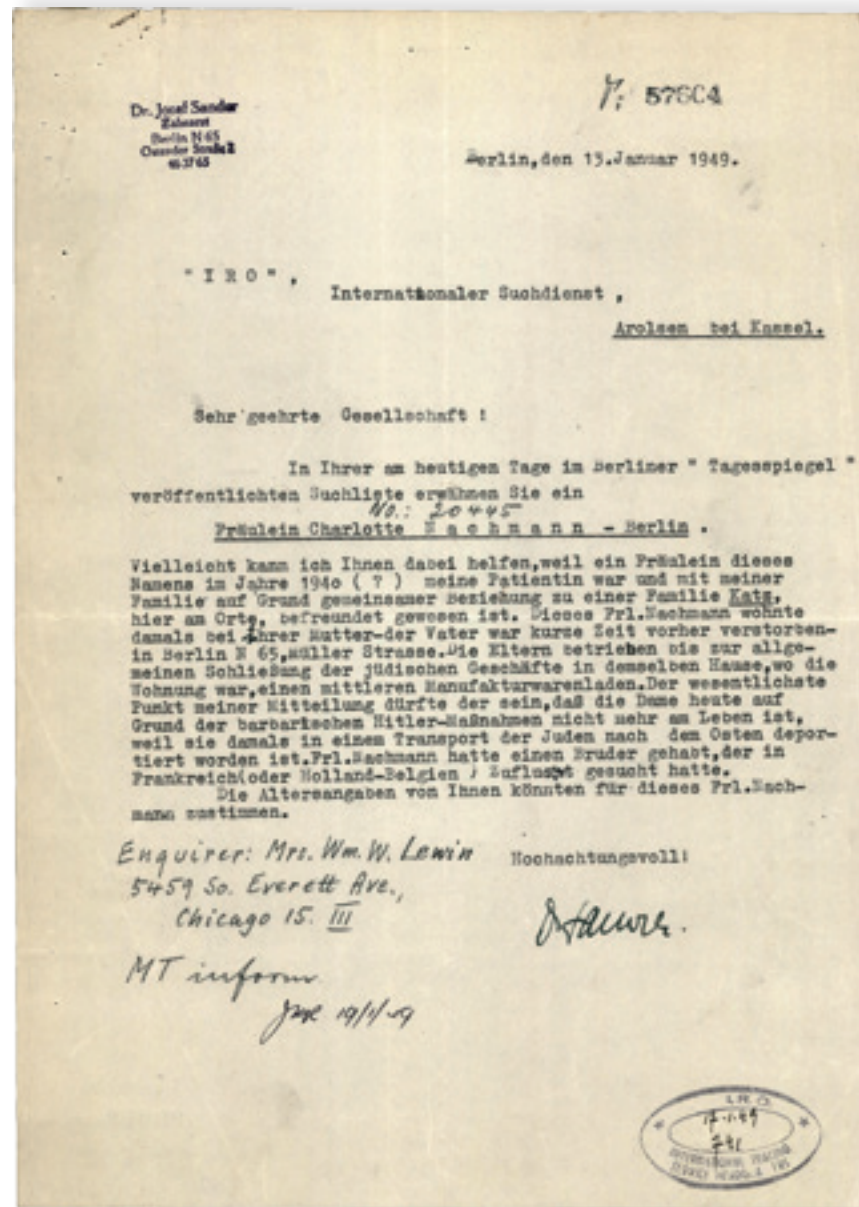
Tracing List Number 1014 for a *Mass Tracing*, 1949

The ITS compiled lists for the *mass tracing*. The following personal data was important here: family name, first name, age, birthplace and birthdate, last known address and nationality. Charlotte Nachmann is listed here as number 498.



Publication of the Tracing List in the *Berliner Tagesspiegel*, January 13, 1949

The ITS sent the tracing lists to national and international newspapers. They were usually published where the ITS thought the readers might have information, such as where the missing persons used to live. Radio stations also set aside regular slots for broadcasting the tracing lists.



Letter from Josef Sander to the ITS, January 13, 1949

Sander, a dentist, saw the search appeal in the *Tagesspiegel* and recognized his former patient, Charlotte Nachmann. He notified the ITS that she had been deported to the "East". Most of the deportees from Berlin to the "East" were sent to Auschwitz or to Riga, where the Germans murdered almost everyone.

# Audio Station Excerpts

“ This is the third broadcast made on behalf of 45 allied children, who have been Nazi captives and have no homes. ”

“ I call Katz, Salma Katz, who may be living in London. I call her on behalf of her 16-year-old cousin Hela Bergman, born in Poland, who was separated from her family at the age of 12 and made to work in an ammunition factory. Her father, mother, sister and brother were sent to Treblinka extermination camp. ”

BBC Appeal for Relatives of Children who had Survived the Camps, August 5, 1946

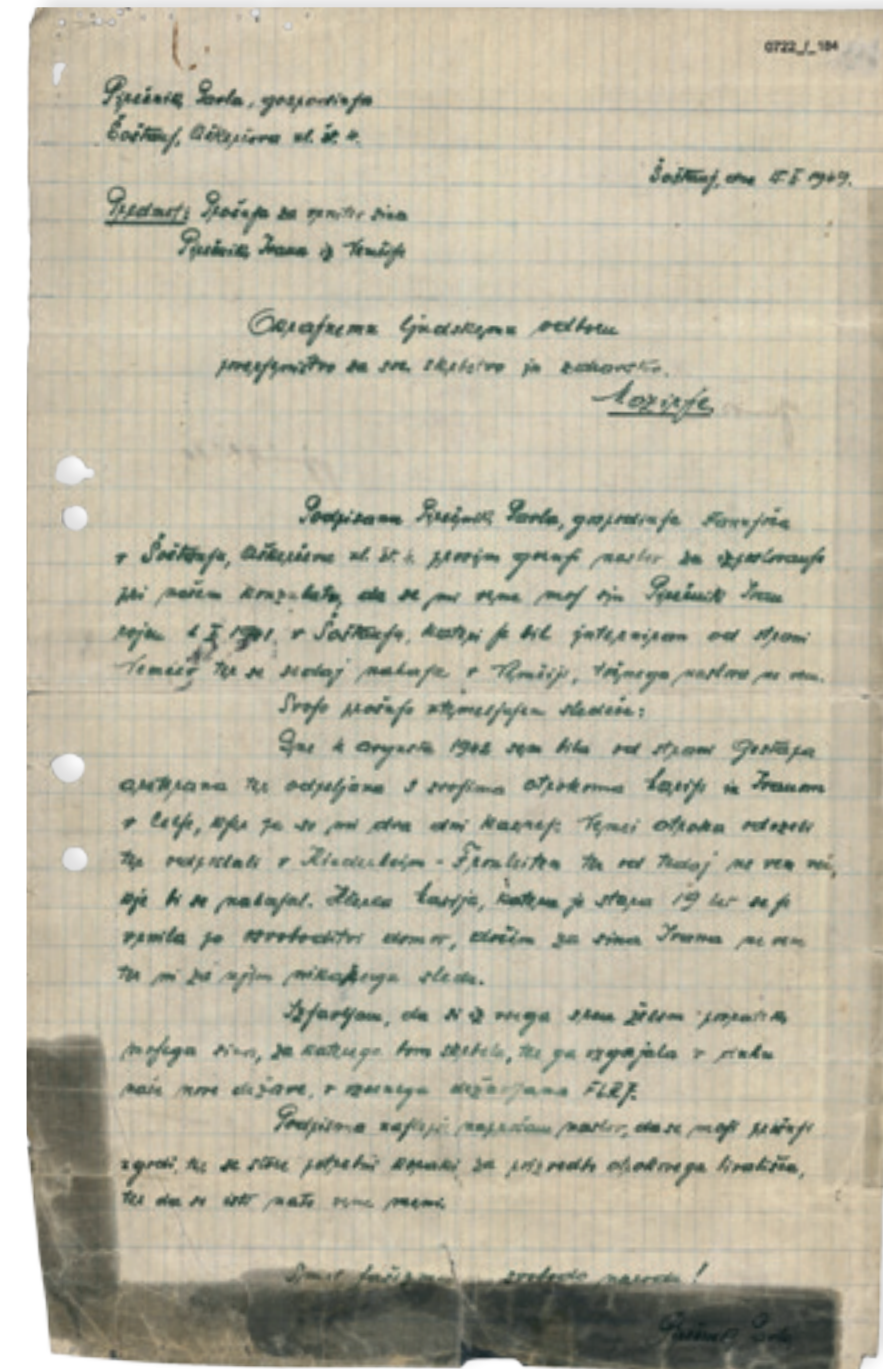
The tracing lists were read out on the radio worldwide, usually live. This is one of few remaining recordings.





# A Focus on Tracing Children and Adolescents

In 1945 the Allies liberated thousands of unaccompanied minors from concentration camps and from forced labor. They also found many children stolen from their parents and given to German families for adoption. For this reason, a special focus was placed on the tracing of children and adolescents from UN states after the war. The ITS set up a special *Child Search Branch* in 1948, based first in Esslingen and then in Arolsen from 1950. The *Child Search Branch* had two main responsibilities: It searched for children reported missing by their families, and it traced and registered unaccompanied children in order to then search for their parents or relatives.



Tracing Inquiry from Paula Pirecnik for her Son Ivan, February 15, 1949

In 1945 Paula Pirecnik began looking for her son, whom the Germans had taken in 1942 and given up for adoption. The scale of these abductions did not become clear until 1947 through the trials of high-ranking SS men. This intensified the search for children. To this day there are victims of the Nazis who know nothing about their origins.





**Child Search Branch Employees in the New Offices in Arolsen, 1952**

In autumn 1950 the *Child Search Branch* moved from Esslingen into the former SS barracks in Arolsen. The bottom photo shows the reference card for Ivan Pirecnik. In addition to the *Central Name Index*, there was a special *Child Search Index* for children and adolescents.

70110  
PERETSCHNIK  
Pirecnik Ivan  
(Pirecnik)

8/2/570

1090 9.0

5.10.51

transf. IRO - 5/2/570

The boy is Schindler's child, in custody of German authorities as "Hitler's son".

Handwritten notes in red and blue ink, including "Auftrag zur Überprüfung" and "Auftrag zur Überprüfung" with a date "1.10.52".

**Reference Card from the *Child Search Index* for Johann Peretschnik (Ivan Pirecnik), circa 1952**

The data on the card was continually updated. Most of the information is about Ivan's whereabouts, which were only discovered during the search. Ivan was first taken to a "Lebensborn" home, from where abducted children were handed over to German families. This is how Ivan was placed with the Sirsch family.

Kulmbach, 13.10.1949

An International Refugee Organization!

Die von Ihnen, uns zugesandte Suchanzeige nach einem gewissen Peretschnik Johann geb. 1.1.1941, P.M. Fam. Sirsch (od. Sirsch) Barn, Adolf Hitlerpl. 3., hat sich bei uns Herr Sirsch selbst gemeldet und wollen Ihnen somit die Adresse weiterleiten:

Guslav Sirsch  
(16) Vollmarshausen  
über Kassel

Dadurch hoffen wir Ihnen gedient zu haben und bitten Sie, die für uns entstandenen Unkosten von DM 1,- auf unseren Konto Nr. 2919 der Stadtparkassa Kulmbach, einzunehmen.

Respektvoll  
Herrn Sirsch  
Postfach 29

**Information from the *Sudetendeutscher Heimatdienst* Regarding Ivan Pirecnik's Location, October 13, 1949**

At first there were few clues about Ivan's location. The *Sudetendeutscher Heimatdienst* published a search appeal and found out that the boy was living in Vollmarshausen near Kassel. If the ITS had little information, it would contact youth welfare offices, local authorities, other tracing services or newspapers.

Report on a foster home investigation made on March 21st and April 19th 1950

PERETSCHNIK, Johannes born 1.1.1941, to Sireberg/U.-  
O/O Sirsch, Vollmarshausen Nr. Kassel (steiermark.)

I. The Family.

1. Name, age & sex of each member of the family group.

The family consists of	46 years old
Mr. Gustav Sirsch,	46 * *
Mrs. Josefina	46 * *
Mr. Josef Sirsch,	75 * *
(Mr. Sirsch's stepfather).	

2. Name, age & sex of adults living with them, but not related with them.

3. Health of all members of the family group.

The foster parents look very healthy; the foster mother has just returned from the hospital where she had stayed with an abdominal inflammation, but she believes to be alright now. The stepfather looks old and weak. The boy himself has a healthy appearance.

4. Nationality.

Until 1938 the foster parents were Czechoslovakian citizens, living in German-Slovakia; then they became German citizens. They are of German origin.

5. Religion.

Mrs. Sirsch is Roman Catholic and the boy is also brought up as a Catholic.

6. Education.

Mr. Sirsch has attended both elementary school and Mittelschule. Mrs. Sirsch has attended only elementary school.

7. Present financial situation, etc. & resources - employment.

Until 1939, Herr Sirsch states that he worked as a joiner. When he was mobilized in 1940 he joined the Waffen-SS. In 1945 he was taken prisoner by the Russians in Prague and came home in 1949, when he joined his family in Vollmarshausen. The family had been expelled from Czechoslovakia in 1946. The foster father has been unemployed ever since. He at some got a weekly assistance of 24 Marks (Arbeitslosenfluege) as a Heilmacher.

Mrs. Sirsch is a dressmaker and has been able to care for the family. She states that she works very well and has never asked for any assistance.

-2-

**Excerpt from Carla Hansen's Report on Ivan's Living Situation, March 21 to April 19, 1950**

Carla Hansen, the IRO Child Care Officer who visited Ivan, reported that he was doing well in his foster family. She also provided information about the family's background. The *Child Search Branch* worked closely with other IRO offices to find and question unaccompanied children.



C o p i e

Bonn, den 12. Oktober 1949  
N.F. No. 376 N.F.N. 507

744/ITS/OMH/1000/77

An den Herrn M I N I S T E R  
DES INNEREN UND AUSWÄRTIGEN  
LEBENS WÜRTEMBERG/HOHNZOLLERN  
T E B I L D E R

Herr Minister,

Ich beehre mich hiermit Ihnen zur Kenntnis zu bringen, dass die Suche nach vermissten Kindern, die von dem Internationalen Suchdienst durchgeführt wird und in der die Unterstützung des hohen Kommissars der Französischen Republik vorliegt, eine neue Phase der Arbeit bedingt und zwar die Einholung zehrender amtlicher Daten.

Es wird beabsichtigt von den Staatskammern entsprechende Schritte zu ergreifen, die aus der Jugend-Suche, bzw. Suchaktionen auf Grund der Einsicht von Suchdienst angestrebten Familien nicht gehen können.

Eine möglichst konkrete Feststellung der Staatsangehörigkeit eines Kindes erfordert als Vorbedingung möglichst genaue amtliche Angaben bei der Durchprüfung der eingegangenen Familienblätter hat es sich erwiesen, dass bei einem gewissen Teil der Fälle, ungefähr 1000 für die Französischen Zone, diese Angaben fehlen.

Um diesen Zustand abzuschaffen, beabsichtigen wir uns an die Staatskammern mit einem entsprechenden Fragebogen, laut beiliegendem Muster, zu wenden und die fehlenden Daten anzufordern.

Wir ersuchen Sie gleichzeitig an Sie mit der beschriebenen Bitte heranzutreten und Ihre Unterstützung und Hilfe zu gewähren, damit die vorgeschriebenen Schritte von den Staatskammern eingeleitet werden.

mit vorzüglicher Hochachtung

Jane S. A. S. S. I. S. S.  
Le chef à la Section Infance  
de Service International de  
Recherche pour la Zone Fran-  
çaise d'Occupation

1. 10. 1949

Systematic Registration of Children in Württemberg-Hohenzollern (French Zone), October 12, 1949

In October 1948, the *Child Search Branch* adopted a *Limited Registration Plan*. Ministries and agencies in the western occupation zones were asked to compile lists of all foster children, children in state or private facilities and those who had been adopted after the start of the war.

WÜRTTEMBERG

Gemeinde : H A V E N S B U R G  
Gemeinde : BODNEGG

- Pflegekinder, die in einer fremden Familie untergebracht sind  
- Enfants en garde

No	Nom et prénom des enfants	Date et lieu de naissance	Nom et adresse des parents des enfants	Observations
✓ 46	BUCHER Bruno	8-5-55 a Ravensburg	unbekannt Fischer Martin Eriegl Frida Bodnegg-Bodnegg	
✓ 47	ELMER Johann	24-8-54 a + Bosen	Elbers Johann Kraus-Gelbig- hausen Wolfe Ludwig Kraus Josephine Hinterwies- Bodnegg	Über 14 Jahre alt
✓ 48	FÜHNIGER Michael	1-10-50 a	Fünlinger Josef Altschauen, Feyerabend Maria verstorben	
✓ 49	GÖPPEL Franz	23-7-56 a Bodnegg	Göppel Hans u. Paula, Bodnegg	Göppel Franz Pauline Anna Loben-Bodnegg
✓ 50	HARD Kurt	6-3-56 a	unbekannt	Heute Josef Sina Barbara u. Wenzel- Bodnegg
✓ 51	HARDHALL Josefine	16-2-55 a Hohenberg	Hardhall Jo- sefine, Wobert unbekannt	Fuchs Josef Opfen Pauline Über 14 Jahre alt Bodnegg-Bodnegg
✓ 52	HIEDLAI Helmut	19-6-57 a	Hiedl Helmut Stuttgart	Gesche Helmut Bodnegg
✓ 53	HELD Georg	16-6-52 a + Dorfen	Hecht Georg Kammerhof- Bodnegg	Hecht Heinrich Hecht Josefine Über 14 Jahre alt Kammerhof Bodnegg
✓ 54	STÄUBER Theresia	15-8-57 a Ravensburg	Staubacher Jo- hanna, Ger- hart-Bodnegg Wichter Annie Bodnegg	Pfeffer Johann Gutemann Elisabeth G. Wagner Bodnegg
✓ 55	VOJAK Helmut	12-2-52 a + Leberhausen	Vojak Julius u. Klara, Leber- hausen Kr. Biele Bodnegg	Haydenher Berth. Über 7 Jahren Theresia Bodnegg alt
✓ 56	BEREZNIAK Josef	16-10-48 a Ostschlesien Ukraine	Berezniak Anna- tonia, verheiratet Bodnegg	Pfeffer Johann Gutemann Elisabeth G. Wagner Bodnegg
✓ 57	ROGGER Alfons	16-7-48 a Sigmaringen	unbekannt	Hilde Justine Pauer Anna Loben-Bodnegg

List of all Foster Children in Bodnegg in the Ravensburg District, 1949

Authorities listed all foster children regardless of their background. Children of non-German origin were then checked and registered by the *Child Search Branch*. One of these children was Josef Berezniak, listed here as number 56.

BEREZNIAK JOSEF 14 08 44 8 959

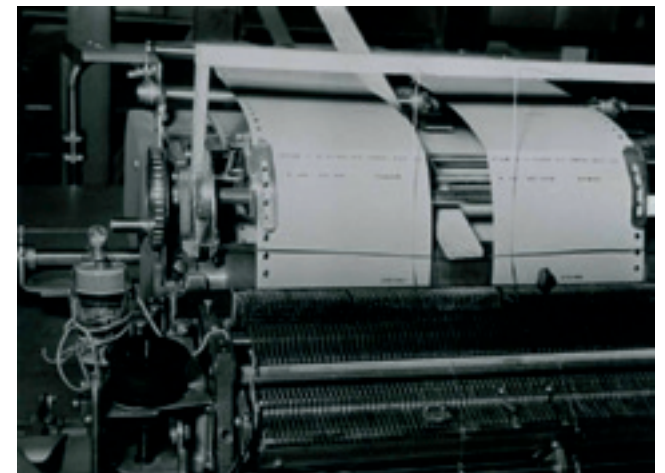
SERIAL NUMBER	SURNAME	CHRISTIAN NAME	FIRST CHRISTIAN NAME	BIRTH DAY	BIRTH MONTH	BIRTH YEAR	COUNTRY	CITIZENSHIP	ENROLLMENT IN CASE OF MARRIAGE	NATIONALITY	UNION CARD
00000000	000000000000000000	00000000	00000000	00	00	0000	0000	0000	0000	00000000	00000000
11111111	111111111111111111	1111111111	1111111111	11	11	1111	1111	1111	1111	1111111111	1111111111
22222222	222222222222222222	22222222	22222222	22	22	2222	2222	2222	2222	2222222222	2222222222
33333333	33333333	33333333	33333333	33	33	3333	3333	3333	3333	3333333333	3333333333
44444444	44444444	44444444	44444444	44	44	4444	4444	4444	4444	4444444444	4444444444
55555555	555555555555555555	55555555	55555555	55	55	5555	5555	5555	5555	5555555555	5555555555
66666666	666666666666666666	66666666	66666666	66	66	6666	6666	6666	6666	6666666666	6666666666
77777777	777777777777777777	77777777	77777777	77	77	7777	7777	7777	7777	7777777777	7777777777
88888888	888888888888888888	88888888	88888888	88	88	8888	8888	8888	8888	8888888888	8888888888
99999999	999999999999999999	99999999	99999999	99	99	9999	9999	9999	9999	9999999999	9999999999

INDEX

BEREZNIAK JOSEF 14 08 44 8 959

Hollerith Index Card for Josef Berezniak, August 22, 1949

The large amount of information gathered through the *Limited Registration Plan* was recorded on punch cards. The individual holes represent different pieces of data: for example, the fourth hole in column 60 means that Josef Berezniak was born out of wedlock.



Hollerith Machine, Munich, circa 1950

With a machine like this, a precursor to today's computers, punch cards were produced for the *Child Search Branch* of the ITS. It was hoped that this system would make it possible to record and evaluate information faster.



# Ivan Pirecnik

## 1941–1995

Ivan Pirecnik's mother spent over four years tracing her son, who had been violently taken from her by the Germans in 1942. He was from Šoštanj in what was then Yugoslavia (now Slovenia). When the Germans and their allies occupied the region in 1941, they shot Ivan's father because he was with the resistance. They gave Ivan up for adoption without his mother's knowledge. In July 1943 he was given to the Sirsch family and named Dieter. Nine years later he finally returned to his mother in Yugoslavia, where he finished school and worked in a power plant.

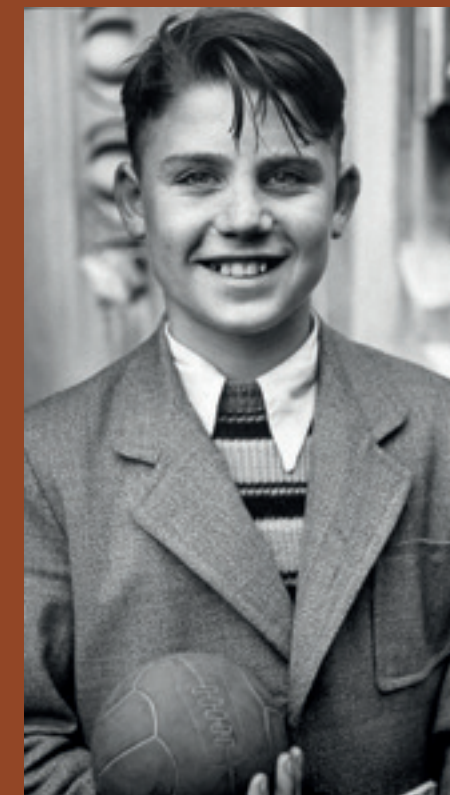
Ivan with his German Foster Parents outside a US Courthouse in Frankfurt am Main, 1952

After the lengthy search, Ivan's future was uncertain at first. Should he return to Yugoslavia or remain in Germany? Judges first ruled that he should stay with the Sirsch family. After successful protests by his biological mother, Paula Pirecnik, the judges revised their decision and granted her custody of Ivan.



Ivan with his Mother, shortly before Leaving for Šoštanj, in a Frankfurt Hotel Room, 1952

Ivan Pirecnik was about one and a half when the Germans separated him from his mother. His mother and sister survived concentration camps and forced labor. When Ivan was reunited with his mother in 1952, he spoke no Yugoslavian and had no memory of his life in Šoštanj.



Ivan Pirecnik, 1952



Ivan (3rd from left) with his Former Foster Parents, probably in Vollmarshausen, circa 1985

After returning to Yugoslavia, Ivan initially had no contact with the Sirsch family. He quickly formed a good relationship with his biological mother and sister. He first wrote to the Sirsch family as an adult and visited them in the 1980s.

# From Tracing Missing Persons to Administrative Act

In the 1950s information given by the ITS significantly changed. As a part of West German compensation for Nazi victims, lawyers, public authorities and courts wrote to Arolsen to confirm or check hundreds of thousands of claims. The ITS soon was their most important source of information when it came to imprisonment and residence certificates. By 1954, inquiries concerning compensation proceedings outnumbered tracing inquiries for missing children and adults. Search efforts increasingly involved research in the ITS archive, and providing information became an administrative act.



Employees Checking T/D Files, Arolsen, 1955

Inquiries relating to compensation had outnumbered tracing inquiries by 1954. The *tracing files* were therefore renamed *tracing/documentation files*, or *T/D files* for short. These are still created (digitally) today for each inquiry about a person. If another inquiry is received about the same person, the existing file is updated.

An  
International Tracing Service (ITS) Arolsen (Waldeck)

( ) ~~Informationen~~ ( ) Auskunft über Auswanderung  
( ) Ausweg v. Konzentrations- ( ) Sterbeprotokolle  
( ) ~~Informationen~~ ( )

Name: Mettbach Nachname: Frost  
Vorname: Rosa M./w. Religion: Kath.

Brd. u. Führung an-  
geborene Person und Beruf

Geburtsdatum: 19.6.1924 Geburtsort: Birkenfeld  
Wien Österreich

Familienstand: z. B. d. Inhabung: ledig Beruf: Artistin  
Staatsangehörigkeit: Österreich / deutsch  
Eingetragte - Name (Nachname) Vorname und Adresse: Johann Mettbach  
München 9, Perlenerstrasse 125  
Ort und Datum der Eheschließung: München, 3.8.1946  
\* Letzter Wohnort vor Einlieferung in das Konzentrationslager:  
München Duguteilerstr. 14 Bayern  
Name des Vaters: Adolf Weiserich Name der Mutter: Maria Frost

Angaben über verschiedene Aufenthaltsorte in Konzentrationslagern, Ghettos, Gefangenen- und and. Lagern:  
Verhaftet am: Febr. 1944 in: München durch:  
Eingeliefert in das: KZ Auschwitz Haft Nr.:  
am: Febr. 1944 ursprüngliche Stelle:  
Überstellt von: KZ Auschwitz am: Febr. 1944 Haft Nr.: 10044 I  
Überstellt von: KZ Ravensbrück am: Sept. 1944 Haft Nr.:  
Überstellt von: KZ Wolkenburg am: Mai 1945 Haft Nr.:  
Inhaft verlassen oder gestorben am: Mai 1945 in: Wolkenburg  
Es weiteren Angaben bitte Rücksicht beachten

Nur bei Anforderung von Nachforschungsunterlagen ausfüllen:  
DP Nr.: Aufenthalts i. d. DP Lager:

München, den 27. März 1954  
Anmeldung in:  
Akt. 1212 260  
1275 = 91/30/41

Kaiserliches  
Kriegsministerium  
E. A.  
Friedrich  
Friedrich

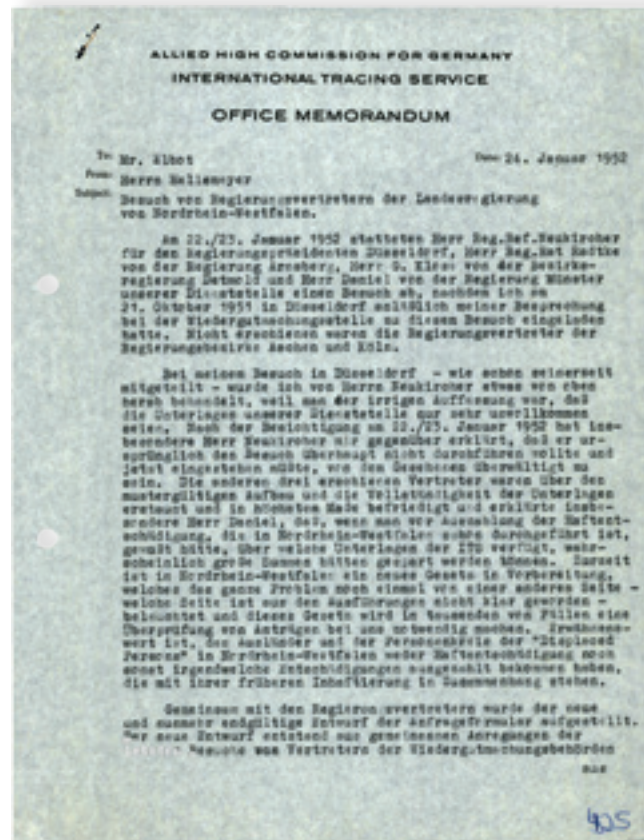
Standard Compensation Inquiry Form submitted to the ITS, this one for Rosa Mettbach, March 22, 1954

To handle inquiries more quickly, the ITS sent out standardized forms to the authorities from 1952. In compensation proceedings it was usually not the applicants themselves who contacted the ITS, but their legal representatives or the compensation authorities. In the case of Rosa Mettbach, this was the Bavarian Compensation Office.



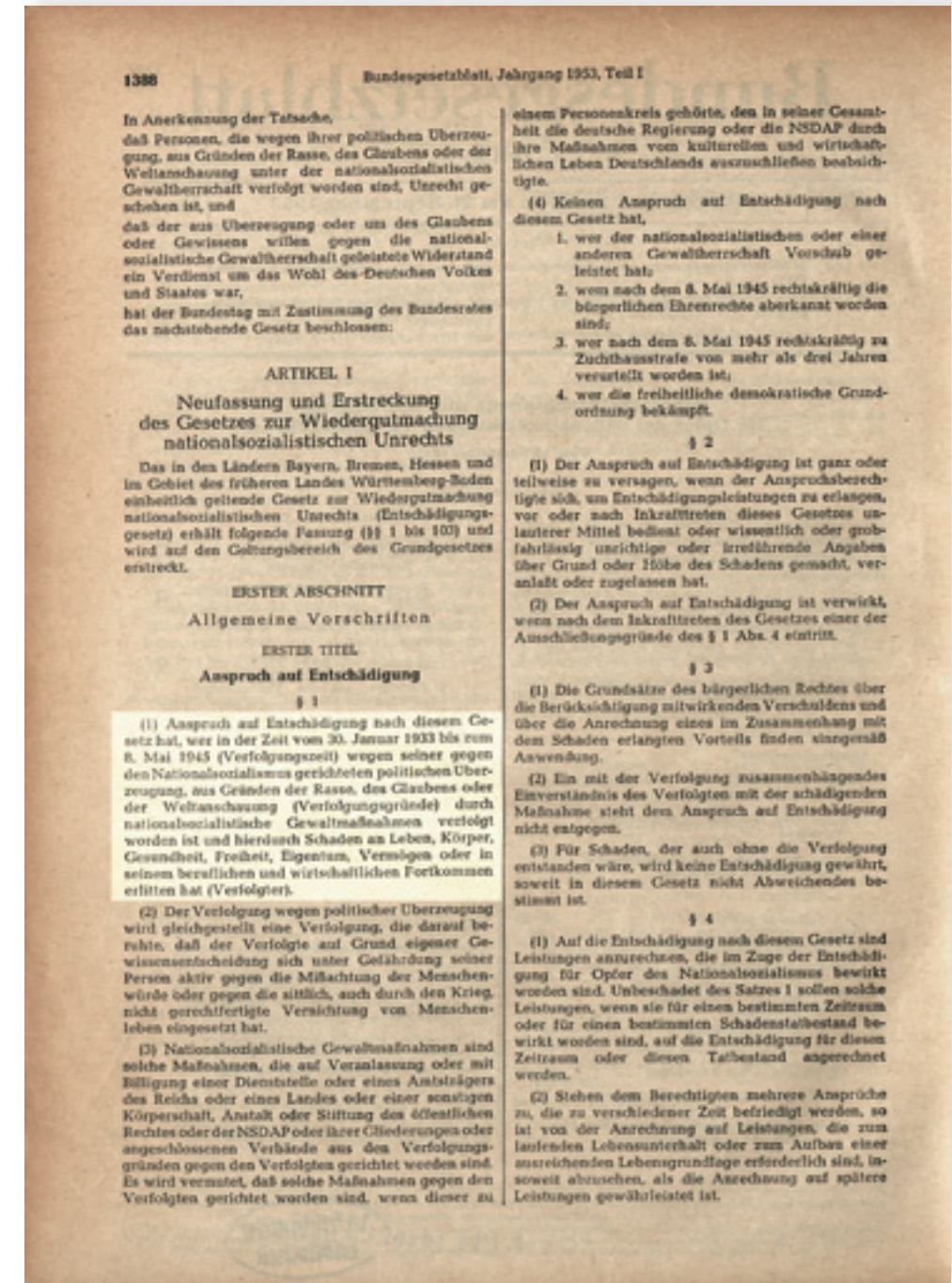
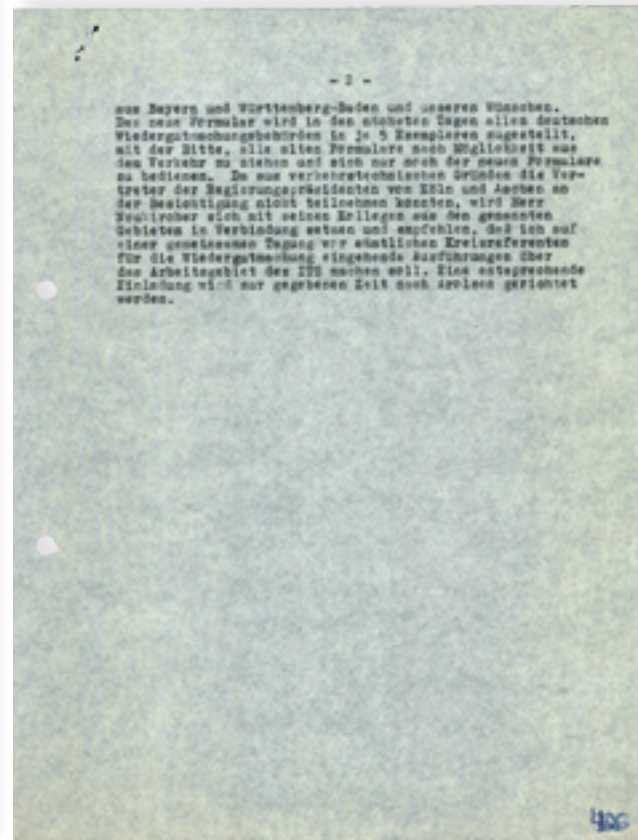






Report on ITS Visit by Government Representatives from North Rhine-Westphalia, January 24, 1952

Government representatives visited the ITS and discussed a joint, standardized approach to compensation proceedings. As early as 1946, the Allies had passed compensation laws in the western zones. But a standardized rule for the Federal Republic was not established until 1953.



Excerpt from the First German Federal Law for Compensating Nazi Victims, September 21, 1953

Paragraph 1 of the law defined a very narrow concept of who was considered a victim of persecution. Other groups of victims, such as Sinti and Roma people, homosexuals, so-called "anti-social elements" and "professional criminals", as well as nearly all non-German victims of Nazi persecution, were thus excluded from compensation.



# Rosa Mettbach

1924 – 2004

Rosa Mettbach fought for Sinti and Roma rights after 1945. In 1954, the authorities contacted the ITS regarding her claim. The Nazis had persecuted her as a “Gypsy.” Rosa Mettbach was the only member of her large family to survive multiple concentration camps, including Auschwitz and Ravensbrück. After 1945, her fight for compensation was initially fruitless. The authorities rejected her claim on the basis that she had been arrested for supposed “anti-social” behavior, and not for racist or political reasons. Rosa Mettbach kept fighting for compensation and was gradually able to assert her claims in the 1960s.



Rosa Mettbach, Munich, 1993



Johann and Rosa Mettbach on their Wedding Day, Munich, August 3, 1946

Johann Mettbach worked as a forced laborer on the construction of the BMW plant in Allach. After 1945, the couple fought for the rights of Sinti and Roma people. Johann Mettbach was supposed to be the first chairman of the planned *Committee of German Gypsies*.



Rosa Mettbach (Center) with Family Friends, Rosenheim, 1948

For many former victims, it was important to have contact with other survivors. Numerous members of the Höllenreiner family had also been murdered. The Mettbach and Höllenreiner families joined forces after 1945 to fight for the remembrance of the murder and persecution of Sinti and Roma people.

# Infographics

## Incoming, Outgoing and Backlogs of Responses to Humanitarian Inquiries

Over the decades, the ITS changed how it statistically counted its casework. The display reveals important developments, but the figures are not entirely consistent. The workload reflects the large waves of compensation: West German compensation in the 1950s and 1960s, pension and compensation processes in Central and Eastern Europe from the early 1990s, as well as the compensation for forced laborers between 2001 and 2007.

*The figures are taken from the official annual reports*





# Piles of Letters Unanswered: Waiting for Information

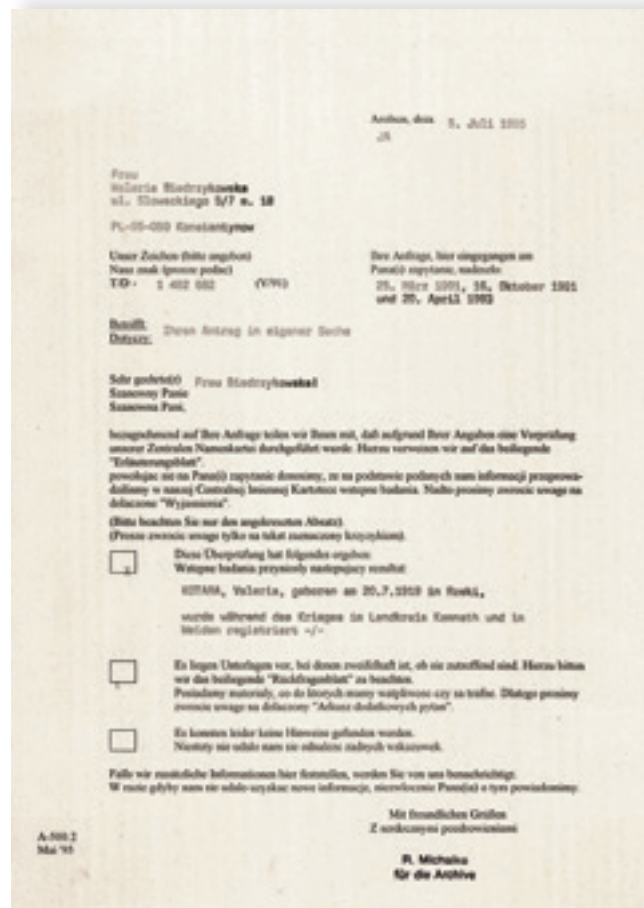
From the 1990s, the ITS faced hundreds of thousands of inquiries from Nazi victims living in Central and Eastern Europe needing evidence for pension or compensation claims. Many of these people were already very old when dedicated foundations in Poland, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus transferred first German compensation payments in the 1990s. From 2001, further payments were made to former forced laborers by the *Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future"* (EVZ). Although the ITS used various measures to speed up its process, the extremely long waiting times remained a major problem.



## Waleria Biedrzykowska Wrote to the ITS Four Times for Evidence of her Forced Labor, 1991-1993

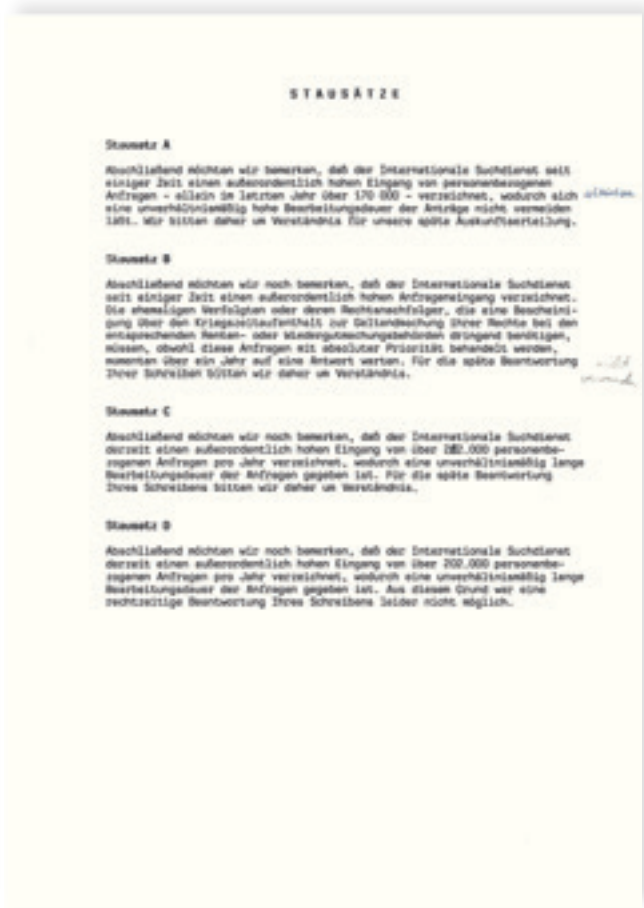
In 1993 she complained that she had been waiting two years for her certificate. This was the situation for over 600,000 former victims mostly from Central and Eastern Europe whose applications had piled up unanswered at the ITS since the early 1990s. They needed proof for pension claims. Many were only now able to request compensation for the first time.





ITS Certificate for Waleria Biedrzykowska, Provided Four Years after her First Inquiry, July 5, 1995

To clear the backlog, the ITS introduced a quick procedure for handling inquiries. Only the *Central Name Index* was checked for this. The first step was to send only the results of this initial check. If a detailed document review was required, applicants had to contact the ITS again.



Instructions on Pre-Formulated "Backlog Phrases" for ITS Employees, circa 1995

The ITS sent standardized letters to applicants who would wait years for their certificates. These letters explained the reasons for the backlog. The ITS employees were given pre-formulated phrases, known as "backlog phrases," for this purpose. The waiting periods remained a source of frustration for the applicants, many of whom were very old.



The Frankfurter Rundschau Reported on the Long Waiting Periods at the ITS, March 4, 1995

50 years after the liberation, the directors of the concentration camp memorials, who also received thousands of requests for imprisonment certificates for former Central and Eastern European prisoners, expressed outrage at the long waiting periods at the ITS. They also complained that researchers were being denied access to the ITS archive.

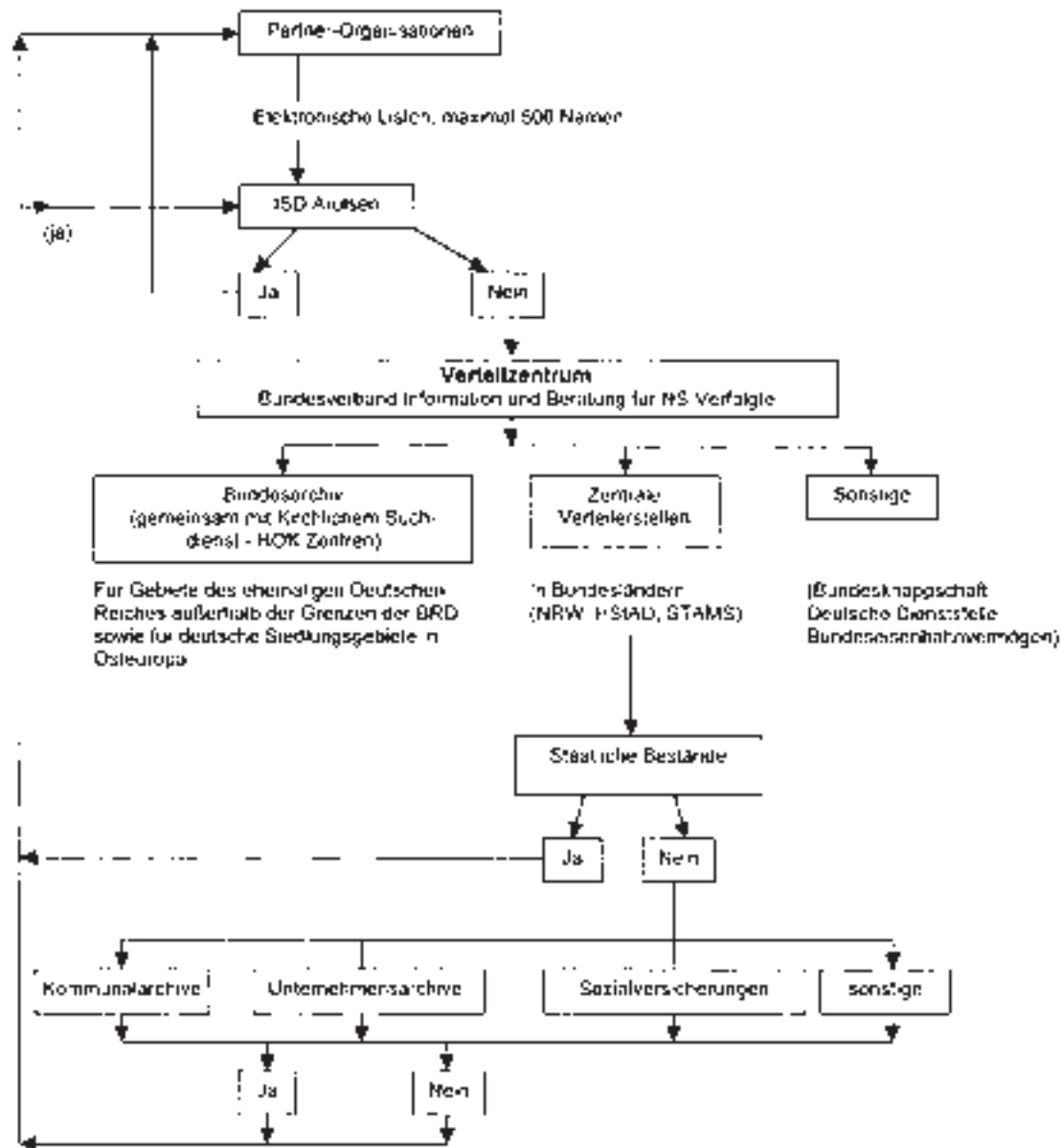


According to Spiegel Magazine, the ITS Expected Thousands of Additional Inquiries, April 2000

In summer 2000, lawsuits and huge international pressure led to the creation of the EVZ Foundation. Its main purpose was to compensate former forced laborers. Payments were made through seven international partner organizations. They checked over 2.3 million applications and often asked the ITS and other archives for verification.



Listenverfahren für Nachweise zur Zwangsarbeit in Deutschland



A Newly Established Archive Network was Supposed to Enable Fast Responses to Inquiries, 2002

Payments were organized by partner institutions of the EVZ Foundation. They checked applications and asked the ITS and other archives for proof in over 800,000 cases. For this purpose, an archive network was created. The ITS was the first point of contact. In the 60% of cases in which the ITS was not able to help, the inquiry was forwarded to the network.

Listenanfrage Sonderformat (ITS-Vorgangsnummer: L/3904-2002)

ID	Nachnamen (1-4)	Geb./Tarnname (2)	Vornamen (1-4)	Geb.dat.	Geburtsort	sonstige Angaben	Alter
A051190	SAFUDINOW		GEMADUL SAFUDINOWITSCH		g.Leningrad	1941-1945 Deutschland, Potsdam, Lager	
A051191	SAFUDINOWA		CHADITSCHA KARIMOWNA		g.Leningrad	1941-1945 Deutschland, Potsdam, Lager	
427877	SCHLESNIJAKOWA		WERA MICHALOWNA	23.08.1926	s.Kjuschewo, Wolgogradskaja obl.	1942-1945 Deutschland, Sammelstelle in Frankfurt, im Dorf Lichtnau, Lager, beim Flugzeugwerk, krank war, 2 Monate im Krankenhaus in Kassel (Typhus und Malaria) Sammelstelle, bei einer Besitzerin (2-3 Monate)	788
426086	SAWINA SOKOLOWA	SAWINA	SNAIDA IWANOWNA	13.04.1937	p.Lomonosow, Leningradskaja obl.	18.09.1942 - 1945 Deutschland, Kingsepp (Sammelstelle), Ostpreussen, Deutsch-Elau, in Gross Steinersdorf bei einer Grafen, der Leiter hieß Hans Tuman im Dorf Westgrosen	
A051192	SAWINA		ANNA PROKOPJEWNA	00.00.1901	p.Lomonosow, Leningradskaja obl.	18.09.1942 - 1945 Deutschland, Kingsepp (Sammelstelle), Ostpreussen, Deutsch-Elau, in Gross Steinersdorf bei einer Grafen, der Leiter hieß Hans Tuman im Dorf Westgrosen	
A051193	SAWIN		IWAN MICHALOWITSCH	00.00.1900	p.Lomonosow, Leningradskaja obl.	18.09.1942 - 1945 Deutschland, Kingsepp (Sammelstelle), Ostpreussen, Deutsch-Elau, in Gross Steinersdorf bei einer Grafen, der Leiter hieß Hans Tuman im Dorf Westgrosen	
A051194	SAWINA		PRASKOWJA IWANOWNA		p.Lomonosow, Leningradskaja obl.	18.09.1942 - 1945 Deutschland, Kingsepp (Sammelstelle), Ostpreussen, Deutsch-Elau, in Gross Steinersdorf bei einer Grafen, der Leiter hieß Hans Tuman im Dorf Westgrosen	
A051195	SAWIN		GRIGORI IWANOWITSCH	00.00.1932	p.Lomonosow, Leningradskaja obl.	18.09.1942 - 1945 Deutschland, Kingsepp (Sammelstelle), Ostpreussen, Deutsch-Elau, in Gross Steinersdorf bei einer Grafen, der Leiter hieß Hans Tuman im Dorf Westgrosen	
A051196	SAWIN		PJOTR IWANOWITSCH	00.00.1927	p.Lomonosow, Leningradskaja obl.	18.09.1942 - 1945 Deutschland, Kingsepp (Sammelstelle), Ostpreussen, Deutsch-Elau, in Gross Steinersdorf bei einer Grafen, der Leiter hieß Hans Tuman im Dorf Westgrosen	
A051197	SAWIN		NIKOLAI IWANOWITSCH	00.00.1932	p.Lomonosow, Leningradskaja obl.	18.09.1942 - 1945 Deutschland, Kingsepp (Sammelstelle), Ostpreussen, Deutsch-Elau, in Gross Steinersdorf bei einer Grafen, der Leiter hieß Hans Tuman im Dorf Westgrosen	
426047	ABROSKIN		BORIS PETROWITSCH	13.03.1934	g.Leningrad	02.1944 - 1945 Deutschland, Frankfurt a.O., Lager; seit April in Waldau, die Ziegelei, Arbeitslager nicht weit von Lignitz	
A051198	ABROSKINA		AGAFJA JOSIFOWNA	00.00.1896	g.Leningrad	02.1944 - 1945 Deutschland, Frankfurt a.O., Lager; seit April in Waldau, die Ziegelei, Arbeitslager nicht weit von Lignitz	
A051199	ABROSKIN		PJOTR DANILOWITSCH	00.00.1897	g.Leningrad	02.1944 - 1945 Deutschland, Frankfurt a.O., Lager; seit April in Waldau, die Ziegelei, Arbeitslager nicht weit von Lignitz	
A051200	ABROSKINA		WALENTINA PETROWNA	00.00.1925	g.Leningrad	02.1944 - 1945 Deutschland, Frankfurt a.O., Lager; seit April in Waldau, die Ziegelei, Arbeitslager nicht weit von Lignitz	
426051	ABROSKINA SABELINA	ABROSKINA	NINA PETROWNA	00.00.1931	g.Leningrad	02.1944 - 1945 Deutschland, Frankfurt a.O., Lager; seit April in Waldau, die Ziegelei, Arbeitslager nicht weit von Lignitz	
502625	MUSENKO		STEPAN MAXIMOWITSCH	10.09.1918	die Region Kraenodar, st.Kraenodarskaja	06.1941 - 02.1945 Deutschland, Tilsit, beim Werk - Stahlbetonbauten	

Seite 3/1

List of Applicant Names Compiled by a Partner Organization of the EVZ Foundation, 2002

The lists were submitted electronically. This was supposed to speed up the exchange of data within the archive network, which involved over 300 institutions. Because the information provided was imprecise, and because the ITS sometimes sent lists to the network too late, tensions developed.



Quick Check of Lists in the Digitized Central Name Index, Bad Arolsen, 2006

Computers were expected to speed up the provision of information. In addition to the lists, the ITS received individual inquiries which were supposed to be integrated into the lists. This however happened very rarely. As a result, these inquiries were not processed in time for compensation payments to be made.

# Searching for Clues: New Questions from Later Generations

What happened to my (grand)parents under the Nazis?  
Does my mother have a grave? Who were my biological parents?  
These and similar questions still reach the *Arolsen Archives* today. Relatives of former Nazi victims from around the globe are curious, as many survivors never spoke to their families about their fate, or only talked about their experiences after they were quite old. To answer these questions, research is conducted in the archive, and today relatives also receive copies of any documents found. In the case of missing persons, other offices are also contacted, and to this day families are still being reunited.



**Lucy Stoxen with her husband and children at the ITS, Bad Arolsen, July 23, 2018**

Lucy Stoxen's mother was born in 1944 in the Theresienstadt ghetto. Most members of her Jewish family were deported to Auschwitz or Sobibor and murdered. Her mother survived and emigrated to Australia. Lucy Stoxen is researching her family history so that she can tell her children more about it.





Alexandr Afanasjew with his Daughter and Granddaughter in Bad Arolsen, May 8, 2017

Alexandr Afanasjew was captured by the Germans as a prisoner of war in 1944 and later imprisoned in a concentration camp. He and his daughter spent years searching for proof, after former Soviet POWs could receive a small compensation payment from the German government in May 2015. He used the money to publish his autobiography, *Alone Against Germany*.



Zaneta Kargól-Ożyńska Carrying out Research with her Husband and Daughter, Bad Arolsen, August 3, 2016

Her grandfather Julian Banaś never returned home from forced labor. In Bad Arolsen, the family learned that he was murdered in the summer of 1942, and that his grave and a "Stolperstein" are in Schwerte, where he had performed forced labor. In 2016 the family visited Schwerte and placed a candle on the grave of Julian Banaś.

pourrait être utile au traitement de votre demande

pour à cette en effet en travaillant a été informé a dachau,jaichach et à modifions.Elle a voulu des archives et elle a été libérée en août 1946.Mai sa fille je voulais qu'elle soit reconnue et avoir les documents avant qu'elle s'ait cette terre c'est le plus beau cadeau que nous pouvons lui faire et des réconciliation avec son pays

Motif de la demande pour la personne concernée

Renseignements pour membres de la famille sur la documentation relative à l'incarcération/ l'emprit/ le travail forcé/ le séjour ou le séjour en camp DP après 1945. Je souhaite obtenir des précisions sur la persécution suite d'un parent proche pendant la guerre et son sort dans l'après-guerre immédiat. J'effectue cette recherche par intérêt personnel pour ma famille et son histoire.

Le membre de ma famille en question a survécu à la persécution nazie?

Le membre de ma famille en question a survécu à la persécution nazie et est encore en vie.

Faciles indiqués à ce sujet son adresse actuelle. Cette personne est-elle informée de votre registre auprès de l'ITZ (qualifier)

OK,elle est informée,c'est à sa demande,elle est très âgée,SI ma je suis sa fille. Voici son adresse, scharf avec le rue des officiers 67000 BADENHEIM

Connaissances actuelles

Je viens juste de commencer mes recherches

Email (Protokolle)

Von: ITS Arolsen (arol@its-arolsen.org)  
 Datum: 3. Februar 2016 16:23  
 An: Email (Protokolle)  
 Betreff: Humandaten Antrag (20160203162328) Person 1 (1)

Folgende Familienfakten wurden gemeldet:

Prisonnier	rachel
Nom	scharf
Nom et numéro de la carte	01000000000000000000
Code postal	67100
Commune	Landshut
Pays	France
Téléphone	00330632000000
Adresse électronique	l.scharf@orange.fr

Bijoux de l'ITZ

Je certifie sur l'honneur que toutes les indications ont été fournies en toute bonne foi.

ITS Bad Arolsen  
 - 3. Feb. 2016 16:23  
 020  
 20160203162328

Personne 1

Prisonnier	anna
Nom	scharf
Sexe	féminin
Situation familiale pendant la guerre	célibataire
Nom de naissance	anna
Nom de naissance	scharf
Nom de substitution éventuel	incertains
Date de naissance	29 novembre 1923
Lieu de naissance / région, département	Landshut Bayern
Nationalité (pendant la guerre) allemande	
Religion	catholique
Nom et prénom du père	scharf Joseph
Nom de jeune fille et prénom de la mère	scharf anna

Quel est votre lien de parenté en quelle est votre relation avec la personne sur laquelle vous souhaitez obtenir des informations

Je suis sa fille.

Informations supplémentaires

Ma mère a été prisonnière politique.Elle a été arrêtée le 13 avril 1942 sur le

Inquiry from Rachel Scharf for her Mother Anna Scharf at the ITS, February 3, 2016

Since 2016 the ITS has accepted inquiries through an online form. Rachel Scharf wanted to use this option to confirm her mother's path of persecution. The Munich District Court had sentenced Anna Scharf in 1942 to two years in jail because she had had contact with French prisoners of war, which was forbidden.

Zuname:	Scharf
Vorname:	Anna
Mädchen-/Tarnname:	
geboren am:	29.11.23
Geburtsort:	Landshut
Nationalität:	-
Häftlingsnummer:	-
Fundort:	PP MÜ-Stadelh 2498/47

Reference Card for Anna Scharf from the Central Name Index, 1993

This card indicates that information about Anna Scharf's imprisonment can be found in the prisoner register of the Munich-Stadelheim jail in the *Arolsen Archives*. Originals and copies of such documents from other prisons are stored in the archival collection labeled *Group PP: Prisons and Persecution*.

## Video Station Excerpts

*“ I want to know about everything, ... I want to hold the documents in my hands. ”*

*Rachel Scharf*

*“ I knew my father suffered because he never knew his biological father, and I also knew that he had started research when I was still a child. ”*

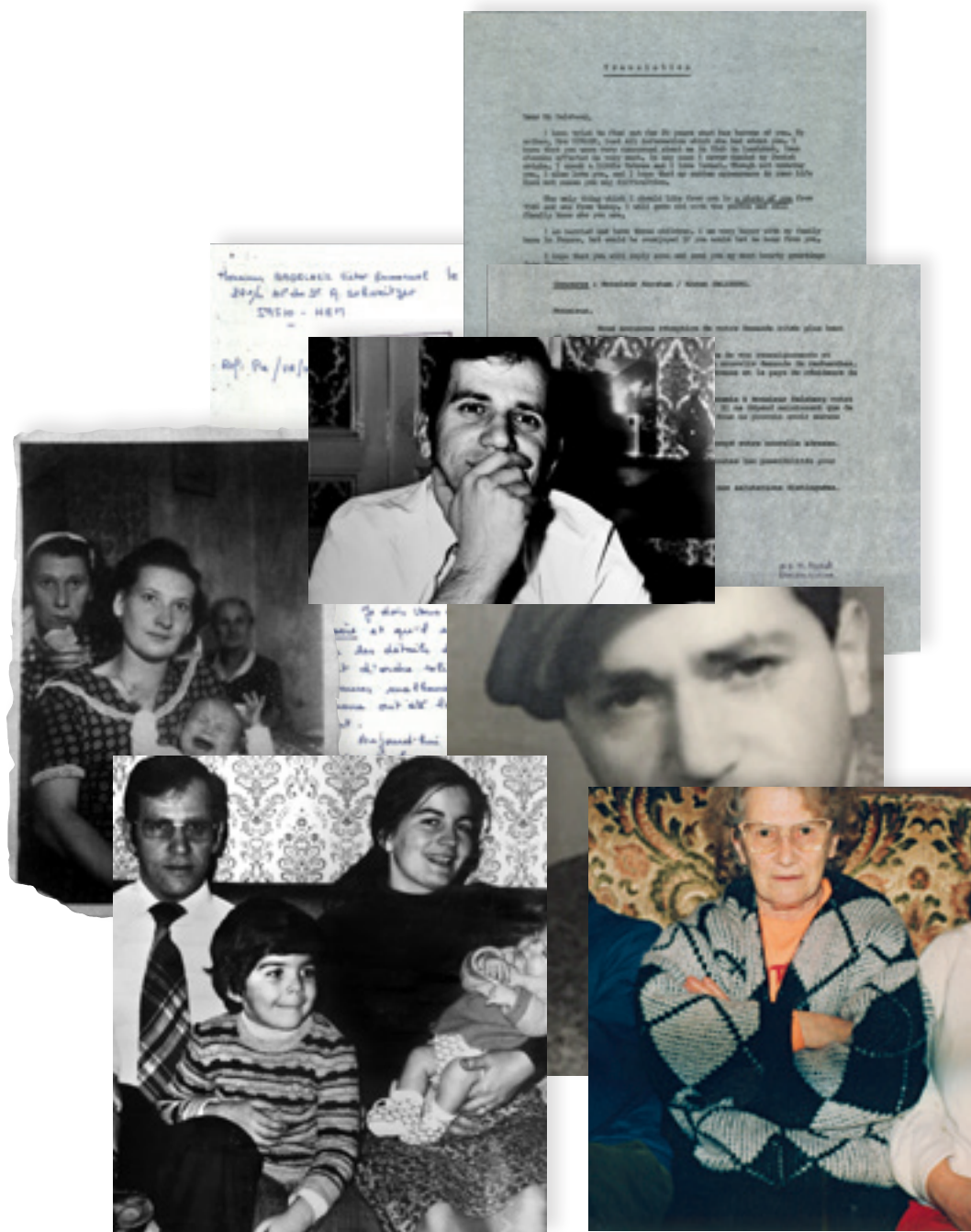
*Etienne Scharf*

*“ And today we are so happy that we’ve found him and were able to achieve his goal in the end. Achieving the goal of his research gave us a great feeling of joy and peace, inner peace. ”*

*Etienne Scharf*

**Rachel and Etienne Scharf Talk about  
Researching their Family History, 2017**

The ITS was able to confirm Anna Scharf’s imprisonment and close an open tracing case at the same time: Emmanuel Scharf, Anna Scharf’s first son, unsuccessfully searched for his father his whole life. An inquiry from his sister Rachel Scharf got the search going again. Etienne Scharf, the son of Emmanuel Scharf, was then able to complete the search and meet his grandfather.



### Years Later: An Old Case is Solved

Archive documents verified the imprisonment of Anna Scharf. ITS staff also found a tracing case from the 1980s that was closely linked to the history of the Scharf family. Only now, after Rachel Scharf had submitted her inquiry in 2016, was it possible to solve the case.



# Anna Scharf

## 1923–2017

When documents from the ITS provided important proof in 2016, the Munich District Court lifted Anna Scharf's 1942 conviction. Because she had had forbidden contact with prisoners of war, the 19-year-old had been held in the Aichach women's prison. After the war, Anna Scharf met Abraham Zalcborg, a Polish Jew who had survived the atrocities of Auschwitz. One year later they had a son, Emmanuel. But the couple then separated, and Zalcborg emigrated to Israel. Anna Scharf moved to France in 1949 and started a family. She began telling her children about her imprisonment early on.



Anna Scharf with her Son Emmanuel, Lyon, circa 1955

Emmanuel knew that his father was a Polish Holocaust survivor. From the 1970s he had tried in vain to find him. Emmanuel died in 1995. His sister Rachel submitted an inquiry to the ITS in 2016, which made it possible for his son Etienne to end the search successfully in 2017 and visit his grandfather in the USA.



Anna Scharf in her Home, Strasbourg, August 17, 2017

Anna Scharf loved to play German folk songs on the piano and harmonica. But she could no longer imagine living in Germany on account of her time spent in a women's prison there. She died in Strasbourg in 2017, surrounded by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Anna Scharf's Children: Rachel, Fayçal, Farid and Yamina, Lille, 1969

Anna Scharf married in France and had four more children. She started talking about her persecution early on. Anna Scharf was deeply affected by her traumatic experiences. She was a strict mother and did not develop an affectionate relationship with her children until she was very old.





# Who Were and Are the Employees?

The staff expanded rapidly in the early years, growing from 80 people in 1945 to 1,758 four years later. The first employees came from 21 countries. They included Allied military and civilian personnel, DPs and Germans, some of whom had been SS or Nazi Party members. At the start, the staff was insufficiently trained. Employees often lacked historical knowledge and archival skills. At the same time, the language skills of DPs were very helpful. However, by the mid-1950s most DPs had left Arolsen. Their positions were filled by locals from within the region, many of whom joined the ITS from other professions. With the ITS turning into an archive and information center, recent years have seen the arrival of new employees with a specific training background for these new activities.



## Alexander Kopaniak 1915 - 1986

Alexander Kopaniak was a former Polish prisoner of war and one of the first employees of the *Central Tracing Bureau*. His Polish, German, English and French language skills initially earned him a position as a clerk in 1946.

"Because on his experience of living in a prisoner of war camp, working in tracing was very important to him," as his wife, Johanna Kopaniak, put it.

The couple had met each other through work, where she was one of the first German employees. Kopaniak did not want to return to Poland and stayed in Arolsen. There, he worked at the ITS until he retired in 1980.



Employees in Front of the ITS Headquarters, on the Grounds of the Former SS Barracks, Arolsen, 1952

1946



Alexander Kopaniak (center) with Staff of the *Wartime Documents Section*, Arolsen, circa 1972

Alexander Kopaniak was in charge of the *Wartime Documents Section* for some time and took over the *Postwar Documents Section* in 1978.

## Erich Henschel 1921-2007

Henschel was a trained graphic artist and classic career-changer. Though not a specialist, he eventually led various departments. He studied graphic design in Berlin and loved photography. After graduating he was drafted into the German army, where he was retrained as a cartographer. In 1947, these skills probably helped him secure a job at the *Central Tracing Bureau*, predecessor of the ITS. There he was tasked to draw numerous maps and charts, including those showing the sites of concentration camps, which the employees needed for their daily work.

1947



Henschel (Standing, r.) in the *Concentration Camp Documents Section*, Arolsen, c. 1972

Erich Henschel worked at the ITS from 1947 until retiring in 1986. From 1980 to 1986 he was head of the *Concentration Camp Documents Section*.

## Józef Żyłka 1910-1953

Józef Żyłka was one of more than 500 Displaced Persons who shaped the first phase of the *International Tracing Service*. He had been deported from Poland in 1940 for forced labor. After liberation he and his family arrived in Arolsen in 1948. He was initially employed in the DP Training School, an educational facility for DPs housed in the former SS barracks. When it closed in the spring of 1949, he moved on to the ITS, where he last worked in transportation for the administration. In April 1952 he and his family emigrated to the USA.

1949



The Żyłka Family in Bremerhaven, shortly before Emigrating, April 2, 1952

The Żyłkas were among the last DPs allowed to emigrate to the USA under the "DP Act". Their last name started with Z, so they boarded the ship last. Newspapers therefore referred to Józef Żyłka as the "last European refugee." Upon arrival, US President Truman greeted the family at the White House.





1949

ITS News Bulletin Number 2, March 10, 1949

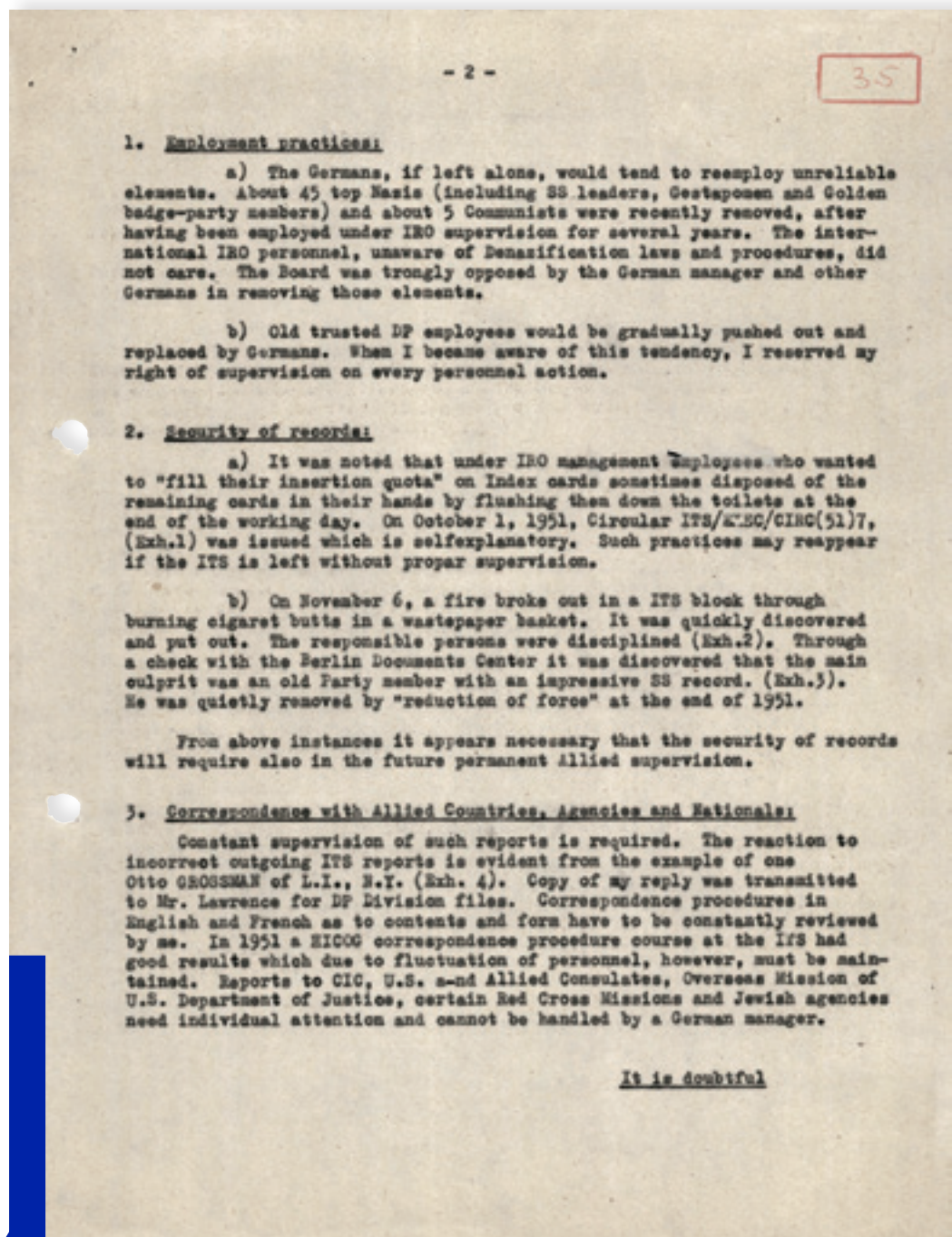
In 1949 and 1950 the ITS published a staff newsletter. A total of 14 issues published in English have been preserved. They give an impression of the multi-national background of the first ITS employees and provide an insight into their life and work.

No.	Name	Sex	Nationality	Birth Date	Age	Birth Place & Country	I.D.No.	Remarks
137.	WISNY Henryk	F	Polish	21.7.1914	5	Lelmefeld, Germany	453390	
138.	WISNY Gertruda	F	Polish	16.3.1916	3	Gerbach, Germany	563388	
139.	WISNIEWSKI Jozefa-Lena	F	Polish	8.1.1918	2	Wladyslaw, Germany	864403	
<del>140.</del>	<del>WISNIEWSKI Helena</del>	<del>F</del>	<del>Polish</del>	<del>27.3.1926</del>	<del>23</del>	<del>Jassy, Poland</del>	<del>599480</del>	<del>16.4.50 to USA</del>
141.	LAPINSKI Danna	F	USSR Ukrainian	30.5.1925	24	Katerinowka, Russia	569904	
142.	LAPINSKI Danna	F	Polish	18.7.1924	25	Dzika, Poland	569904	
143.	LALOGA Cecylia	F	Polish	15.1.1923	26	Ceskaowa, Poland	568819	
144.	LAPINSKI Danna	F	Latvian	1.11.1924	25	Adama, Latvia	566024	
145.	LAPINSKI Danna	F	Ukrainian	10.8.1924	25	Trifanowo, Russia	569908	16.4.50 to USA
146.	LELA Josef	M	Polish	3.1.1920	29	Sobieszewo, Poland	562158	
147.	LELA Gertruda	F	Polish	25.3.1915	34	Berlin, Germany	536298	
148.	LELA Gertruda	F	Polish	29.1.1914	6	Torun, Germany	536298	
149.	LELA Gertruda	F	Polish	12.6.1918	1	Berlin, Germany	536296	
150.	LEWINSKI Jolanta	F	Latvian	21.5.1922	27	Aikswale, Latvia	795305	
151.	LEWINSKI Gertruda	F	Latvian	13.1.1923	26	Talasski, Latvia	795433	
<del>152.</del>	<del>LEWINSKI Jolanta</del>	<del>F</del>	<del>Latvian</del>	<del>23.11.1927</del>	<del>22</del>	<del>Sobieszewo, Germany</del>	<del>795463</del>	<del>16.4.50 to USA</del>
<del>153.</del>	<del>LEWINSKI Gertruda</del>	<del>F</del>	<del>Polish</del>	<del>18.8.1924</del>	<del>25</del>	<del>Pala Gostkowo, Poland</del>	<del>568820</del>	<del>to USA - 30.1.50</del>
154.	LEWINSKI Gertruda	F	Polish	18.8.1924	25	Pala Gostkowo, Germany	568820	
155.	LEWINSKI Gertruda	F	Polish	18.8.1924	25	Pala Gostkowo, Germany	568820	
156.	LEWINSKI Gertruda	F	Polish	18.8.1924	25	Pala Gostkowo, Germany	568820	
157.	LEWINSKI Gertruda	F	Polish	18.8.1924	25	Pala Gostkowo, Germany	568820	
158.	LEWINSKI Gertruda	F	Polish	18.8.1924	25	Pala Gostkowo, Germany	568820	
159.	LEWINSKI Gertruda	F	Polish	18.8.1924	25	Pala Gostkowo, Germany	568820	
160.	LEWINSKI Gertruda	F	Polish	18.8.1924	25	Pala Gostkowo, Germany	568820	

1950

Excerpt from a List of Employees Housed in the Arolsen DP Camp, 1950

The names crossed out are those of DP employees who left around 1950 because they emigrated or returned to their countries of origin.



1952

Excerpt from a Memorandum by Hugh G. Elbot,  
Chairman of the ITS Administration, February 6, 1952

Elbot firmly rejected the idea of handing over the ITS to the Germans. He feared that old Nazis would be hired, was concerned about the security of the documents and wanted to ensure access to the archives for US intelligence. From 1952 the staff was regularly screened, and at least 45 people were dismissed, usually due to prior SS membership.

## Margret Schlenke

### \* 1952

"The work I do here can only be learned through practice," Margret Schlenke concluded after over 47 years of work at the ITS. A local resident, she joined the ITS upon leaving school in 1970. Colleagues who were former DPs introduced her to the job. She took over the *Child Search Archive* in 1976 and also the *Tracing Department* nine years later. For decades, Margret Schlenke continually reassembled the puzzle pieces involved in the search for individuals. She was in contact with Red Cross offices, authorities and archives all over the world, as well as survivors and their families.



1970

Margret Schlenke with Folke Heinecke, Tracing  
his Family History, Bad Arolsen, 2007

Margret Schlenke spent decades helping survivors and family members search for relatives and clarify their fate. Folke Heinecke was born as Aleksander Litau in Crimea. The Germans deported him and gave him up for adoption to a German family. He has been tracing his origins since his adoptive parents died.



# Jens Paul

\* 1975

When Jens Paul joined the ITS in 1996 as a so-called *list-checker*, he had no idea what area he would be working in 20 years later. He started out reviewing lists of former foreign forced laborers in the context of pension or compensation proceedings. Parallel to this, he visited various German archives and microfilmed documents about former victims of Nazi persecution. Since 2007 he has been a staff member of the ITS library, where he assists colleagues and visitors with an interest in specialist books on Nazi persecution.

1996



Jens Paul in the Library of the *Arolsen Archives*, Bad Arolsen, August 21, 2018

Today the scope of Jens Paul's work is manifold. In addition to advising users, he catalogs books and journals and indexes them through keywords.

# Christiane Weber

\* 1984

"It's unbelievable what you can find out about someone's fate from index cards and forms if you just have the right knowledge about their context," says employee Christiane Weber, whose job it is to make historical documents and texts understandable. She studied history and German and English studies in Gießen, employed at the *Arbeitsstelle Holocaustliteratur* for a few years. After that, she worked as an editor for an academic publisher. At the *Arolsen Archives* she worked on the e-Guide, an online tool that provides extensive background information on the documents found in the archival collections.

2017



Christiane Weber Talks About Working with Historical Documents at a Workshop, 2018

Research associates at the *Arolsen Archives* participate in international workshops and conferences. They explain the potential for research and education that lies within the collections stored in the *Arolsen Archives*.

2018



Employees behind the Main Building,  
Bad Arolsen, August 29, 2018





# Collecting and Organizing

One of the world's largest collections of documents on Nazi crimes was created in Arolsen from 1946 onwards to clarify fates. Today the *Arolsen Archives* consist of over 30 million documents. The accumulated collections of tracing services are special, not only in scope but also in terms of content and structure.

Nearly all documents in the archive relate to specific people, to persecution at specific sites, but also to life after the war. They include early investigative records of the ITS itself, which document Nazi prisons and death marches, for example. The archive was organized in its unique way in the early 1950s, when the zonal tracing bureaus sent all their documents to Arolsen.

The core of the archive consists of large card indexes and files which are arranged according to various topics and criteria. Since the ITS continually acquired original and copied documents, its collection grew rapidly, particularly from the 1980s. But there was also a dark side to this development.

Since the late 1990s, the collections have been digitized and measures have been taken to preserve the documents. This was originally only done to speed up working with the files. Today the aim is to preserve and provide widespread access to this unique documentary heritage of the world.



# Early Investigative Documents

When the ITS was created in 1948, it had only a few documents. Besides copies of lists of names and reference cards for tracing, most of the documents in Arolsen were investigative records. Since many Nazi crimes were documented poorly or not at all, the ITS initially set out to find proof and evidence itself. For example, in order to gather evidence of the death marches endured by concentration camp prisoners at the end of the war, the ITS questioned thousands of local offices and survivors, researched grave sites and mapped the individual march routes. Many victims of the death marches were identified in this way.



Recovering the Bodies of Death March Victims,  
Neunburg vorm Wald, April 29, 1945

During their advance at the end of April 1945, the US Army found the bodies of hundreds of concentration camp prisoners murdered by the SS in Neunburg vorm Wald and the associated town of Neukirchen-Balbini. The liberators confronted the residents with these crimes and ordered them to recover and bury the victims.

Landratsamt  
UNRRA-Suchstelle  
Neunburg vorm Wald

Neunburg v. Wald, den 22. März 1947

Für die Gemeinde Neukirchen-Balbini. 196 (6.)

BETRIFFT: Todesmarsch ..... *H. Reg.* .....

- Sind einer oder mehrere Gefangene Transporte während des monates *Apr. 1945* durch Ihre Gemeinde gegangen? ja
- Falls bejahend, zu welchem Zeitpunkt? *21.4. - 22.4.45*  
(Wenn möglich, genaues Datum angeben).
- Aus welcher Richtung kam derselbe? Lager Floussenburg
- Aus wieviel Gefangenen bestand dieser Transport? ca 500 Mann
- Sind Gefangene beim Durchgang Ihrer Gemeinde gestorben? ja
- Falls bejahend, wieviel? *100*
- Sind Gefangene in der Nachbarschaft Ihrer Gemeinde gestorben? ja
- Falls bejahend, wieviel? unbekannt
- Wo sind diese Gefangene beerdigt? *KE-Friedhof am Ostausgang*
- Von wem sind dieselben begraben worden? *Neukirchen-Balbini*  
(Wenn möglich, Angabe des Namens und Anschrift) *Epistlicher Bat Neuk.-Balbini*
- Wer pflegt diese Gräber? *Gemeinde Neukirchen-Balbini*  
(Angabe des Namens und Anschrift desselben)?
- Hat der Bürgermeister die Personalien der Gefangenen n. Ankg. registriert, welche im Lager, in der Gemeinde oder in der Nachbarschaft gestorben und begraben wurden sind?
- Kann die Richtung angegeben werden in welcher sich der Transport begeben hat? *Transport wurde aufgelöst*
- Ist dieser Transport zu Fuss weitermarschiert oder in Ihrer Gemeinde durch die Bahn abtransportiert worden? *Auflösung des Transportes.*
- Sind noch Augenszeuge in Ihrer Gemeinde anwesend, welche Auskunft über solche Transporte aussagen können? ja
- Falls bejahend, ist Name und Anschrift derselben angegeben?  
a) *Ehemalige KE-Ler Alfred Heuter, wohnhaft in Bosen -12- Gemeinde Neukirchen-Balbini,*  
b) *Händler Josef Lecher, Neukirchen-Balbini Haus Nr. 76*

Anmerkung: Beim Bürgermeisteramt Neukirchen-Balbini sind die Gefangenennummern der erschossenen bzw. verstorbenen ehemaligen KE-Ler registriert.

I.A.  
*(H. Reg.)*  
Buchbearbeiter.

Questionnaire for the Town of Neukirchen-Balbini  
Regarding a Death March, March 22, 1947

Thousands of questionnaires were sent to German cities and towns to gather information about death marches that had passed through. The ITS used the completed questionnaires to map the individual routes and then searched for clues about the victims.





ITS Map Showing the Death Marches from Flossenbürg Concentration Camp, March 2, 1950

Based on the investigative forms, large-scale maps were produced of the march routes from individual concentration camps. The death march from Flossenbürg to Neukirchen-Balbini is listed seventh in the legend on this map. ITS employees used the maps as tools for tracing and providing information.

International Tracing Service  
 Records Branch - Berlin

Neukirchen-Balbini  
 No. 72.176

Identified Identification of unknown Dead

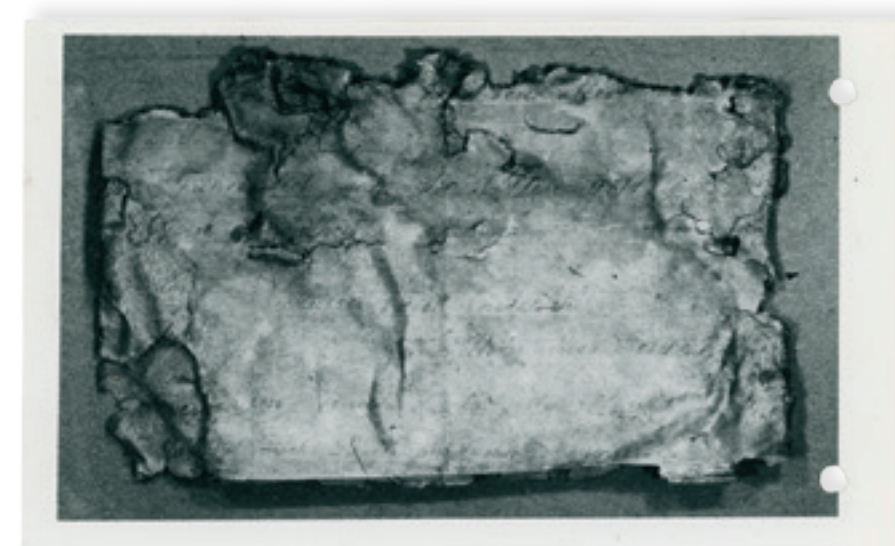
Category	Under What Number is Found in	Passive	Location
Prisoner	2. A. 06 KOPKA, Marceli - Belg Warszawa	110	No. 13.890 p. 13 Neukirchen-Balbini Transp. 22.1.49 to No. 118188
Flossenbürg	not found		
Prisoner	17.12.13 DEUTSCH, Joel - Belg. Jew Basina	111	No. 13.892 Transp. 22.1.49 to CC Burgomünde No. 118188 ✓
Pr. found	not found	-	

Prepared by: 17.1.50



Exhumation Register for Wetterfeld Concentration Camp Cemetery, circa 1946

Exhumations were carried out along the routes of death marches from Flossenbürg concentration camp. In cooperation with the town, an UNRRA team recorded all information regarding the identity of those murdered. The original prisoner numbers that had been attached to the clothing of the deceased were pasted into this register.



Personal Handwritten Note, Recovered in Plattenberg Concentration Camp Cemetery, November 1949

In November 1949, 140 caskets were opened in a cemetery in Neukirchen-Balbini in order to identify the death march victims buried there. A few items of clothing were found as well as personal notes such as this one, probably the last note from a family to their child: "Behave yourself. We ask God to keep you healthy. Loving kisses. Your parents and siblings."

ITS Investigative Form for Identifying a Murdered Concentration Camp Prisoner, August 17, 1950

ITS employees compared the prisoner numbers found along the march routes with concentration camp documents. These provided information about the names associated with the numbers as well as about stations of imprisonment. In this case, Joel Deutsch was identified as a probable victim of the death march in Neukirchen-Balbini.







# The Creation of an Archive for Clarifying Fates

The ITS archive in its current structure was established in 1952. It was created when the Allied zonal tracing bureaus closed and all of their collected materials were sent to Arolsen.

At the same time, the ITS shifted its focus to clarifying individual fates primarily on the basis of documents. To this day, the archive is organized in three large collections:

1. Documents from concentration camps and other detention sites
2. Documents about forced laborers
3. Documents about Displaced Persons

Information on a person is often found in all three collections.

## ITS Visitors Viewing the *Concentration Camp Documents Section*, Arolsen, 1952

After the zonal tracing bureaus closed, the ITS opened a *Concentration Camp Documents Section* in the early 1950s. This held valuable records that the Allies and survivors in camps such as Buchenwald, Dachau and Mauthausen had been able to save. These were always the most important archival holdings for the ITS.



## ITS Envelope with Documents about Marian Otremski from Buchenwald Concentration Camp

The individual documents of concentration camp prisoners, such as this prisoner registration card, personal effects card and prisoner registration form for Marian Otremski, constitute one core of the archive. They were bundled together in envelopes by the ITS and are stored in large alphabetical indexes. The envelopes were sometimes incorrectly labeled.









Delivering DP Documents to the New ITS Main Building, Arolsen, 1952

After the dissolution of the *International Refugee Organization*, the ITS received over 30 tons of registration documents for Displaced Persons at the end of 1952. This huge addition to the ITS archive led to the creation of a third collection in summer 1953: the *Postwar Documents Section*.

OTREMBSKI 10  
 (Handwritten note: OTREMBSKI 10)  
 (Red stamp: RESIDUE FOR UNO CARE FRANK A.)

**APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE AND MAINTENANCE**

PCIRO (B) 27/6/51

OTREMBSKI (Family name) 30.3.47 (Date) 427740 (Identify No.)

Other spelling or aliases: OTREMBSKI

Other spelling or aliases: POLISH (Nationality)

Religion: (blank) (Other)

Marital status: (blank) (Other)

Wife: (blank) (Other)

3939

Names	Relationship to head	Date of birth	Nationality	Town, province and country of birth
X Marian	head	21. Nov. 1915	POLISH	Kolonka/Lodz Poland
Woman				
Children				

Other members of family: (blank)

Full names: (blank)

Places of residence for last 10 years

For whom	dates	Town or village, province and country
1	1915-1918	Kolonka, Lodz, Poland
1	1918-1920	POLISH ARMY, POLAND
1	1920-1921	GORLITZ, SILESIA, POLAND
1	1921-1922	Kemmer Westfalen, Germany, Halag GA
1	1922-1924	Lesmerthe/Jerlorn west. "
1	1924-1925	ISERLORN, WESTFALEN, Germany
1	1925-1926	BUCHENWALD, THURINGEN, Germany
1	1926-1927	DACHAU, BAYERN, GERMANY
1	1927-1928	MÜNCHEN, "
1	1928-1929	DP-CAMP MENDEN, Westphalia, Germany
1	1929-1930	ISERLORN, Westfalen, "

(M) for wife inside.

Application for Support as a Displaced Person from Marian Otremski, October 30, 1947

The index cards, lists and case files compiled by Allied relief organizations for helping Displaced Persons (DPs) were and are an important resource. Documents like this application, from a file of the *International Refugee Organization* for Marian Otremski, provide clues about peoples' whereabouts and movements after the liberation.

# Marian Otremski

## 1915-1997

Marian Otremski is an example of many victims of the Nazis whose fates are documented all across the ITS archive. He was a Polish soldier who was captured by the Germans and performed forced labor from 1942 in the city of Iserlohn. When Marian Otremski tried to escape in 1944, he was imprisoned in the concentration camps of Buchenwald, Natzweiler and Dachau. After the liberation, he lived as a Displaced Person in Germany and spent five years as a driver for Allied aid organizations. Because he was unable to emigrate to Australia as planned, Marian Otremski remained with his new family in Iserlohn.



Passport Photos of Marian Otremski, his Wife and his Son, 1951

After the liberation, Marian Otremski returned as a Displaced Person to Iserlohn, where in 1949 he married the Dutch woman Maria van Kessel, who had also lived there during the war. Their son Romvald-Uno was born in 1950. These three photos are from an *International Refugee Organization* file.

D 785264

Marian Otremski  
(geb. 21.11.15) 5860 Iserlohn, den 13. August 1992  
VERMERKT Nr. 21

Internationaler Sachdienst  
Große Allee 5 - 9  
3568 Arolsen

erledigt mit Schreiben  
vom 20.09.92 Q.G.M.

Betr.: Ermittlung der ID-Nummern in den verschiedenen ID-Lagern, in denen ich untergebracht war.

Bevorzugend auf mein Anfang August mit einer Ihrer Damen geführtes Telefonat gebe ich Ihnen folgendes Sachverhalt bekannt:

Als Kriegsgefangener kam ich nach Deutschland und wurde später als ziviler Gefangener dienstverpflichtet. Als Gegner des Nationalsozialismus schloß ich mich einem Kreis von Widerstandskämpfern an. Leider fiel die Sache auf und ich versuchte mich der Verhaftung durch Flucht zu entziehen, wurde aber am 30.9.44 durch die Gestapo in Siegen verhaftet. Von 30.9. - 1.12.44 war ich im Tollsegenflughaus in Siegen inhaftiert, als Gefangener wurde ich in diesem Zeitraum bei dem Geländearbeiter Hansverloren zum Arbeitseinsatz eingewiesen. Dort erlitt ich einen Arbeitsunfall und kam als Gefangener in das Krankenhaus Fiederhahn bei Siegen.

Vom 2.12. - 12.12.44 wurde ich als politischer Häftling des Konzentrationslager Buchenwald überstellt.

Vom 15.12.44 - 1.4.45 war ich als politischer Gefangener im Konzentrationslager Natzweiler (Saarbrücken - Saarbrücken).

Vom 2.4.45 - 4.4.45 war ich politischer Häftling im KZ Dachau und vom 5.4.45 - 2.5.45 war ich als politischer Gefangener im KZ Dachau, Außenkommando München-Ilten.

Befreit wurde ich am 2.5.45 durch die Alliierten.

auf den Rest meiner damaligen ID-Nummern befindet sich noch die Nr. 07356 mit einem Winkel und einer 7, welche Nummer ich in den anderen Lagern hatte, weiß ich nicht mehr.

Wie ich Ihnen am Telefon schon sagte, wurde meine Klage seitens der USG Düsseldorf abgewiesen mit der Begründung, daß ich zu Recht inhaftiert worden sei, da ich mich den Befehlen des 3. Reiches nicht unterworfen habe.

In ich hoffe, daß ich irgendwann doch noch einmal mein Recht auf eine Rente bekommen werde, würde ich gerne, wenn möglich, die fehlenden Nummern aus den jeweiligen Konzentrationslagern haben.

In die mir schon sagte, daß sehr viele Anfragen bei Ihnen vorliegen, habe ich mich schon auf eine längere Warteszeit eingestellt.

Mit freil. Gruß

M. Otremski

ITS Arolsen
Nr. 17.086.192
Antrag:
Ausg. Datum: 17.8.92
Empf. Datum: 15.09.92
Empf. Name: 23.01.92

JAV 01. 1. 92

Letter from Marian Otremski about his Persecution, Iserlohn, August 13, 1992

In 1992 Marian Otremski wrote to the ITS as part of his second attempt to receive compensation for his time in the concentration camps. His first claim had been rejected by a West German court in the 1960s. In 1992 he was still living in Iserlohn. It is not known whether he received compensation before he died in 1997.



# Infographics

## Over 30 Million Documents – the Scope of the Collections in the Arolsen Archives

This model conveys an impression of the scope of the collections in the *Arolsen Archives*. The pillars show how high the documents from the three main collections and the *Tracing/Documentation files (T/D files)* of the *Arolsen Archives* would be if they were stacked up.



# Preserve and Destroy: The Acquisition of Documents

The ITS had searched for documents ever since it was founded. But from the 1980s and especially after the end of the Cold War, its activities in acquiring documents grew by leaps and bounds. For many inquiries from Nazi victims in Central and Eastern Europe the ITS was unable to find information in its own archive. ITS teams therefore traveled through Germany and Europe to acquire, copy or microfilm collections of original documents. But this document acquisition was also highly problematic, because of an outdated definition of who was a Nazi victim, one which had been overtaken by recent public debates.



**Two ITS Employees Filming the Death Books from Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Moscow, October 1989**

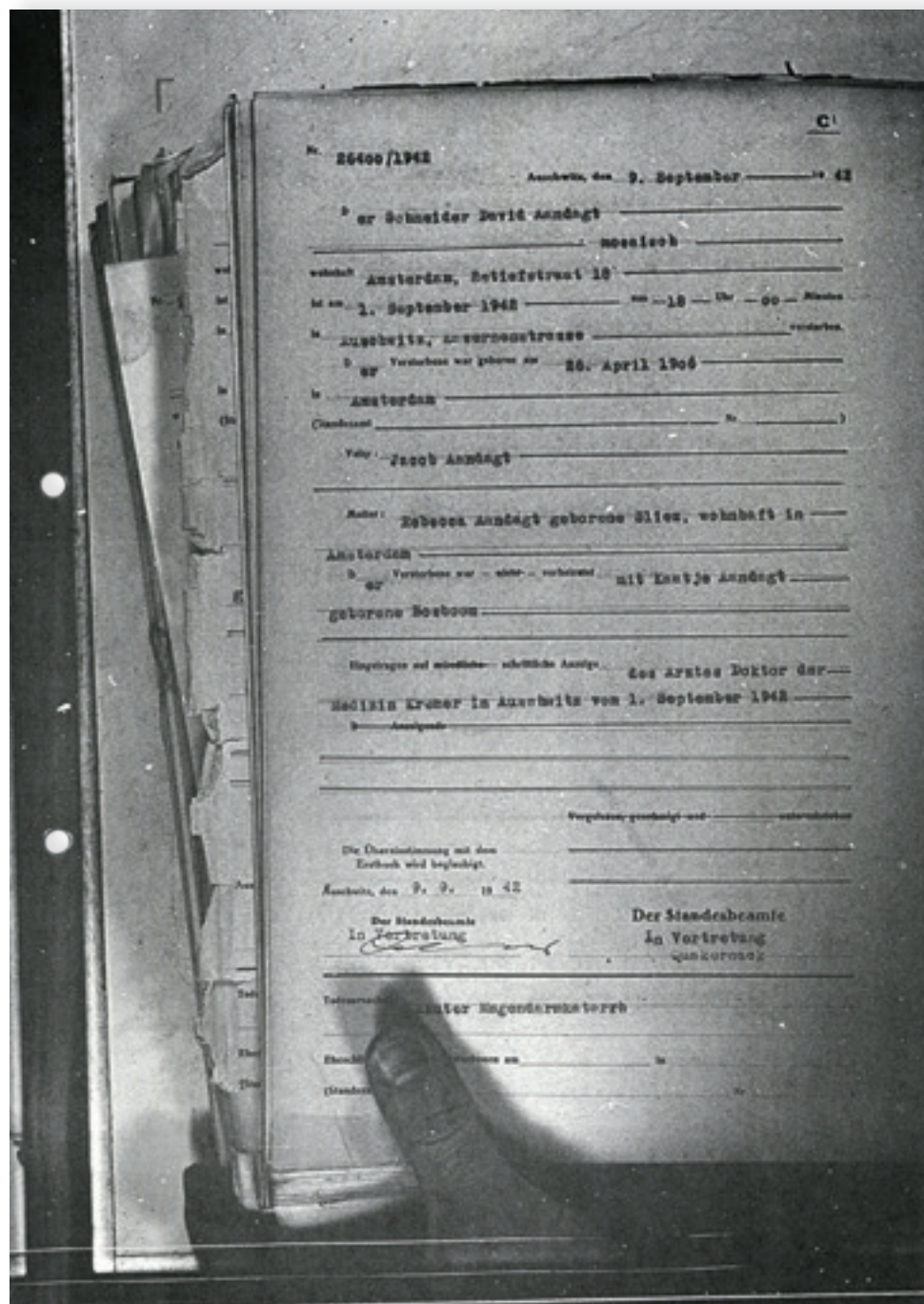
This photo symbolizes a breakthrough in the acquisition of documents. In autumn 1989, after lengthy negotiations, the ITS was able to film the death books from Auschwitz during a multi-week trip to Moscow. The Red Army had seized the documents in 1945. Before 1989, Soviet archives had been inaccessible for decades.



**Microfilm Cases for the Filmed Death Books from Auschwitz, Labeled in October 1989**

Before the introduction of digital technology in the 2000s, ITS employees acquired documents using microfilm cameras suspended in large frames. In autumn 1989, the two employees sent to Moscow filled 29 films, each with around 3,000 images.





Printout of Microfilmed Death Certificate for Dutch Jew David Aandagt, September 9, 1942

The microfilms from Moscow finally gave the ITS proof of the deaths of thousands of victims in Auschwitz. Documents were often filmed hastily under bad conditions. The focus was on recording the victims' names. Some documents are partly illegible, like this one, where the finger of the employee holding the book was in the way.



Hessische/Niedersächsische Allgemeine Report on a Press Conference in Arolsen, November 10, 1989

In November 1989 the ITS negotiated with the Central State Archive in Moscow to film more documents, including those from Sachsenhausen concentration camp which had been taken to Moscow in 1945. Acquiring such documents helped many victims of Nazi persecution and their relatives.



Printing out Microfilm in the ITS Photo Lab, Arolsen, circa 1991

To incorporate filmed documents in its archive, the ITS had to print the microfilms document by document. The printouts were then given page numbers and stored in folders in the archive. Names in the documents were recorded on cards for the *Central Name Index*.

# Audio Station

## Interviews

“ In 1994 I was in Moscow for four weeks. Then there were trips to the UK, several to Belarus – in Minsk. One time in Minsk I arranged a last-minute trip to Brest for a week in the same period; I was in Ukraine several times; Prague, twice in the Czech Republic. ”

Constanze Schmidt

“ Once, in Speyer, we were in a psychiatric hospital or something. ... I didn't have a clue about euthanasia or anything ... So you really just looked for the names – is that maybe a Polish forced laborer or a German Jew? – and you microfilmed it. ”

Jens Paul

### Employees Describing their Document Acquisition Experiences in 2018

The ITS continued to acquire documents until 2006. In the end, the focus was on Eastern Germany and countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The two employees here describe their trips and the often unusual working conditions.

“ When we were on the road, you never knew what to expect. ... In big companies, you were taken into the cafeteria. But in some places you were taken down into the filthiest cellar, in the winter, with open windows, and then you had to improvise. ”

Jens Paul

“ Back then in Moscow, I was totally irritated at the start by these huge masses of German files. ”

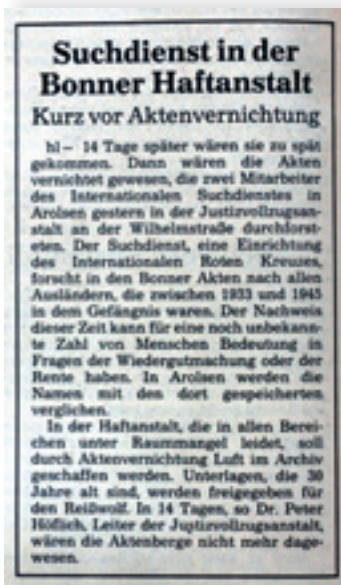
Constanze Schmidt





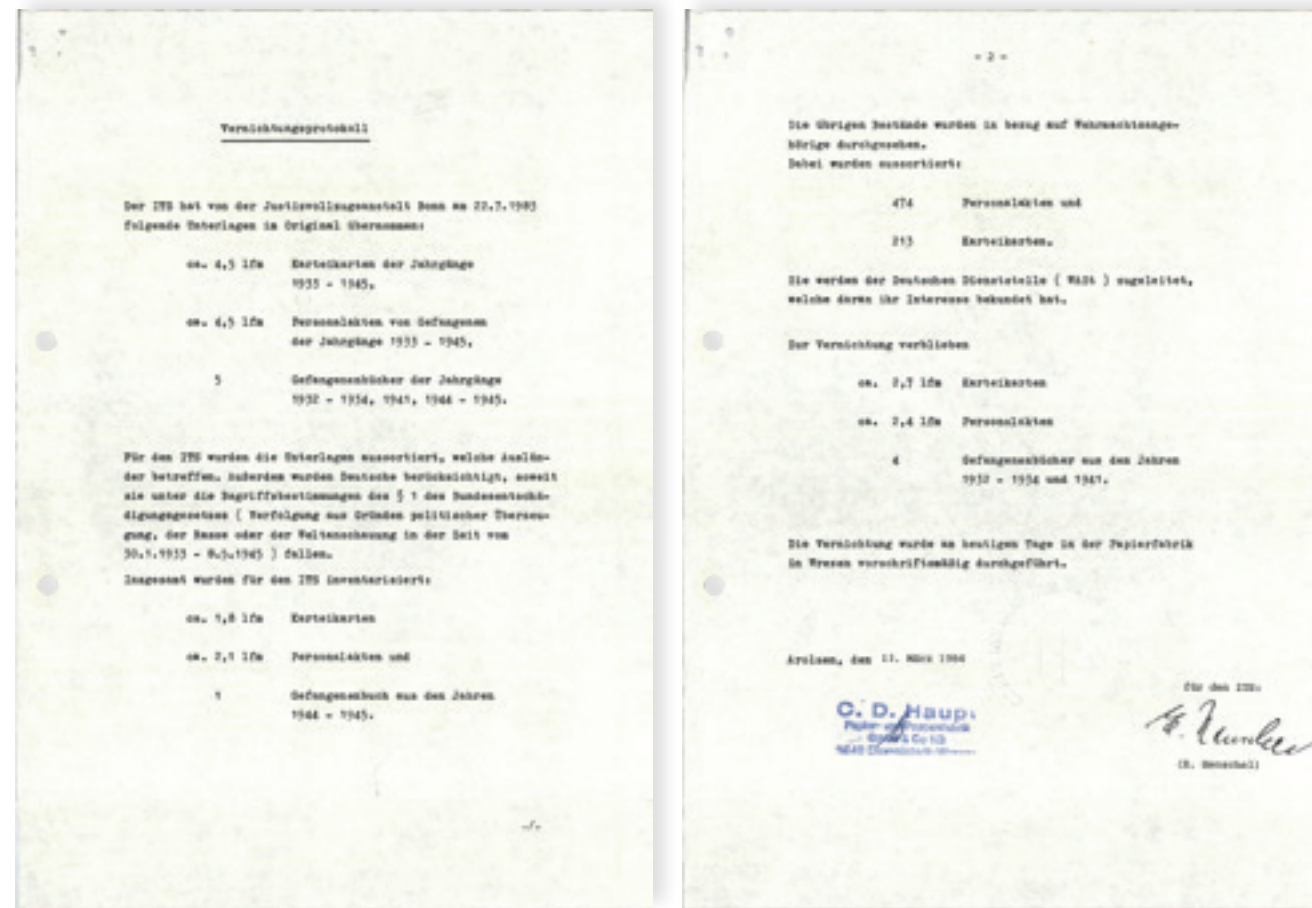
Redactions in the Original Prisoner Register of Bonn Prison from 1944/45

After acquiring the documents, ITS employees redacted the names of all prisoners not included in the target group of foreigners or victims of Nazi persecution. This action was based on a restrictive German compensation law from the 1950s, even though its narrow definition of persecution had been publicly criticized since the early 1980s.



The Bonner Generalanzeiger Reported on the Document Acquisition, July 22, 1983

Securing the files from Bonn Prison was one of the first new document acquisition efforts in the Federal Republic of Germany. The ITS often acquired files shortly before they were due to be destroyed, as was the case here. At the time, there were no laws requiring authorities to hand over their files to a state archive.



ITS "Destruction Log" for Bonn Prison Documents that had been Separated out, March 13, 1984

The Bonn documents were separated according to the dubious criterion defined in Paragraph 1 of the German compensation law, and many were permanently destroyed by the ITS. This shows how public debates and new research concerning the Nazi persecution of social outsiders and other "forgotten victims" had passed by the ITS in the 1980s.

# Digitization and Preservation

The ITS was a pioneer in the digitization of archival material. Its first major project was launched in the late 1990s to speed up the process of providing information from the archive. While there was limited space in the crowded rows of shelves, multiple employees can conduct research in parallel on computers. The daily use of the documents also resulted in wear and tear. Digitization thus protects the valuable collections in Arolsen from irreversible further harm or even destruction. Although nearly all of the holdings have been scanned, digitization and preservation constitute a long-term challenge.



**Preparing to Scan a T/D File, Bad Arolsen, August 22, 2018**

One major digitization project concerns the nearly three million *Tracing/Documentation files* (T/D files), which preserve all correspondence with and about individual victims of Nazi persecution. The scanning process starts by removing all metal, checking the sequence of pages and the stamping of the documents.

**Scanning a T/D File Image by Image, Bad Arolsen, August 22, 2018**

For T/D files like this one for former forced laborer Sinaida Baschlay, the front and back of each document are scanned individually. Barcode sheets are inserted to separate the incoming and outgoing correspondence. A computer uses this to automatically generate the proper digital folder structure.





**Metal Removed from around 24,000 T/D Files to Prepare them for Scanning**

To prepare each file, all metal is removed (staples, paper clips, pins, etc.) to ensure clean scanning and prevent long-term damage through rust or tearing. The waste metal shown here was taken from around 24,000 files over the course of three months in the spring of 2018.



**Quality Control for the Scanning Process on a Computer Screen, Bad Arolsen, August 22, 2018**

After scanning, quality control is carried out on a screen so the document can be scanned again if necessary. The digital copies are then imported into the archive system, and relevant information, such as names, birthdates and file numbers, are manually entered in the archive database.



**Storing Scanned Documents in Acid-Free Protective Envelopes, Bad Arolsen, August 22, 2018**

To complete the combined digitization and preservation efforts, the *T/D file* material is placed in acid-free envelopes to protect the paper from decay. Most holdings in the *Arolsen Archives* are stored in fire- and water-resistant protective cartons.



\*CC-FAL\*

Original

**Ossenberg & Schneider Partnerschaft**  
EDV-BERATER UND UNTERNEHMENSBERATER

Abbildung 3: Struktur der EDV-Arbeitsweise

In entsprechender Weise sind dann schon der Fallbearbeitung auch alle weiteren Tätigkeiten des ITS, z.B. Inventarisierung, Vorarbeiten und Integration von Neuerwerbungen mit HIN zu informationstechnischen Verfahren im elektronischen Bestand vorzunehmen.

**Vorgehensweise**

Dieser Mindeststandard kann innerhalb eines überschaubaren Zeitraums nicht in einem Schritt erreicht werden. Neben der bereits dargestellten Digitalisierung des Dokumentenbestands wäre eine vollständige Neustrukturierung durchzuführen, um die Inhalte der ZNK-Datenbank zu strukturieren. Nach sehr groben Schätzungen läge ein derartiger Aufwand - bei Rückgewinnung der Daten aus der ZNK - mindestens in der Größenordnung von 500 Personenvolljahren.

Daher wird schrittweise - ohne dieses Ziel aus den Augen zu verlieren - eine Ausdehnung an die Modellierung über eine Folge von Teillösungen angestrebt, die

- jeweils in sich abgeschlossene Ergebnisse liefern, die für die tägliche Arbeit des ITS verwandt werden können.

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ITS Digital Workflow Concept from Ossenberg & Schneider, July 22, 1997

In the summer of 1997, the IT service provider Ossenberg & Schneider presented a concept for handling inquiries fully digitally at the ITS. It encompassed digital research in the Central Name Index and in all archival holdings. As recommended, the ITS and the service provider soon began implementing some of these solutions.

102.1-2100\*

Sie, bitte  
begründen, ob  
diese Version  
abschließend ist!

Bad Arolsen, 22.12.1999  
die

Ja, die 3.42000

**Digitalisierung der Zentralen Namenskartei des Internationalen Schiffsverkehrs**

Mit dem Digitalisierungsprojekt in der Zentralen Namenskartei des ISDv wurde im Januar 1998 begonnen. Nach technischen Anfangsschwierigkeiten begann die Aufnahme des Routinebetriebs zum Ende des ersten Quartals 1998.

Von Beginn an wurde, in Anbetracht der zu erwartenden Beschleunigung in der Antwortzeit und somit aus humanitärer Sicht, ein Abschluß der Arbeiten für Spätestens dieses Jahres festgelegt. Ende November 1999 kam die Einsicht, daß die Masse von ca. 47 Mio. Kartekarten - welche beidseitig gescannt werden mußten - wegen immer wieder auftretenden technischen Schwierigkeiten nicht vollständig zu bewältigen sei. Der Einsatz eines zweiten Scanners zur Erhöhung des Durchsatzes wurde unerlässlich.

Damit trat dieser zur Komposition der bis dahin zu verarbeitenden Ausfallzeiten bei.

Im Laufe des Projekts erwies sich eine weitere Vorklärung als ebenfalls unumvermeidlich - die Kartekarten in Plastikblöcken einzulegen, die beim Einzug am Scanner aufgrund ihrer Papierstärke große Probleme bereiteten.

Die nächste unvermeidbare Maßnahme war, das Großteil der Hauptkarten „reinstücken“, um deren enormen Verschleiß sowie dem beim Scannen auftretenden nicht unvorstelligen Abrieb- und damit der Verschönerung der Scanner, gleichsam wie mit der Verengung des Durchsatzes - effektiv entgegenzuwirken.

Die Leistung von Überstunden - ab Ende September 1999 bis 23.00 Uhr sowie samstags bis 15.00 Uhr - trägt letztlich dazu bei, daß die Digitalisierung der gesamten Kartei am 30. Dezember 1999 termingerecht abgeschlossen werden konnte.

Die Gesamtkosten des Digitalisierungsprojekts belaufen sich auf ca. 4 Mio. DM (incl. der Betriebs- und Personalkosten sowie der Kosten für die Vor- und Nacharbeiten, die Geräte und die Miete).

Der ISD ist überzeugt, in den nächsten zwei Monaten, nach den noch zu erledigenden Folgearbeiten - insbesondere im Softwarebereich (z. B. Durchführung der Zuerhebungstätigkeit) - die Gesamtheit der Images und Datensätze zur ausschließlichen IT-Bearbeitung in der Zentralen Namenskartei zur Verfügung zu haben: der entscheidende Faktor zur Beschleunigung der Kartearbeit und somit gerade rechtzeitig für die möglichen Anforderungen aus der Südtunguslände deutscher Unternehmen.

Sie 22/12/99

3

Internal Report on Scanning the Central Name Index, December 22, 1999

The first big project was the digitization of the Central Name Index in 1998/99 using sheet-feed scanners. The ITS expected hundreds of thousands of inquiries for forced labor compensation. The report shows how difficult, expensive and resource-intensive it was to start digitizing the archive.

Gesamt Digitalisierung, N.A.B.

Stand: 21.08.2006

Bezeichnung	Teil	Dokumentationsbereich	Starttermin	Beendetermin	Anzahl	Einheit	Projektbudget (EUR/1000)	Aktueller Stand (EUR/1000)	% Fertig	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A1)	1.1.1	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.08.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A2)	1.1.2	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A3)	1.1.3	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A4)	1.1.4	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A5)	1.1.5	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A6)	1.1.6	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A7)	1.1.7	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A8)	1.1.8	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A9)	1.1.9	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A10)	1.1.10	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A11)	1.1.11	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A12)	1.1.12	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A13)	1.1.13	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A14)	1.1.14	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A15)	1.1.15	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A16)	1.1.16	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A17)	1.1.17	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A18)	1.1.18	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A19)	1.1.19	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A20)	1.1.20	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A21)	1.1.21	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A22)	1.1.22	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A23)	1.1.23	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A24)	1.1.24	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A25)	1.1.25	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A26)	1.1.26	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A27)	1.1.27	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A28)	1.1.28	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A29)	1.1.29	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A30)	1.1.30	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A31)	1.1.31	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A32)	1.1.32	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A33)	1.1.33	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A34)	1.1.34	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A35)	1.1.35	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A36)	1.1.36	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A37)	1.1.37	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A38)	1.1.38	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A39)	1.1.39	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A40)	1.1.40	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A41)	1.1.41	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A42)	1.1.42	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A43)	1.1.43	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A44)	1.1.44	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A45)	1.1.45	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A46)	1.1.46	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A47)	1.1.47	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A48)	1.1.48	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A49)	1.1.49	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									
Archivbestand 1941-1945 (A50)	1.1.50	Arbeitsblätter	12.12.2000	12.12.2001	110.000	Blätter	100	100	100									

Seite 4 von 11

Internal Report on Scanning Progress in Parts of Collections 2 and 3, August 21, 2006

This interim report outlined the progress of the document scanning process, which had started in 1999. The list of holdings from the second and third collections of the Arolsen Archives conveys an impression of the mass of documents and the length of the process, which is still not completed.



# Sinaida Iwanowna Baschlay

## 1914 – ?

Former forced laborer Sinaida Baschlay from the Soviet Union is one of nearly three million people with a *T/D file*. She was a draftswoman who lived and worked in Kharkov before the Germans deported her for forced labor in 1942. She had to work as a maid and in the armaments industry, first in Berlin and later in a small town near Marburg. When she returned to Kharkov in 1945, she faced rejection. “Working for the enemy” was considered treason in the USSR. From the 1990s, Sinaida Baschlay became an advocate for Soviet Nazi victims to be recognized and compensated.



**Sinaida Baschlay Working as a Secretary for the Society of Nazi Victims, Kharkov, circa 2000**

In the successor states of the Soviet Union, many former forced laborers and concentration camp prisoners were in a difficult situation. They suffered social and health problems from the lasting effects of persecution, post-war discrimination and social upheaval. This made it all the more important to fight for their interests.



Während meiner Arbeit am Kriegswertmessen damaligen Aufenthaltsort war das Lager „Steinbel“ in der Nähe Neustadt, wo ich bis zur Absendung nach Heimat am Juni 1945 geblieben wurde.  
Am Frühling 1945 sind alle Ausländer, die damals in dem Lager sich befunden haben, registriert worden. Ich hoffe, dass die Namensverzeichnisse noch aufbewahrt worden.  
Ich bitte Sie um Bestätigung von meinem Aufenthalt und Beschäftigung in Deutschland, vor allem von Beschäftigung am Brückbau in Neustadt.  
Ich hoffe auf möglichst schnelle Antwort und danke Ihnen in voraus.  
Beilage: Angaben über mich während meines Aufenthaltes in Deutschland.  
Hochachtungsvoll!  
Strauss Fr. Sinaida Baschlay

000007

**After the Liberation, Sinaida Baschlay Returned Home to the Soviet Union, Kharkov, circa 1946**

The forced laborers who returned were considered traitors in the Soviet Union. Tens of thousands were deported to camps, where many died. Sinaida Baschlay was relatively lucky: she was able to resume her profession in Kharkov. But she did not talk about her experiences in Germany until the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

**In 2000 Sinaida Baschlay Searched for Proof of her Forced Labor in Germany, April 24, 2000**

For her compensation claim, Sinaida Baschlay needed proof of her persecution. Like many former forced laborers, she contacted German authorities, who often forwarded letters to the ITS if they could not find evidence themselves. This is what the State Archives in Marburg did: in 2002, the ITS sent her the proof she needed.

# Who Managed and Manages the Institution?

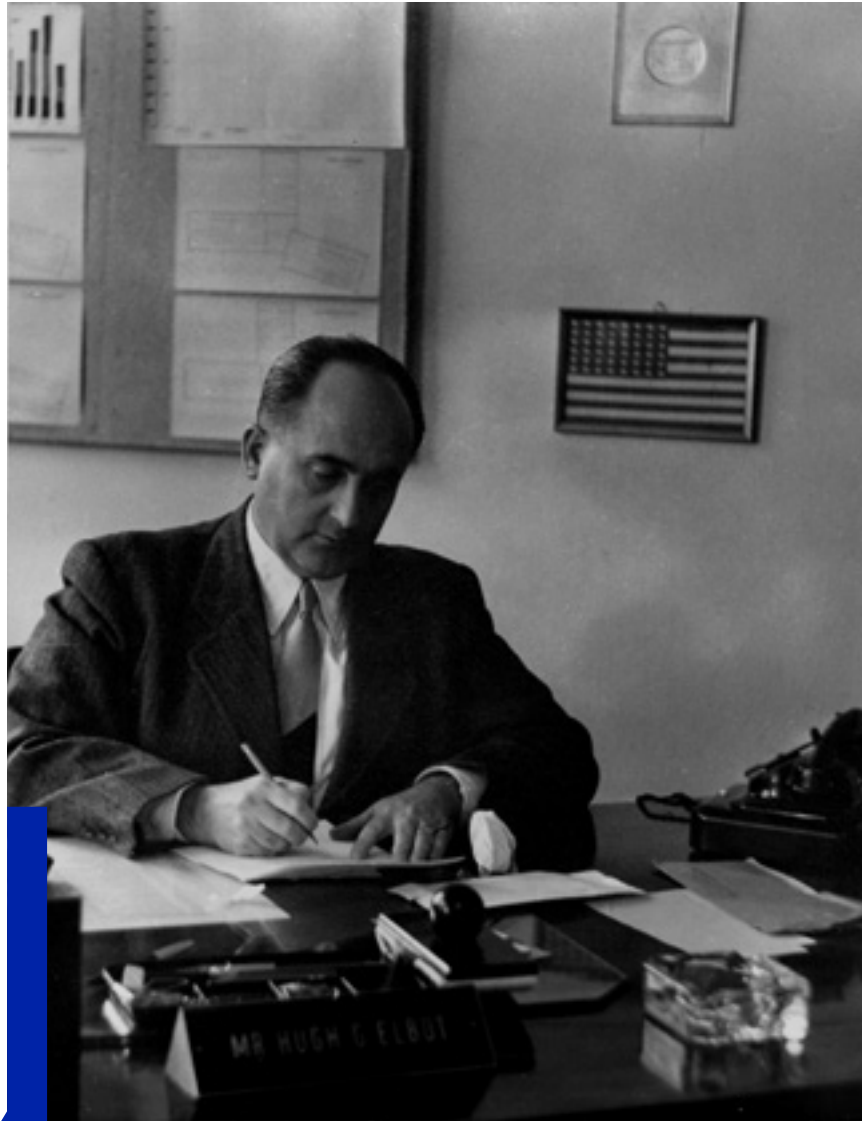
The *Arolsen Archives* have always had an international focus, from the founding of the ITS in 1948 to the present day. First run by the *International Refugee Organization (IRO)*, then the *High Commission for Occupied Germany (HICOG)* from 1951, management of the ITS archive passed, after lengthy debate, to the *International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)* in 1955. Since then it has been financed solely by the German government. In 2013 control of the ITS passed to an *International Commission* which had existed as a supervisory body for the ITS since 1955 but had not been active in this role for a long time. However, it was above all the individual directors on site who truly shaped the course and daily work of the ITS over time.





# Hugh G. Elbot

1951



**Hugh G. Elbot, Chairman of the ITS Administration under HICOG, at his Desk in Arolsen, circa 1952**

A US citizen, Hugh G. Elbot was the leading figure at the ITS under HICOG from 1951 to 1954. He was a lawyer who had worked for US intelligence during World War II. He ran the ITS with the authority of the occupiers, but also sought connections with the Germans in the early days of the Cold War.



**Elbot during a Speech at the Former Barracks in Arolsen, circa 1952**

Until 1951, the work of the ITS under the IRO was closely tied to relief efforts for Displaced Persons. Elbot reoriented and restructured the ITS. He dramatically reduced the number of staff, set up the archive, established closer cooperation with the German authorities and helped standardize the information that was provided.



**Mural in the New ITS Main Building in Arolsen, completed in 1953**

This and three other related murals were painted by an artist from Kassel in the stairwell of the new building one year after it was completed. They reflected the self-portrayal of the ITS at the time, serving survivors in the tradition of the Allied liberators. In 1983 the murals were removed during renovation work.







The *Bundesanzeiger* Published the New Core Document for the ITS, December 14, 1955

The preamble to the Bonn Agreement, covering the creation of an ITS *International Commission*, defined the institution's new foundations and tasks. The ICRC took charge, for a limited time initially. The German government handled financing, while the *International Commission* protected the archive.

## Nicolas Burckhardt



Nicolas Burckhardt, First ITS Director Appointed by the ICRC, Arolsen, circa 1965

Burckhardt moved from Geneva to Arolsen in 1955. Like all later ICRC directors of the ITS, he already had a career in the ICRC, spoke German and was a Swiss citizen. The portrait of Red Cross founder Henry Dunant behind Burckhardt reflects the reorientation of the ITS: from this point on, it emphasized its exclusively humanitarian mandate.

# Albert de Cocatrix



1970

Albert de Cocatrix, Second ITS Director from the ICRC, Speaking to Visitors, Arolsen, 1975

Albert de Cocatrix came to Arolsen in 1955 as the deputy director and held the office of director from 1970 to 1977. He was the first to start opening the ITS for research and remembrance. He was highly respected by the employees. But the German government was increasingly critical of the new direction taken in Arolsen.

Albert de Cocatrix Speaking at a Meeting of the Neuengamme Survivors Association, Paris, 1975

Engaging with associations of victims of Nazi persecution in Western Europe was an important aspect of the opening of the ITS pursued by Albert de Cocatrix in the 1970s. With appearances such as these, he clearly positioned the ITS on the side of the survivors.



## Jubiläum beim Internationalem Suchdienst

Jubiläen werden überall gefeiert, die Jubilare stets geehrt. Meistens dafür, daß sie eine Reihe von Jahren ihren Arbeitsplatz nicht gewechselt haben. Eine Felerstunde besonderer Art wurde Mitte November in Arolsen bei Kassel im Gebäude des Internationalen Suchdienstes (ITS) begangen. Acht Mitarbeiter dieser in der ganzen Welt bekannten Einrichtung des Roten Kreuzes haben ein viertel Jahrhundert damit verbracht, Schicksale von Menschen aufzuklären, die infolge des Zweiten Weltkrieges und der Nazi-Verfolgung umgekommen sind oder ihre Angehörigen verloren haben. Für diese im Sinn des Wortes hu-

manitäre Arbeit dankte der Direktor des ITS, Albert de Cocatrix, Hildegard Thiele, Olga Kuznetsova, Marla Sawzenko, Lieselotte Ury, Erich Henschel, Jerzy Mikulski, Wladyslaw Stallinski und Kurt Halmemann. Die Namen der Geehrten weisen bereits aus, daß einige von ihnen aus Osteuropa stammen. Gerade ihrer Kenntnis ist jedoch die Aufklärung vieler Schicksale zu danken, weil sie diese Sprachen und Schreibweisen beherrschen. Wievielen Verfolgten sie zu Rente und Anerkennung als NS-Opfer verholfen haben, wird man nie erfahren.

Freiheit und Recht Article on the Tribute to Long-Standing ITS Employees, 1973

In the 1970s, ITS employees were honored by a director in this way for the first time after 25 years, and their work was publicly recognized. De Cocatrix probably wrote the article himself.



# Philipp Züger



De Cocatrix (Left) Visiting the Auschwitz Concentration Camp Memorial, 1971

While Elbot had clearly positioned the ITS on the side of the West in the early 1950s, de Cocatrix sought contact beyond the borders of the Iron Curtain in the 1970s, especially in Poland. This gave the ITS the chance to also microfilm documents there.



Allgemeine Jüdische Wochenzeitung Article about a Research Visit to the ITS, 1976

Director de Cocatrix's new strategy included opening the ITS for scholars and in-house research. He broadly interpreted the mandate of the ITS and invested money and personnel in it. This was criticized by the German government and the ICRC. It is not clear whether this is why de Cocatrix left the ITS in 1977.

1977



ITS Director Philipp Züger (right) with his Deputy, Charles-Claude Biedermann, Arolsen, 1985

Philipp Züger came to Arolsen in 1978 as the third director appointed by the ICRC. With his deputy Charles-Claude Biedermann, he reversed the opening initiated by de Cocatrix in just a few years. He streamlined processes at the ITS, and the work atmosphere declined at the same time.

# Charles-Claude Biedermann



Minutes of Züger's Meeting with the ITS Historical Department, March 14, 1978

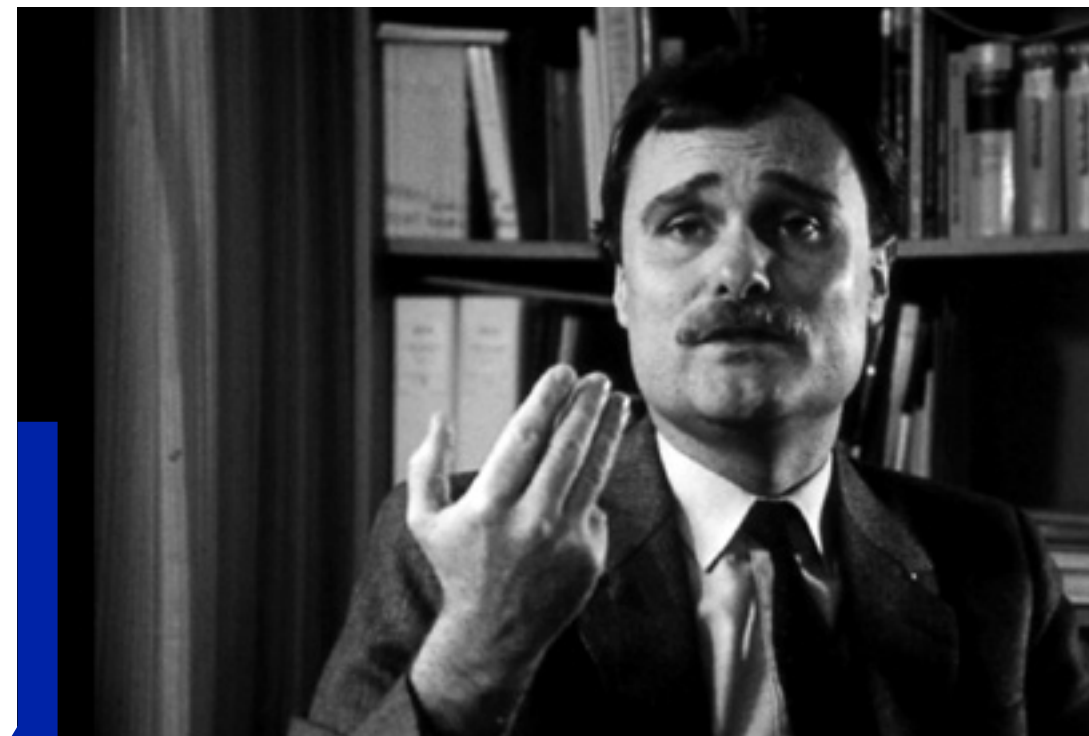
Züger first turned to the *Historical Department* and its projects, which de Cocatrix had broadly expanded. Züger felt that these were not part of the responsibilities of the ITS. In this meeting, it was initially agreed that they would no longer be mentioned externally. The department and its projects were wound down by 1983.



Excerpt of Minutes of the *International Commission Meeting* in Bonn, May 10, 1984

The last step in the reversal of the opening process was the *International Commission's* decision, brought about by Züger, that the archive should be closed again to researchers and the public. While the archive had gradually become more difficult to use, from this point on it was completely inaccessible.

1985



ITS Director Charles-Claude Biedermann Explaining the Four Mandates of the ITS in the Film *Traces*, 1987

In 1985, economist Charles-Claude Biedermann became director of the ITS. Shown here is his reference to the four ITS mandates defined in the 1955 agreement – but instead of “providing access” he spoke of “reviewing.” This reference to the four mandates was used to legitimize the sealing-off of the ITS during Biedermann’s term until 2006.



**TV Hören + Sehen ,**  
23.9.1999

21.00 Panorama (K1) 100	70:00
21.45 CityExpress (K1) 100	95:00
22.00 Tagesthemen	00
23.00 Gesucht wird...	
Biedermanns Reich	45:00
Der Intern. Suchdienst als NS-Gegner	
23.45 Ein Fall für Mep	100:00
0:30 Nachtmagazin	0:00

Heute Abend im ARD-Fernsehen:  
**Polnische NS-Opfer fordern Ablösung des ITS-Direktors**

**Suchdienst unter Druck**  
Vorwürfe gegen ITS aus Polen und den eigenen Reihen

#### Many Media Outlets Reported on Problems at the ITS in Autumn 1999

In the mid-1990s and especially around 1999, the ITS and Director Biedermann were the focus of massive public criticism. This revolved around extremely long waiting times for information, the ongoing exclusion of researchers and the bad working environment under which many employees suffered.

**HNA, 1.10.99**



Internationale Suchdienst  
**Alle Vorwürfe zurückgewiesen**

Mitarbeiter schildern aus ihrer Sicht die Situation beim Suchdienst:  
**„Es ist noch schlimmer geworden“**

**Mannheimer Morgen, 15.10.99**

INTERNATIONALER SUCHDIENST  
**Internationaler Suchdienst im Kreuzfeuer der Kritik**  
DGB prangert Missstände an / ITS-Direktor dementiert

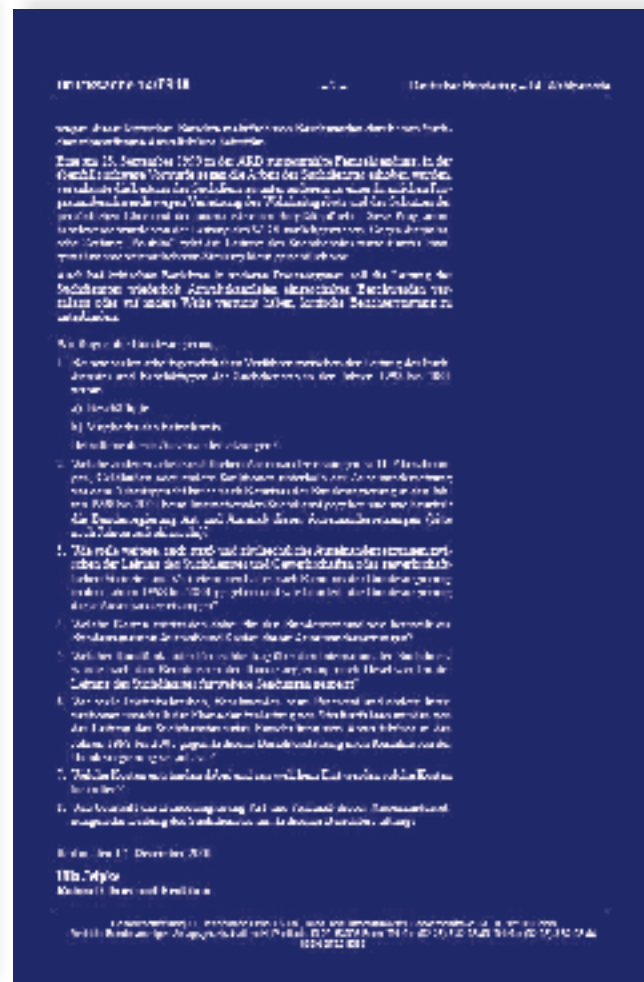
**HNA, 29.10.99**

INTERNATIONALER SUCHDIENST  
**Geldgeber Bund will sich zu Vorwürfen nicht äußern**



Bundestag Members Asked Critical Questions about the ITS Leadership, December 19, 2001

Director Biedermann's approach and the legal action he sometimes took against critical media and employees were addressed in German parliament. But the German government, which financed the ITS, played down the criticism of individual members of parliament. Biedermann held office until 2006.



2006

### Withdrawal of the ICRC

Biedermann had to leave in 2006 after clashing with representatives of the *International Commission* about access to the ITS archive. He was followed by three more directors from Geneva before the ICRC withdrew from its management role at the end of 2012 due to the opening and reorientation of the ITS and passed control to the *International Commission*.

Member States of the *International Commission*: Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, United Kingdom, United States of America



# Rebecca Boehling

2013



ITS Director Rebecca Boehling (center) at the UNESCO Ceremony, Arolsen, June 18, 2013

At the start of 2013, Rebecca Boehling, a history professor from the US, became the first expert in Nazi crimes to lead the ITS. In June 2013 she celebrated the inclusion of the ITS on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register together with Andrzej Misztal, Chairman of the *International Commission*, and a UNESCO representative.

Abgabe 14/2013

Mitglied entfällt bei einer Mitarbeiterversammlung  
mit dem 14. am 17.10.2013 im Bürgerhaus  
St. 13

New Mission Statement of the ITS International Commission  
for the International Tracing Service (ITS):

To archive, conserve and open up the ITS archives to public access;  
to modernise and make more effective ITS services to Nazi victims  
and Holocaust survivors and those who seek to learn the fate of  
family members persecuted by the Nazis and their allies and to integrate  
the ITS into the European and international network of research and  
education that focuses on Nazi persecution, the Holocaust,  
forced labour and displaced persons.

Neues Mission Statement des ITS Internationalen Ausschusses für den ITS

Der ITS muss sein Archiv aufbewahren, konservieren und für die Öffentlichkeit  
zugänglich machen, seine Dienstleistungen gegenüber Nazi-Opfern und  
Überlebenden des Holocaust und anderen, die der Schicksal ihrer Familienmitglieder  
in Bezug auf Verfolgung durch die Nazis und ihre Alliierten aufzuklären versuchen,  
modernisieren und die Archivarbeits dazu öffentlicher machen, und sich in ein  
europäisches und internationales Netzwerk von Forschungs- und Bildungsinstituten  
integrieren, die sich mit der Verfolgung durch die Nazis, dem Holocaust, Zwangsarbeit  
und Displaced Persons beschäftigen.

The ITS Receives a New Mission Statement from the  
*International Commission*, Arolsen, October 17, 2013

In 2013 the *International Commission* assumed responsibility for the ITS and set new goals with the director it appointed. The transformation from a tracing service into a professional archive and documentation center shaped Rebecca Boehling's term in office, which lasted until the end of 2015.



# Openness versus Isolation

The ITS had a very turbulent relationship with the public. For years, the archive was not accessible to researchers. This was criticized in the media in the 1990s and 2000s, along with the shockingly long waiting times for information. The ITS developed a reputation for always isolating itself. As a result, an earlier phase of openness had been forgotten.

In the 1960s and 1970s, research was carried out in Arolsen by numerous survivors, scholars and memorial initiatives. The ITS also supported remembrance and commemoration projects and conducted its own historical analyses and research, all of which was to facilitate the processing of inquiries. But in the early 1980s, the doors of the archive closed. The ITS justified its isolation on the basis of data protection and with reference to its main humanitarian mission of finding missing victims of the Nazis and clarifying their fate. Despite massive protests, the ITS held to this for over 20 years.

Growing international pressure from politicians and the media finally led to the renewed opening of the archive in 2007. Today the main responsibilities of the *Arolsen Archives* include supporting and carrying out research and educational activities.



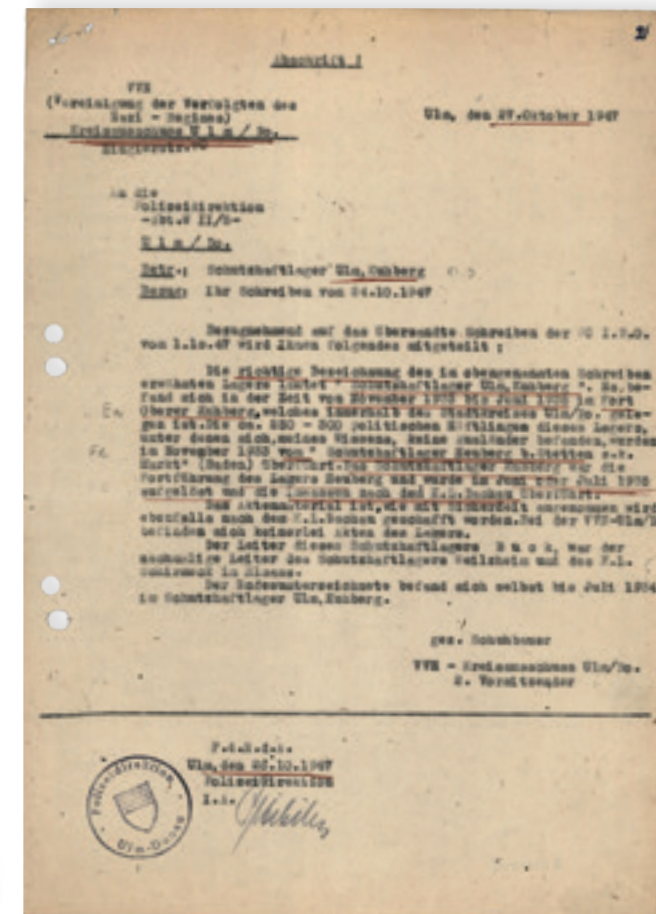
# Lists of Imprisonment Sites: Early ITS Research

To trace people and provide information, it was essential to compile knowledge of imprisonment sites and mass crimes. From the late 1940s to early 1980s, the ITS conducted a large research project on Nazi imprisonment sites across Europe. It also collected early testimonies from thousands of survivors who shared their knowledge about the camps in questionnaires. The ITS was thus often the first point of contact for authorities with questions about classifying and recognizing individual camps. This specific activity sometimes led to tension with the Federal Ministry of Finance which handled compensation.



**Catalogue of Camps and Prisons in Germany and German-Occupied Territories, 1949**

The national and zonal tracing bureaus needed information about the camps to respond to tracing inquiries. Nearly every office initially compiled its own lists of the locations of such sites. This data was combined in this first catalog, which was later expanded and revised.



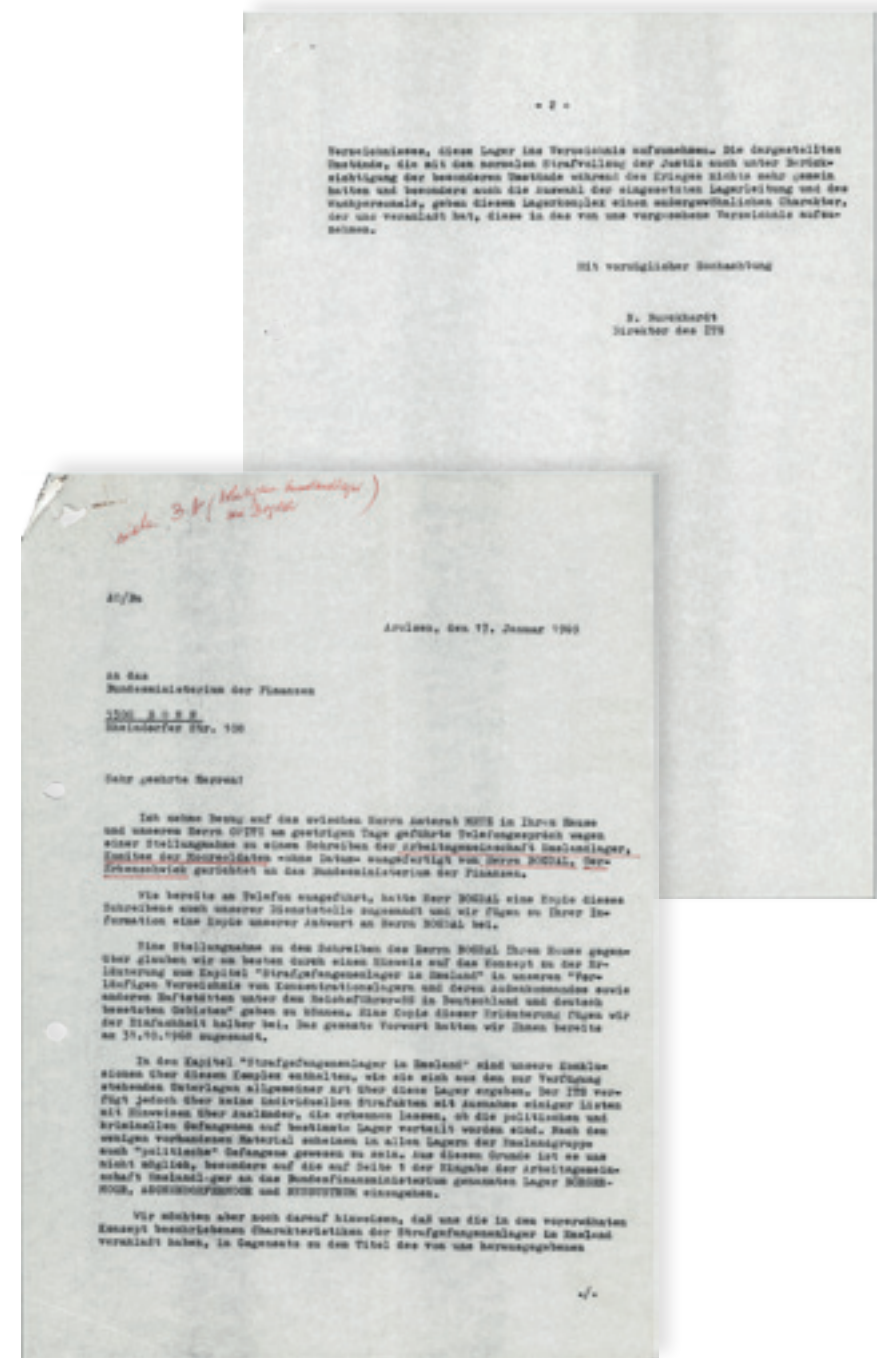
**Report from Survivor Josef Schuhbauer on the "Ulm Protective Custody Camp, Kuhberg", October 27, 1947**

To document the many detention sites, employees in Arolsen evaluated all of the seized documents. There were many gaps, however. This is why survivors were questioned as well. Around 1950, the ITS sent out thousands of questionnaires asking for information about the camps.

INTERNATIONALES LAGER Lager der Konzentrationen KONZENTRATIONSLAGER		KREITZGEFANGENISSEN	
Ort	Zeitraum	Ort	Zeitraum
VITTEBORG (Dänemark)	1941-1945	1. KREITZGEFANGENISSEN Kriegsgefangene	1941-1945
WITTKOW (Pommern)	1941-1945	2. KREITZGEFANGENISSEN Kriegsgefangene	1941-1945
WITTKOW (Pommern)	1941-1945	3. KREITZGEFANGENISSEN Kriegsgefangene	1941-1945
WITTKOW (Pommern)	1941-1945	4. KREITZGEFANGENISSEN Kriegsgefangene	1941-1945
WITTKOW (Pommern)	1941-1945	5. KREITZGEFANGENISSEN Kriegsgefangene	1941-1945

Register Of Places Of Detention Under The Reichsführer-SS 1933-1945, Arolsen, 1979

Into the early 1980s, the ITS strove to document all Nazi detention sites in Europe. The last directory of such sites was published in 1979, but it was missing many forced labor camps and ghettos from an earlier 1949 version. The German government wanted the published list to be restricted to sites it had recognized for compensation purposes.



ITS Statement on the Penal Camps in the Emsland Region, January 17, 1969

Although the ITS was not an academic institution, into the 2000s it frequently advised authorities regarding the recognition of individual sites of imprisonment. As early as 1964 and 1969, the ITS compiled a list of imprisonment sites, which the compensation authorities used as a tool for investigating eligibility of applicants.



# Josef Schuhbauer

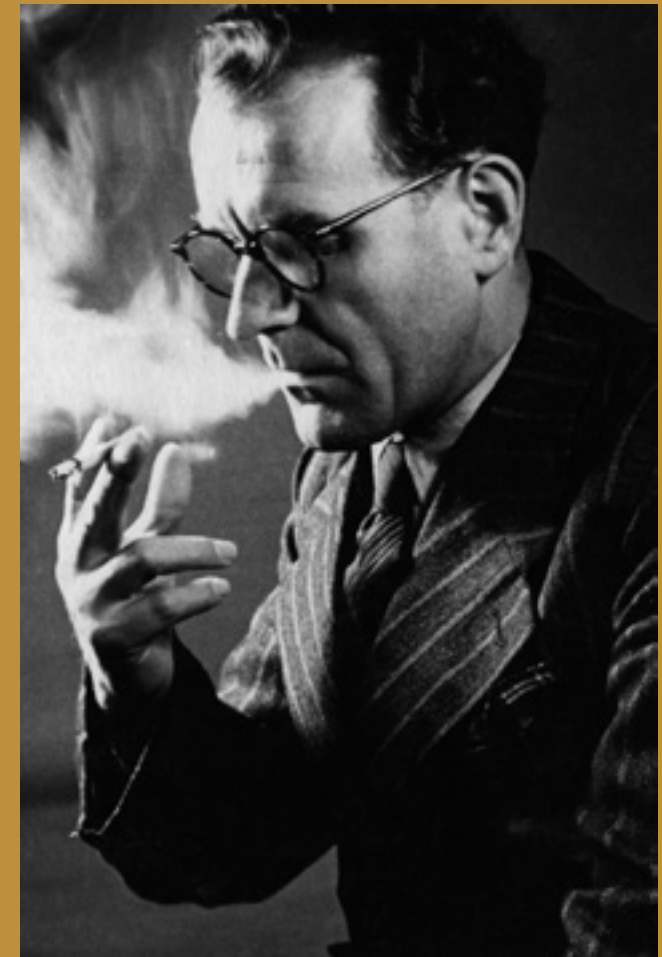
1906 – 1974

After his liberation from a concentration camp, Josef Schuhbauer was committed to the analysis and documentation of Nazi crimes. The Nazis had originally arrested Schuhbauer in 1933 when he was active amongst communist circles in Ulm. With only a short break, he remained imprisoned until 1945: in the Heuberg, Oberer Kuhberg, Welzheim and Buchenwald camps. He was also in the Kassel-Druselstal subcamp of Buchenwald, where prisoners were forced to carry out construction work. There the SS appointed Josef Schuhbauer as the camp elder, making him responsible for ensuring a smooth daily routine.



**Josef Schuhbauer (3rd fr. r.) in Liberated Buchenwald with Württemberg Survivors, April 27, 1945**

Josef Schuhbauer was a founding member of the *Heuberg-Kuhberg-Welzheim Camp Association*, a group of concentration camp survivors from Württemberg. He was also a member of the *Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime (VVN)*. From 1966 his health deteriorated due to the lasting effects of the abuse he experienced in Buchenwald.



**Josef Schuhbauer, probably in Ulm, after 1945**

After the liberation, the trained roofer returned to Ulm, where he first found a job in the police criminal investigation department. He was later elected to the Ulm local council representing the *Communist Party of Germany (KPD)*.

# Research in Arolsen

## in the 1960s and 1970s

In the late 1960s, the ITS opened its archive for the first time to numerous survivors, scholars and memorial initiatives.

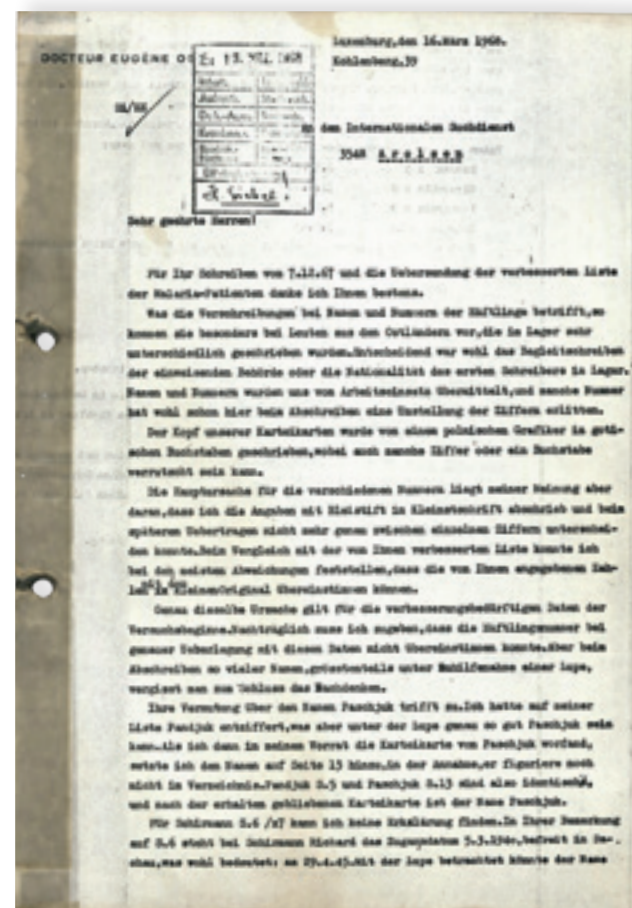
The ITS also supported the creation of memorial sites and book projects, like the Memorial Book of the Federal Archives for the Victims of the Persecution of Jews in Germany.

These activities were proudly recorded in its annual reports.

The ITS investigated the Nazis' human medical experiments itself to answer special questions in individual compensation cases.

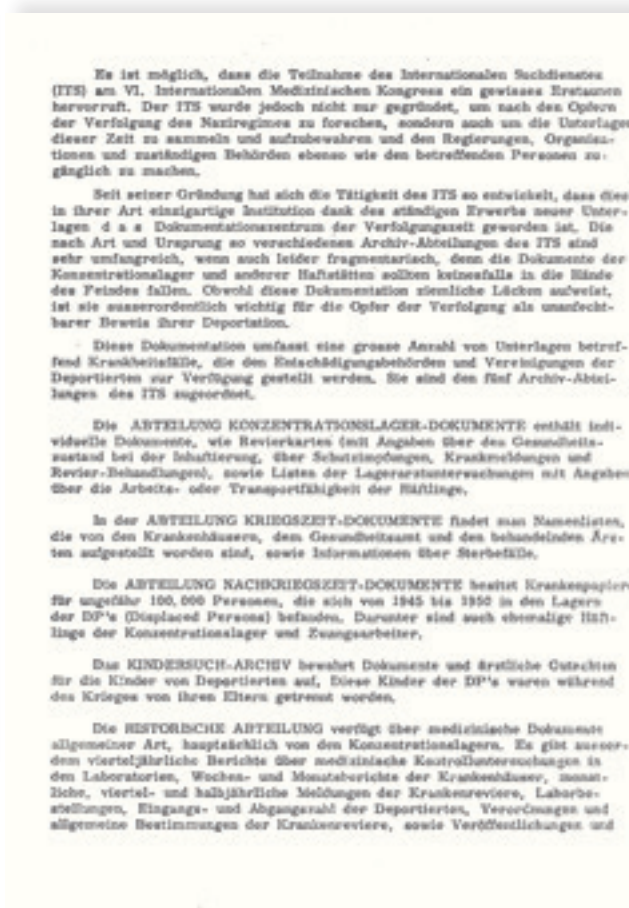
This began to change in the early 1980s, however,

and by 1984 the ITS had gradually closed its archive again.



Excerpt from a Letter from Former Prisoner Eugène Ost to the ITS, March 16, 1968

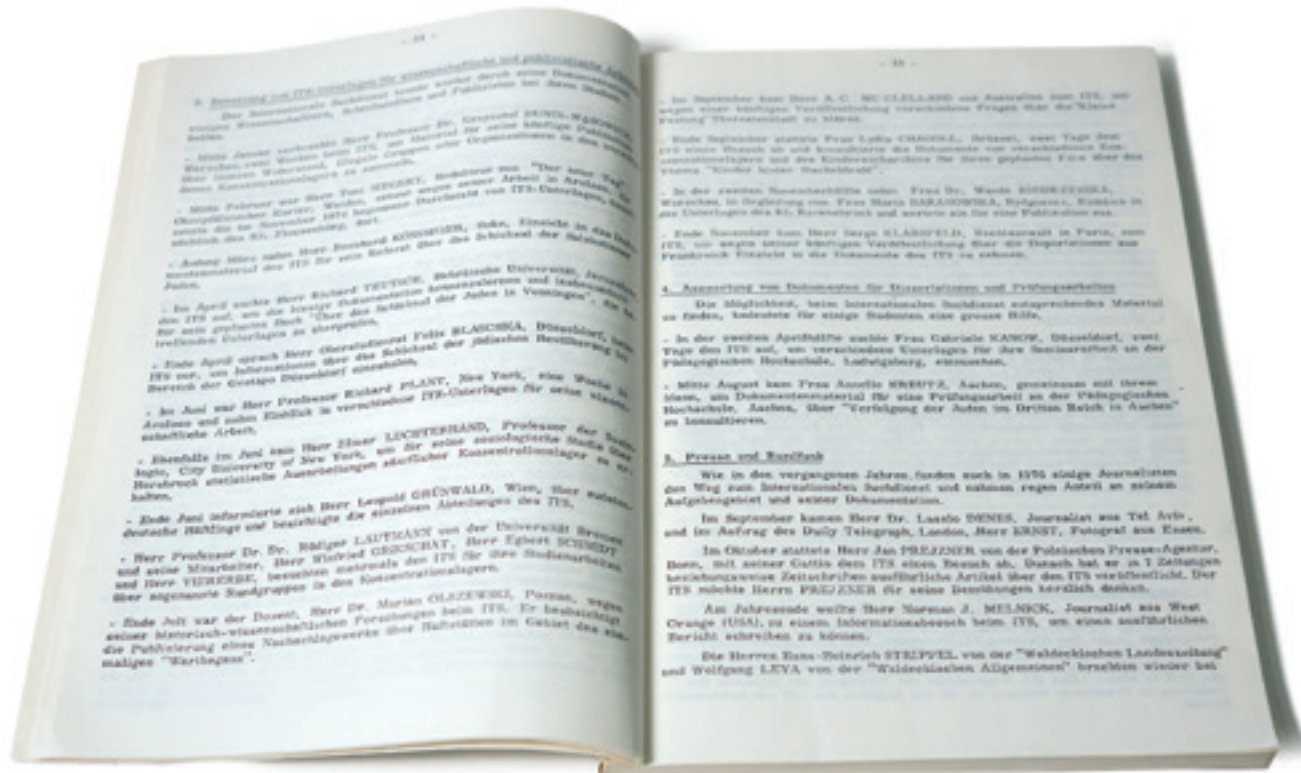
Eugène Ost helped the ITS decipher documents from concentration camps on human medical experiments. He had been a clerk at the malaria station in Dachau. This knowledge was needed for checking compensation cases. From 1961 former concentration camp prisoners from Eastern Europe who had been victims of human medical experiments could claim compensation.



Excerpt from the Speech by the ITS Director at the International Medical Conference in Prague, 1976

Director Albert de Cocatrix stressed the self-image of the ITS in the 1970s as a "center for documenting the time of persecution." He reported that the ITS had evaluated 59 human medical experiments in eight concentration camps in the context of claims for compensation.

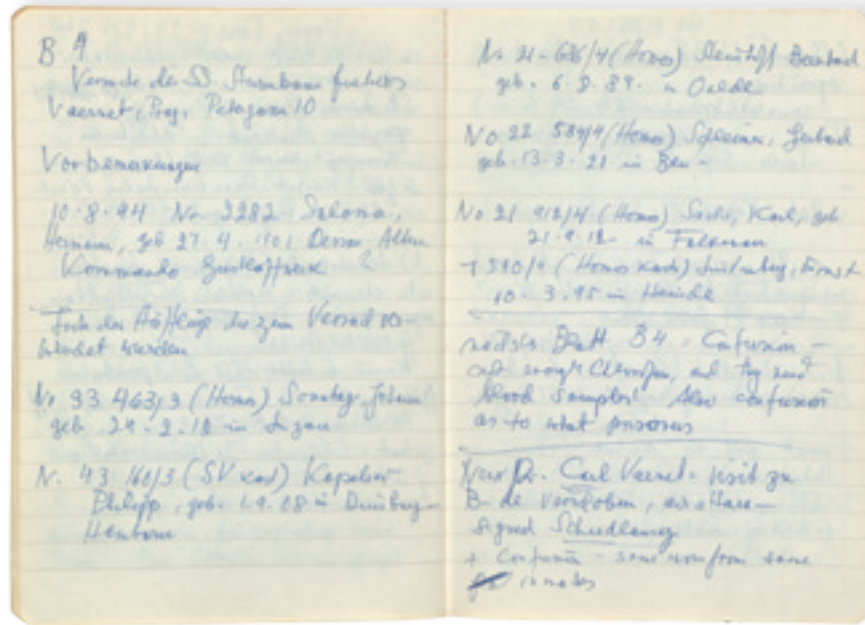




ITS Annual Report, 1976

The ITS described its participation in networks and its support for researchers in its annual reports in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1976, for example, it covered the research of Rüdiger Lautmann and Richard Plant into the persecution of homosexuals, and the participation of ITS director de Cocatrix at the International Medical Conference in Prague.





#### Excerpt from Richard Plant's Notebook, June 1976

In June 1976, Plant conducted research at the ITS into the Nazi persecution of homosexuals. In his notebook he recorded his findings, such as information about the hormone experiments of Danish SS doctor Carl Vaernet in Buchenwald. These had mostly been carried out on homosexual prisoners in September and December 1944.



#### 10 Years after Researching in Arolsen, Plant published his findings in 1986

A German translation was published in 1991. His book and the findings of Rüdiger Lautmann, who also researched at the ITS in the 1970s, are now standard works about the Nazi persecution of homosexuals. More than 10,000 homosexuals were imprisoned in concentration camps and often assigned to the most strenuous labor details.

“ I spent long weeks in these archives, which did more than ‘testify to the extermination, torture and slavery’ inflicted by the Third Reich, but preserved, sifted, and organized the testimony so it could never be denied. ”

(p. 194)

“ Life at Arolsen was wearisome. During the day I was busy scanning lists, entries, rosters in the company of the dead or missing. My evenings were spent alone, typing notes or walking through the tiny village, which ignored me. The prevailing beery coziness of the inns repelled me, and I imagined all these redfaced men with their paunches had been in the SS. ”

(p. 196)

#### Excerpts from the Epilogue of *The Pink Triangle* by Richard Plant

Richard Plant described his impressions of the ITS and the city of Arolsen in the 1970s. Plant was Jewish and homosexual himself and had left Germany at the start of the Nazi dictatorship. His father committed suicide with his second wife shortly after the November pogroms of 1938.



# Gerhard Schleimer

## 1921 – 2006

In September 1944, the SS doctor Carl Vaernet abused Gerhard Schleimer for hormone experiments in Buchenwald. After he had been arrested by the Berlin criminal police in 1941, he spent three years in prison and was then sent to Buchenwald. The Nazis persecuted him under Paragraph 175, which criminalized sexual relations between men. To this day, few biographies of homosexual prisoners are known. They were subject to especially harsh conditions in the camps. Gerhard Schleimer first had to work in a quarry. After 1945, he was silent about his experiences for a long time, because homosexuality continued to be a criminal offense.

*“ When you’re still young, it’s easier to get over some things, but after a while the past catches up with you, and then it seems as if it were just yesterday. You could actually say that it had a physical and psychological impact. But you got on with life anyway. ”*

Gerhard Schleimer on the Lifelong Effects of the Medical Experiments, October 25, 2000



**Inquiry from the Ministry of Finance Regarding Gerhard Schleimer's Time in the Camp, May 31, 1952**

Schleimer applied for compensation for the medical experiments he was subjected to. He did not disclose that the Nazis had persecuted him as a homosexual. At the time, the ITS could not yet provide proof of the experiments, because many abbreviations in the concentration camp documents relating to the experiments had not yet been deciphered.

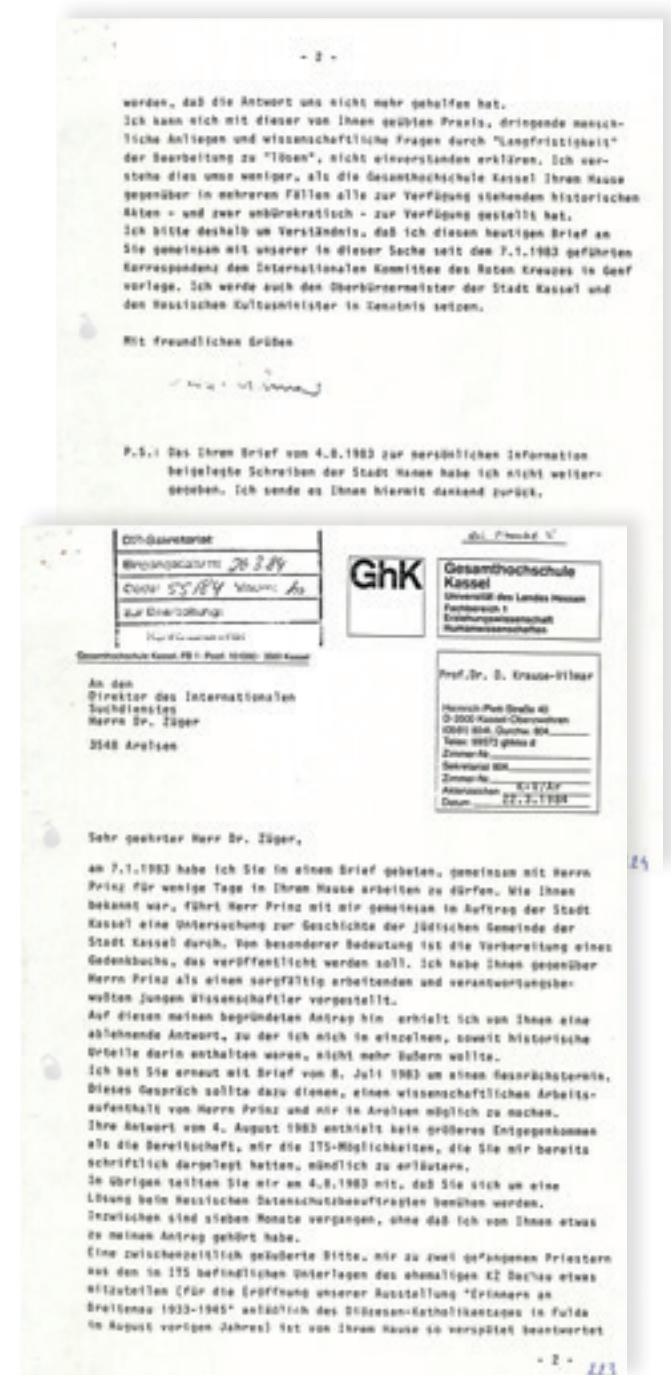
# Protests against the Isolation of the ITS

Just as West German society and historians started discussing and researching “forgotten victims” of the Nazis, the ITS closed the doors of its archive in the early 1980s. One reason was the growing importance of data privacy issues, which made it difficult for the ITS itself to acquire documents. Also, the ITS saw itself as a purely humanitarian institution. The archive’s closure led to many protests right from the start. A turnaround and reopening did not take place until 2007, when political pressure at the international level grew, as did criticism of the ITS management in the media.



Flyer for the Exhibition *Remembering Breitenau 1933-1945*, August 30 to September 12, 1982

From the early 1980s, local memorial initiatives campaigned for the remembrance and investigation of the early concentration and labor education camp in Breitenau. “Dig where you stand” was the motto of many initiatives throughout Germany, which dealt locally with buried Nazi history and stood in solidarity with unrecognized victims of the Nazis.



Letter from Dietfried Krause-Vilmar from Kassel Comprehensive University to the ITS, March 22, 1984

In 1980, Krause-Vilmar researched the history of Breitenau at the ITS. But from 1983 he was denied access to the archive. He protested against this. In this letter, he announced that he would contact the ITS managing organization, the ICRC in Geneva, among other offices. But the ICRC supported the new isolation strategy in Arolsen.



## Video Station

### Excerpts



#### Selection of Petitions, Appeals and Declarations for Opening the ITS Archive, 1990s

Letters of protest were sent not only to the ITS but also to the *International Commission* of the ITS, the *International Red Cross*, members of German parliament and the press. This was meant to increase the pressure on the ITS to open the archive. The comments on the resolutions here are from ITS employees at the time, who studied them carefully.

“The United States is not prepared to let the last generation of Holocaust survivors die with the fear that they will be forgotten and that their family names will be swept under the carpet. We are not prepared to do that, we cannot do that.”

“It is generally agreed that knowingly hiding the documentation of the Holocaust is a form of denial.”

Paul Shapiro | Titel, Thesen, Temperamente  
„ITS Bad Arolsen“ 12.03.2006 | Hessischer Rundfunk

“When approached by TTT, the German Foreign Ministry and Interior Ministry point the finger at each other. No one is willing to comment. Only this much can be said: they are not against opening the archive in principle, but the negotiations had simply not reached an end yet.”

Commentary | Titel, Thesen, Temperamente  
„ITS Bad Arolsen“ 12.03.2006 | Hessischer Rundfunk

#### Looking Back: Why was the Opening of the ITS Archives such a Long and Complicated Matter?

In 1998, the *International Commission* of the ITS resolved to open the archive. But it was not until 2007 that the archive actually opened. This was thanks largely to years of intensive effort by Paul Shapiro from the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, who had continually applied pressure through the media and political committees.

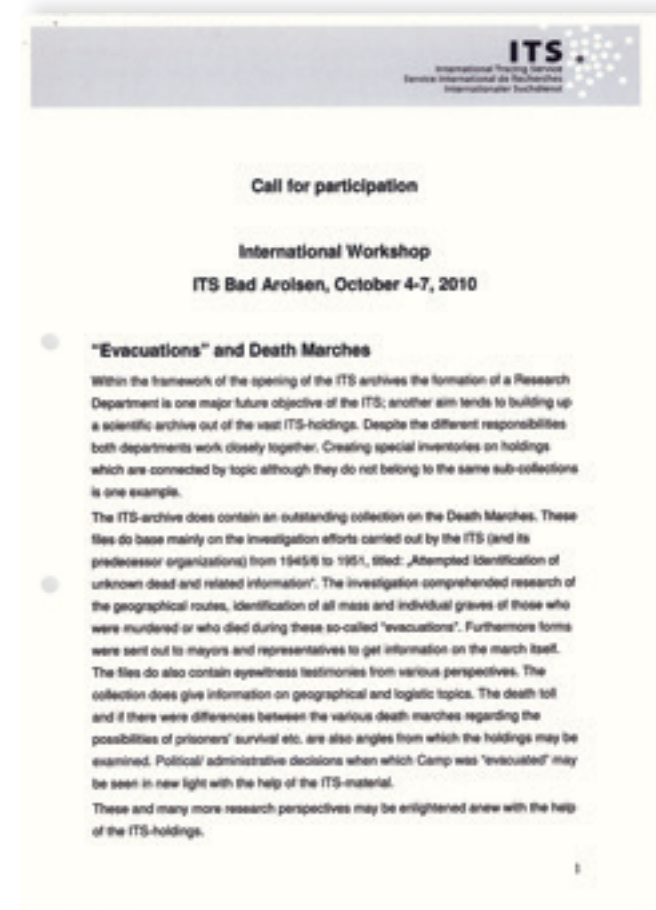
# New Paths in Cataloguing and Research

A lot has happened since the archive opened again in 2007. The provision of information for Nazi victims and their families, and the administration and preservation of the archival documents have been professionalized and are still key responsibilities. But above all, access to the archival collections is improving. For the first time, they are catalogued with archival standards, and new tools are being developed to explain the documents. A reference service department has been established for visitors, and various offers are available to researchers and educators, including workshops, publications and exhibitions.



**British Historian Ian Kershaw Viewing  
Death March Documents, Bad Arolsen, 2009**

Since 2007, many scholars and local researchers have visited Bad Arolsen. The ITS has developed numerous projects to make it easier to access the collections. These include research workshops, exhibitions and teacher training seminars.



**Invitation to a Workshop on Death Marches  
in Bad Arolsen, October 4-7, 2010**

The workshop was organized by the *Research and Education Department*, which was created after the archive opened in 2007. Since then, the ITS has started forming international connections again. A working group was created to study the topic of death marches in detail and to demonstrate the research potential of the archive.



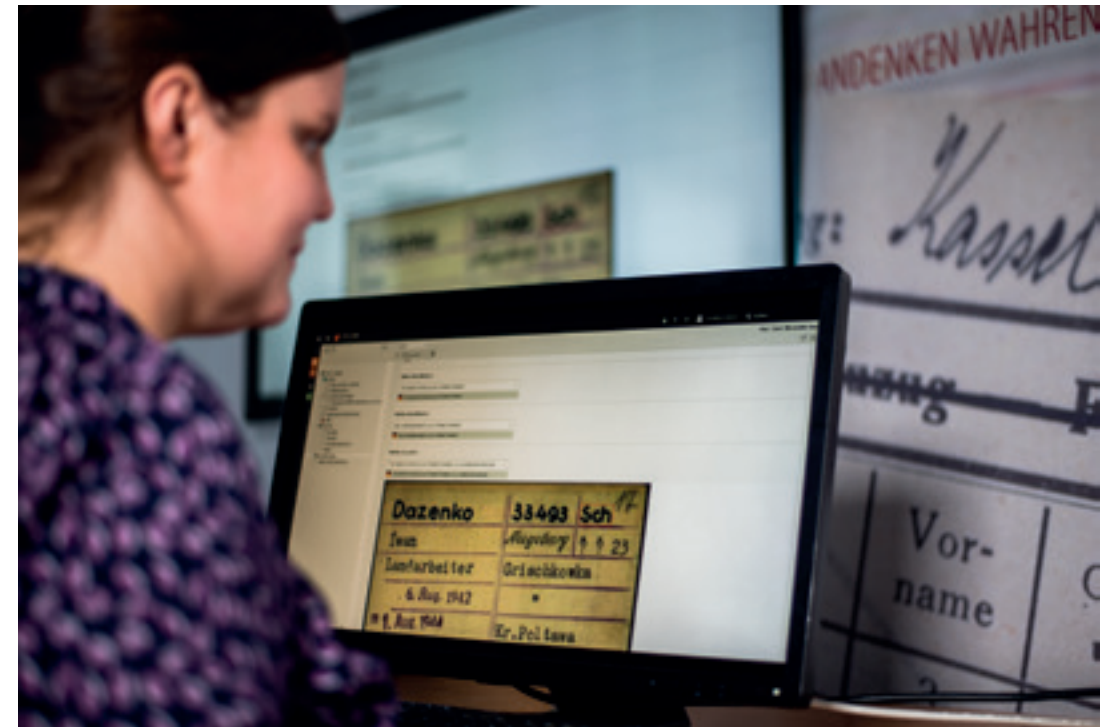






**Professional Cataloguing of the Archival Collections, Bad Arolsen, August 21, 2018**

Now that the ITS has opened up again to become an archive and documentation center, its collections are being catalogued for the first time. Many inquiries today relate not only to people but also to places or specific topics. New archival descriptions are therefore being developed to enable this kind of approach to the documents.



**Working on the e-Guide, an Online Tool from the Arolsen Archives, Bad Arolsen, June 28, 2018**

The e-Guide is an online tool that provides simple, understandable, well-illustrated and interactive explanations of the main document types held in the *Arolsen Archives*. This enables users with varying levels of prior knowledge to decipher the documents independently.



**Research in the Reading Rooms of the Arolsen Archives, Bad Arolsen, August 21, 2018**

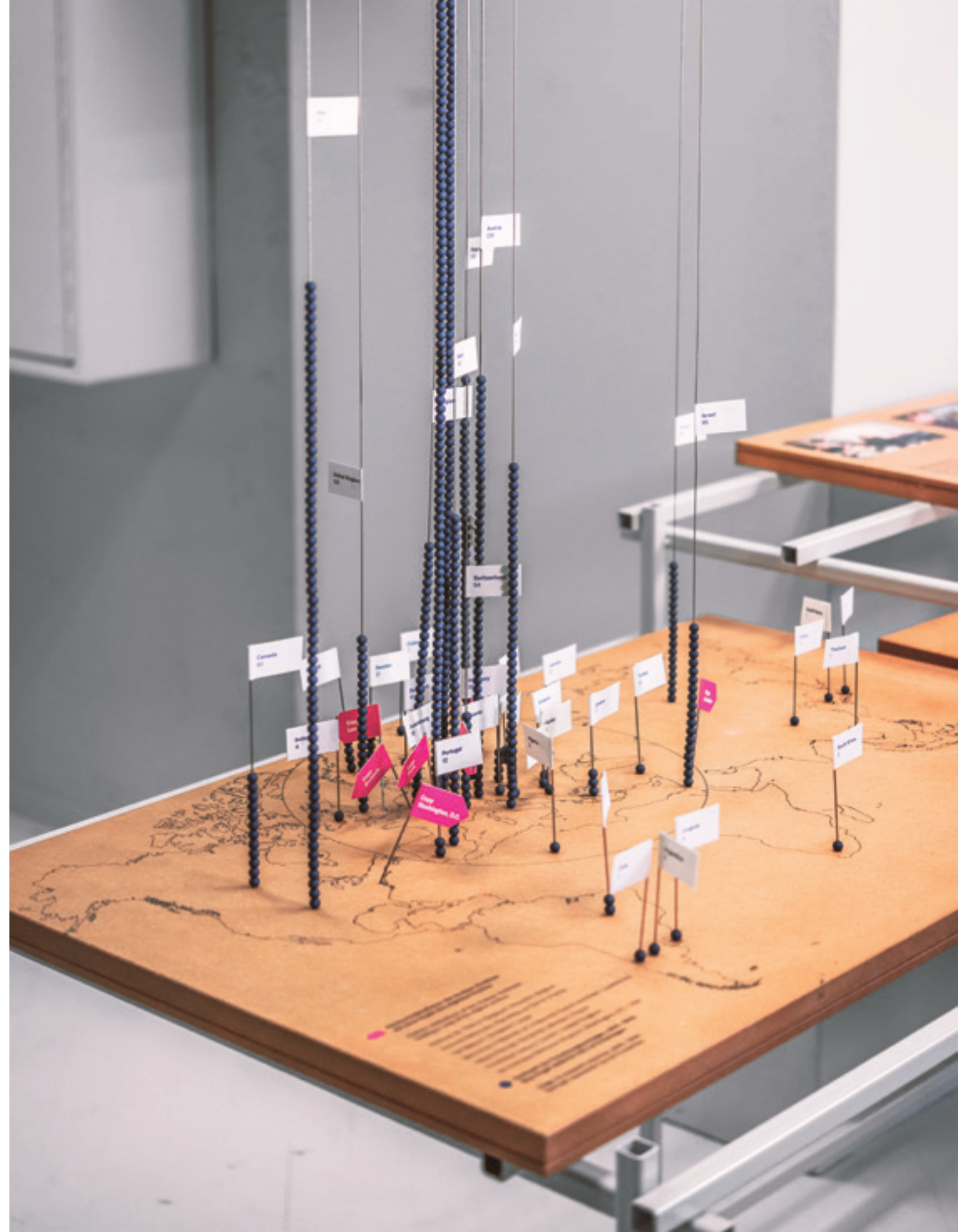
Visitors receive support as they conduct research in the digital archive on site. Nearly the entire collection has now been digitized. They can also use the library, which has works on Nazi history, as well as newspapers and journals from the camp committees of former prisoners and the associations of victims of Nazi persecution.



# Infographics

## Use of the Archive for Research, Education and Remembrance

From 2015 to 2018, 9271 research requests were received from 49 countries, and hundreds of users carried out research on-site. The digital archive can also be accessed through partner institutions of the *Arolsen Archives*, known as copyholders: every member state of the *International Commission* is entitled to receive a copy.



“My father is just one such victim among many millions. They also have no marked graves and no memorials other than the files housed here in Bad Arolsen.”

Thomas Buergenthal,  
Holocaust Survivor | His father died in Buchenwald concentration camp

“The Archives offer unparalleled opportunities for a social history of the Holocaust, or Nazism from the perspective of its victims. This is an important counterpart to a perpetrator-centric narrative.”

Dan Stone  
Historian

“*Arolsen Archives* stands for historical truths. It is our conscience. But we need to make use of it, as it cannot speak by itself.”

Paul Dostert  
Former Chair of the *International Commission of the ITS*

“The *Arolsen Archives* have been in a ‘notspot’ for too long. It is time this unique source of knowledge went where it belongs: in society’s midst, as a moral compass for us all.”

Floriane Azoulay  
Director of the *Arolsen Archives*



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- Front Photo of Suzanne Alhara, born March 19 1931 in Lyon, France. Together with her mother, she had been deported to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The mother survived and searched for her daughter in vain after 1945. Source: 6.3.2.1/84142773/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives
- Back ITS *Records Branch* Employees next to Concentration Camp Documents, Arolsen, circa 1950. Source: The Stars and Stripes

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# A c k n o w l e d g e m e n t s

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