

# EVERYDAY LIFE – ARMAMENTS – ANNIHILATION

PERMANENT EXHIBITION IN MÜHL DORF: the District of Mühl Dorf during the era of National Socialism  
MEMORIAL SITES AT MÜHL DORFER HART: Armament Bunker and Concentration Camp Complex  
INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM OF WALDKRAIBURG: Bunker 29

PUBLISHER: Förderverein Geschichtszentrum Mühl Dorf e.V.  
(Registered Association of the Mühl Dorf History Centre)  
EDITOR: Waltraud Schreiber



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**Editor:**

Waltraud Schreiber

With the assistance of:

Ulrich Fritz, Bavarian Memorial Foundation

Marc Spohr, Curator of the Exhibition in the Mühldorf Haberkasten

Edwin Hamberger, Archivist for the Town of Mühldorf

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OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENED  
OVER FORTY YEARS AGO. BUT THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE  
HISTORICAL CONSEQUENCES.

Speech by President Richard von Weizsäcker during the Ceremony Commemorating  
the 40th Anniversary of the End of War in Europe and of National-Socialist Tyranny  
on 8 May 1985 at the Bundestag, Bonn



## **FOREWORD**

### **1. The Förderverein “Geschichtszentrum Mühldorf e.V.” (Registered Association of the Mühldorf History Centre)**

The „Verein zur Förderung des Kreisheimatmuseums und der Heimatpflege im Lkr. Mühldorf a. Inn e.V.“ (Registered Association for the Promotion of the Local History Museum and Local Traditions in the District of Mühldorf a. Inn), founded in 1974, changed its name to „Förderverein Geschichtszentrum Mühldorf e.V.“ (Registered Association of the Mühldorf History Centre) as a response to an increase in the scope of its activities that had arisen over the years. Today, the Association does, in fact, not only promote activities of the Museum of Mühldorf. On the contrary, it also initiates district-wide history projects, assists with their implementation and provides financial support for their fulfilment.

One of its main tasks is to bring together the participants involved in historical work, supporters from their respective organisations, representatives from politics, society and the economy and potential sponsors for the individual projects. A form of working that has been developed for this purpose over time is the targeted creation of cross-institutional working groups.

This development is not least due to the fact that Eva Köhr, Chairperson of the Association since 2006, is active in local politics, involved in numerous regional and supra-regional associations and, through her family, has good contacts to the economy.

### **2. The Content-Related Focus of Recent Years: Dealing with the Nazi Past as a Whole**

Dealing with the Nazi era should take place in such a way that it becomes accepted as an integral part of local history and is not allowed to sink into oblivion or be ignored. At the same time, it should be connected to commemorative work

that provides present-day people with guidance for their actions both now and in the future.

A particular issue that the Association faced in the course of this work was the project to create a permanent exhibition of the Nazi history. This aimed to continue what the former Director of the District Museum, Dr. Hans-Rudolf Spagl, had started with the exhibition “... until everything was shattered”: a factual and simultaneously profound analysis of National Socialism within the district which shed light on local events.

The new exhibition also aimed to establish a close connection to the armament bunker and the concentration camp complex at Mühldorfer Hart. The initiatives to remember those who had died in the concentration camps were also to be incorporated into the project.

In addition, specific aspects of the district needed to be considered, such as the Ecksberg Home for the Disabled and the local euthanasia killings or the gunpowder factories in Aschau and Kraiburg. In this way, it would also be possible to establish links to the historical activities carried out by the parish of Aschau and the city of Waldkraiburg, particularly to the local museum in Bunker 29.

This book demonstrates that these efforts have been successful. There are now three different exhibition projects related to the Nazi era within the district. They complement each other and show collectively what commemorative work can achieve in a somewhat rural district such as Mühldorf. The financing of this book concludes the work of the Association in this focal area.

Our thanks goes to Professor Waltraud Schreiber, Chairperson of the Advisory Board of the Association, for the conceptual development and production of the publication. May this volume achieve the aim of making people within and without our district aware of our historical activities.

We have decided to publish this book on the WorldWideWeb. It can be downloaded, for example, from [www.museum-muehldorf.de](http://www.museum-muehldorf.de). It can be downloaded as a complete document or in parts, related to one of the exhibition projects.

The English translation is also freely accessible. It is particularly intended for the descendants of the concentration camp prisoners and forced labourers who had to work on the armament projects within the district, often under inhuman and fatal conditions.

Finally, the initiatives of the Association that focus on the Nazi past will be outlined. In this way, the Association itself will be presented as part of the regional commemorative culture.

### **3. Association Initiatives to Examine the Nazi Past within the District**

For almost 40 years, many volunteers have tried to keep the memory of the atrocities of National Socialism and the concentration camp complex at Mühldorfer Hart alive. The "Verein für das Erinnern" (Remembrance Society) played a particularly important role in this work. The efforts to create a dignified memorial in Mühldorfer Hart, however, remained unsuccessful.

The working group "KZ-Außenlager Mühldorfer Hart" (Concentration Camp Complex at Mühldorfer Hart) was founded in 2010 as an initiative of the Association, in order to combine forces. Alongside the Association and the Remembrance Society, the following members belong to it: District Promoter of Local Traditions, Representatives of the District of Mühldorf and the Town of Mühldorf, the regional political powers. Members also included experts from the respective regional authorities: Stiftung Bayerische Gedenkstätten (Bavarian Memorial Foundation), KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau (Concentration Camp Memorial, Dachau), Regional Office for Non-State Museums, Bavarian State Forests, State Building Authorities of Rosenheim, State Office for the Preservation of Monuments, the Government of Oberbayern.

The working group led by Eva Köhr adopted a structured approach. Its proposal to commission a feasibility study was taken up by the District of Mühldorf and the Regional Office for Non-State Museums. The study showed that, in addition to making the locations at Mühldorfer Hart accessible, a central, permanent exhibition was necessary in order to provide a context for the entire memo-

rial. This could not be created in the outside area of the Mühldorfer Hart due to site development legislation and technical ground conditions.

The feasibility study was the basis for the resolution made by the district and city councils to establish a permanent exhibition in the Haberkasten in Mühldorf. This meant that the Association's long cherished wish started to become reality.

The working group quickly agreed that the Stiftung Bayerische Gedenkstätten (Bavarian Memorial Foundation) should take on the responsibility for the planning of the memorial at Mühldorfer Hart and its later implementation and that the responsible regional bodies should be in charge of the permanent exhibition. The Foundation sponsored an architectural competition for the design of the entire area in 2012. The conceptual design by Latz + Partner was selected.

A setback was suffered in that the application for the promotion of memorials from state funds, submitted by the Stiftung Bayerische Gedenkstätten (Bavarian Memorial Foundation), was refused due to "a lack of authentic building fabric and non-existent national significance".

Following the decision of the town council and county council to establish a permanent exhibition, the working group consistently pursued the aim to drive forward the planning and implementation of the permanent exhibition in the Haberkasten of Mühldorf. To this aim, it worked closely with scientists and museum experts to develop a concept.

The Association and Regional Office for Non-State Museums jointly funded the position of a curator. Marc Spohr was chosen, which proved to be a fortunate decision. The section of the exhibition „Everyday Life – Armaments – Annihilation. The district of Mühldorf during National Socialism" verifies this appraisal.

In November 2015, the permanent exhibition was opened. Survivors of the concentration camp complex attended the opening along with prominent politicians at state, regional and town level, participants involved in local historical activities, and finally long-serving and prominent supporters of the memorial project, such as Max Mannheimer and Hans-Jochen Vogel.

The completion of the permanent exhibition increased the pressure to finally turn the second building block, the memorial at Mühldorfer Hart, into a reality as well.

In August 2015, the Bavarian Prime Minister at that time, Horst Seehofer, made the decision that the Free State would take on the responsibility for the erection of the memorial. The Stiftung Bayerische Gedenkstätten (Bavarian Memorial Foundation) was entrusted with the task of fulfilment.

From this point on, the working group was involved in the content-related work for the open-air exhibition. Through site visits, suggestions relating to materials and texts for the display boards and site design, the working group furthered the preparations for creating the memorial. As one of the stakeholders, the Association would be actively involved at the openings of the Waldlager (Woodland Camp) Memorial and the Mass Grave Memorial in April 2018.

The work on the third memorial site, the armament bunker, has not yet commenced. The working group will also support this work in a constructive way.

We will primarily continue to strive for government funding. We will not accept a further refusal due to "a lack of authentic building fabric and non-existent national significance".

#### 4. Acknowledgement

The publication of this book is an opportunity to publicly thank all those who have helped the Association in its aim to deal with the Nazi past collaboratively and with its dignified and future-oriented commemorative work. We would particularly like to thank:

- the Bavarian Minister of State, Dr. Marcel Huber
- the parliamentary Secretary of State in the Federal Department of Internal Affairs, Member of Parliament Stephan Mayer

- the members of the Bavarian State Parliament, Dr. Martin Huber and Günther Knoblauch
- the County Commissioner for the district of Mühldorf, Georg Huber, and the members of Mühldorf County Council
- the mayoress of the city of Mühldorf, Marianne Zollner, and the members of the City Council
- the Remembrance Society with Franz Langstein, Dr. Erhard Bosch, Josef Wagner and Peter Müller
- the Stiftung Bayerischer Gedenkstätten (Bavarian Memorial Foundation), particularly Ulrich Fritz
- the KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau (Concentration Camp Memorial, Dachau) with Dr. Andrea Riedle
- the Regional Office for Non-State Museums, in particular Dr. Michael Henker and Dr. Wolfgang Stäbler
- the State Office for the Preservation of Monuments with Dr. Walter Irlinger
- the Museum of Mühldorf with Dr. Susanne Abel and Diana Herrmann
- the Board of Directors of the Fördervereins Geschichtszentrum Mühldorf e.V. (Registered Association of the Mühldorf History Centre) particularly the Chairperson of the Advisory Board, Professor Waltraud Schreiber, the Vice Chairman and Town Archivist, Edwin Hamberger and the District Promoter of Local Traditions, Ernst Aicher

*Waldkraiburg, im April 2018*

*Eva Köhr,*

*Chairperson of the Förderverein Geschichtszentrum Mühldorf e.V. (Registered Association of the Mühldorf History Centre) and Director of the working group "KZ-Außenlager Mühldorfer Hart" (Concentration Camp Complex at Mühldorfer Hart).*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Dealing with the Historical Legacy of the Era of National Socialism**

This publication shows that the District of Mühldorf deals with the historical legacy arising from the era of National Socialism in a number of ways. There are three exhibition projects dedicated to this subject. Each project is described in a separate chapter. The three projects are:

- The permanent exhibition *Everyday Life – Armaments – Annihilation in Mühldorf*. It portrays the era of National Socialism and the post-war period throughout the district with a focus on the history of the Mühldorf concentration camp complex;
- The memorial site “Armament Bunker and Concentration Camp Complex at Mühldorf”. This has been created on the original site and therefore lies in a large forest area known as the Mühldorfer Hart. It comprises three parts - the bunker construction site, the “Waldlager”, one of the Mühldorf subcamps and the mass grave;
- The Industrial Museum Bunker 29, which is housed in an historic armament bunker. It portrays the earlier (industrial) history of Waldkraiburg based on a gunpowder factory built by the Nazis.

The exhibition do not only focus on different issues. They present the stories of the past in very different ways. Consequently, each of the three chapters begins by describing the concept that the exhibition organisers developed for their exhibitions.

### **2. A Brief View behind the Scenes of the Exhibition**

Readers will be shown the decisions made by the exhibition organisers and designers in order to bring the exhibition to life.

This brief view behind the scenes makes it easier to understand the exhibitions. It helps visitors to sort through the information they obtain. Key messages can therefore be distinguished from

less important ones. This also makes it easier to take note of fundamental connections.

It is, after all, the aim of the curators to illustrate connections: each section deals with a different aspect. Each aspect is explained using typical exhibition resources. This means that exhibits, pictures and texts have been carefully selected and arranged in a particular way. Not only individual events are portrayed – they are also related to each other and with situations which characterise the era. The specific challenge is to bring the background and contexts to light and to explain them. The designers also assist the exhibition organisers in achieving this. They not only select the appropriate colour schemes, materials and shape of the display cases, legible typefaces, appropriate presentation formats for films and audio material. The design concept as a whole is critical, as it combines both content and design. It also encompasses how the exhibition is organised within a section and how the spatial relationships between the sections are arranged.

What makes an exhibition special is, namely, that visitors are much more flexible than when attending a lecture, watching a film, seeing a play or reading a book. During these activities, one has to follow the speaker, the director or the author and the structure they have laid down, whereas in an exhibition, visitors decide for themselves what to occupy themselves with and for how long. What visitors gain from the exhibition is a direct result of this flexibility. The brief view behind the scenes of each exhibition provided in the first chapter helps the visitor to profit from visiting the district exhibitions.

### **3. Becoming “Immersed” in the Exhibitions**

The second chapter invites the reader to immerse themselves in the content of each exhibition. Pictures and texts from each section show which subjects are dealt with and how they will be explained. In addition, the respective leading texts are displayed alongside their related leading exhibits. Photos providing insights into the sections, and plans, give an impression of the chosen arrangement.

The so-called in-depth sections provide more detail. They illustrate what comes next in the sections, again through original accounts from the exhibitions. Only selected examples are introduced at this stage.

Their aim is to stimulate interest in the exhibitions as a whole. This publication does not, and cannot, aim to replace an actual visit to the memorial sites. Its aim is to prepare people for a visit to the site or to provide information afterwards. People are invited to read the texts undisturbed at home, to reflect on the entire experience. And one is also encouraged to consider how the exhibitions connect to each other.

This is important because the district of Mühldorf is more than simply a further example, similar to other regions, that shows how National Socialism established itself in Bavaria and changed life forever.

#### **4. Attract Attention to the Special Features of the District**

One special feature is that several armament factories were built during the Nazi era in Mühldorfer Hart, a forest region covering many square kilometres. These had an effect right into the region, not only in the years marked by National Socialism.

Two different historical phases must be distinguished in terms of time and place. The first began at the end of the 1930's: two gunpowder factories were built near the present-day town of Waldkraiburg, or rather in the present-day parish of Aschau, hidden in the high forest. Initially, it provided mainly locals with employment; in the course of the war, they were increasingly supplemented and replaced by foreign forced labour.

The second phase of armament projects began in the summer of 1944. A huge semi-subterranean bunker complex was built to protect the production of jet-propelled bombs from bombardments made by the Allies. Alongside construction companies and skilled workers, civil forced labour and camp prisoners from all over Europe were used in the construction. The concentration camp complex revealed in a striking way what the Nazi dictatorship caused in terms of inhumanity, death

and dying and what was "humanly possible" in terms of cruelty and inhumanity (Harald Welzer).

The armament projects also show that it is insufficient to consider 1933-1945 only as an isolated period. This will be illustrated in the following paragraphs in relation to the economy, society and commemorative culture. Thereby, it will also be shown how the district exhibitions illustrate connections that exist between historical periods.

##### **a) Economy**

It is undeniable that some aspects of technical development and production modernisation were driven forward during the Nazi Dictatorship. However, the importance of the war was a central condition for the further development of technology and industry. The longer the war lasted, the more difficult it became to obtain the labour needed in the factories. Consequently, forced labour and camp prisoners were used, often under disastrous and often deadly working conditions. These two influences on the Nazi modernisation strategy – the relevance of the war and the situation with regard to labour – must not be disregarded. The fact that the fewest of these developments was actually concerned with new inventions should also not be neglected. Most of the modernisation projects that took place during the Nazi era had already been started in the Weimar Republic or even before the First World War.

This did not change the fact that the modernisation projects continued to have an effect following the end of the Nazi dictatorship. In some areas, they even had a great effect on the post-war years and created the basis for further developments. This could be clearly seen in the district of Mühldorf and its economic, structural change. In the bunker museum, also in some parts of the Haberkasten exhibition, continuities in the areas of economy and technology can be seen.

##### **b) Society**

The fact that the repercussions of the armament industry could also be felt in the sector of society is also illustrated in the exhibitions in Bunker 29 and in the Haberkasten. The exhibitions each have a different focus. In Waldkraiburg, the focus is on German expellees, and in particular on the role



that industry played in the shaping of the new beginning, including a new social beginning.

The Haberkasten exhibition highlights the various perceptions and reactions of people who now had to live together: local residents, people who had come to Mühldorf during the war as camp prisoners, forced labourers or prisoners of war, and German expellees who came in their thousands to a country damaged by war following the end of the war.

One of the most amazing developments in the decades that followed was that people were able to live together after a relatively short time, although the societal structure had been profoundly changed. Our present and our future, currently facing the challenges of a new societal upheaval, can build on this.

### c) A Commemorative Culture

The necessity to cross historical periods is inherent to dealing with memories and recollections: people living at a later date remember the past in order to give the future a direction.

All three exhibitions help us to remember. Seen in this way, they are a part of the commemorative culture. All three exhibitions also deal directly with remembrance: in the Haberkasten there is a separate section dedicated to this. It shows how much “remembering” is also dependent on the present and how changeable commemorative culture therefore is. Directly after the war, people came to terms with the Nazi era in a different way as they did during the economic miracle years and at the turn of the millenium or as they do today.

At the memorial site in Mühldorfer Hart, this subject is addressed on panels situated at all three locations. Remembrance of the victims leads to the precept of global responsibility, that all people should be treated with dignity and all crimes against humanity should be outlawed.

In Bunker 29, the consistent localisation of the early history of Waldkraiburg at the gunpowder factory recalls aspects that were previously only given marginal attention. To this extent, this museum gives the regional commemorative culture an additional emphasis.

## 5. About this Publication

This book is available as a print version and online in German and English. It can be downloaded free of ([www.museum-muehldorf.de](http://www.museum-muehldorf.de)). In this way, interested parties in Germany and overseas can be reached. This applies not least to the relatives of former camp prisoners.

Waltraud Schreiber is responsible for the production and overall appearance of the publication. With regard to the Mühldorf exhibition, the description draws explicitly from a publication by the curator, Marc Spohr (Marc Spohr: “Everyday Life, Armaments, Annihilation” – new permanent exhibition on the Nazi history in the district of Mühldorf a. Inn, in Museum Heute (49) pages 21-26). Edwin Hamberger, Archivist for the city of Mühldorf, assisted with the composition of the chapter, particularly by providing photographic material.

The description of the Waldkraiburg Bunker Museum refers to the contribution by the curator Anita Kuisle and the Director of the Town Museum Elke Keiper (Kuisle, Anita/Keiper, Elke: Bunker 29 – An Industrial Museum for Waldkraiburg, in Museum heute (36), pages 15-20). Elke Keiper also assisted with the composition of the contribution and provided photographic material.

Ulrich Fritz, Bavarian Memorial Foundation, described the concept, the aim and the creation of the memorial site “The Mühldorf Armament Bunker and Concentration Camp Complex”.

The publication is based on an idea of Eva Köhr, Chairperson of the Förderverein Geschichtszentrum Mühldorf e.V. (Registered Association of the Mühldorf History Centre). The publication was financed by the Förderverein Geschichtszentrum Mühldorf e.V., the district of Mühldorf, the city of Mühldorf, the city of Waldkraiburg, the Industriegemeinschaft Waldkraiburg und Aschau.

*Mühldorf, im April 2018*  
Waltraud Schreiber



REMEMBERING MEANS RECALLING AN OCCURRENCE HONESTLY AND  
UNDISTORTEDLY SO THAT IT BECOMES A PART OF OUR VERY BEINGS.  
THIS PLACES HIGH DEMANDS ON OUR TRUTHFULNESS.

Speech by President Richard von Weizsäcker during the Ceremony Commemorating  
the 40th Anniversary of the End of War in Europe and of National-Socialist Tyranny  
on 8 May 1985 at the Bundestag, Bonn



## I. FOR CLASSIFICATION

The permanent exhibition “Everyday life – Armament – Annihilation” was opened in the Mühldorfer Haberkasten in 2015. The sponsors are the district and the city of Mühldorf.



Fig. 1: The Haberkasten is a historical building of the Salzburg Period. Mühldorf, which is located in Bavaria, was governed by the Archbishops of Salzburg until the 19th century.  
© Museum Mühldorf.

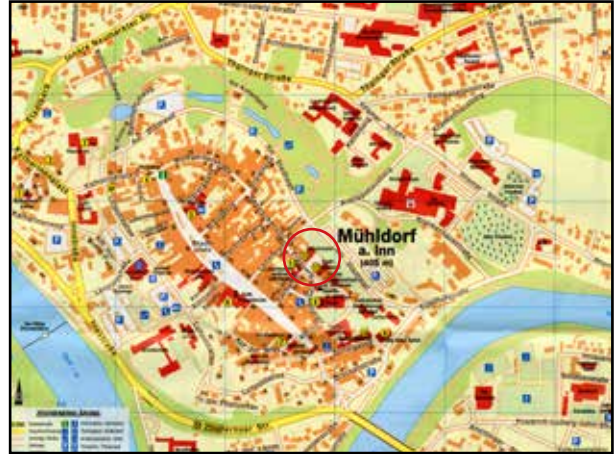


Fig. 2: The Haberkasten is located in the historic quarter next to the parish church. Parking facilities are next to the town wall. © City of Mühldorf.

The exhibition deals with the Nazi era in the agricultural region of south eastern Upper Bavaria, with an emphasis on the history of the subcamp complex at Mühldorf.

Thus, it historically contextualises the memorial site Mühldorfer Hart which refers to the armament project Weingut 1. This venture was one of the Nazi relocation projects, where the arms production was to be moved to a secure place to provide protection from the Allies' bombardments. The construction work was carried out by thousands of concentration camp prisoners and forced labourers – most of them lost their lives. – A detailed report on this memorial site can be found in the Chapter “Armament Bunker and Mühldorf Subcamp Complex”.

The material costs for the exhibition were borne by the district of Mühldorf as well as the city of Mühldorf. The personnel costs for the scientific support of the exhibition were provided by the administration for non-governmental museums in Bavaria and the Förderverein Geschichtszentrum e.V. (Friends' Association of the Mühldorf museum). A working group supported the project and consisted of representatives of the city of Mühldorf, the district of Mühldorf, the administration for non-governmental museums in Bavaria, the Mühldorf museum, the Bavarian Memorial

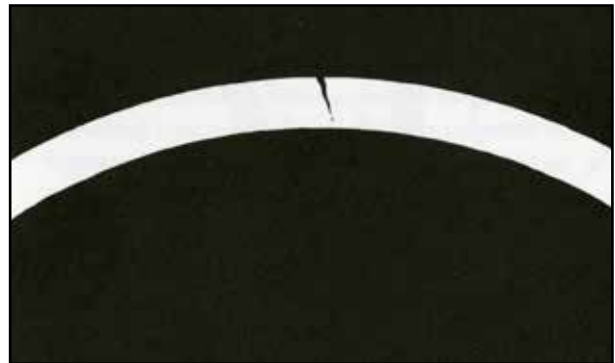


Fig. 3: The Exhibition Logo.

Foundation, the Dachau concentration camp memorial and local volunteers.

The **exhibition opening times** can be found at **[www.museum-muehldorf.de](http://www.museum-muehldorf.de)**. On the website, you can also obtain contact information regarding guided tours and other accompanying programmes.

**Address:** Fragnergasse 3, 84453 Mühldorf a. Inn

## 1. Organisation of the Exhibition

The Mühldorf exhibition is divided into four main sections.

Each of these main sections is introduced by a guiding text and a large-sized photograph (2.5 - 4 m) which gives visitors a first impression of the overall theme. The only fixed installation, a partition made out of scantlings, highlights the second department as essential.



Fig. 4: The partition figuratively ‘cages’ the section about the subcamps and is, nevertheless, accessible for visitors.  
Photo: Heiner Heine, © Museum Mühldorf.

An intelligent arrangement of the subsections creates transitions between main sections. The subjects ‘everyday life’ and ‘construction site of the bunker/subcamp complex’ are connected through the topic of forced labour in the gunpowder factories at Kraiburg and Aschau, and further insights in the lives of forced labourers and war prisoners who were detained in the area of the district Mühldorf. As a further example, the subsections ‘euthanasia’ and ‘war death of soldiers’ are connected to the subsection ‘annihilation’.



Fig. 5: A glance at the sub section ‘end of war’.  
Photo: Anja Köhler, © Space4

The main sections comprises the following subjects

- (1) The Subsections “Everyday Life” and “Violence”
- (2) Armament bunkers and the Mühldorf subcamp complex
- (3) The end of war in the district Mühldorf
- (4) Coming to terms with the Nazi era since 1945

The four main sections are examined more closely in subsections. In each of them, a leading exhibit reveals the specific topic to the visitors. An additional section text provides further information. Moreover, every subsection is equipped with display cases which show original artefacts, pictures, and textual sources. But also videos of contemporary witnesses, audio-visual documents, models, and information texts provide the possibility to acquire in-depth knowledge about the various subjects.

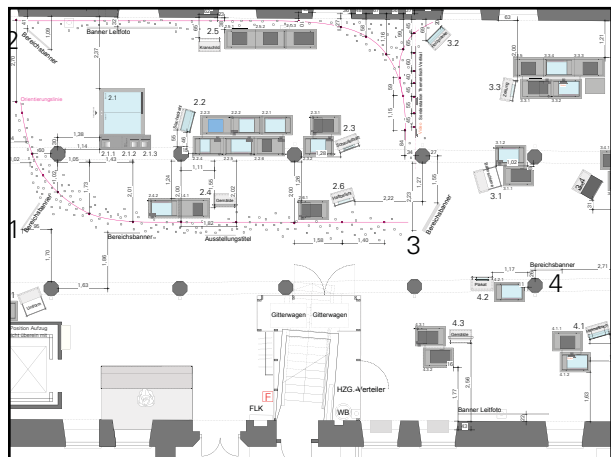


Fig. 6: The four main sections and their related subsections are marked on the site plan with the numbers 1-4. © Space4.

## 2. Composition of the Exhibition

The exhibition organisers focus on people who lived in places that can still be visited today. Thus, they follow a biographical and localisation approach.

### a) The Biographical Approach

As a rule, experiences and viewpoints of several persons are displayed. Almost in every case they represent different perspectives:

- 'Official actors' and the 'ordinary' population
- Perpetrators and victims
- Resisters and profiteers.

This clearly demonstrates that, for example, in a dictatorship, the ordinary population is not only affected but, in one way or another, involved – as students or teachers, parents, voters, as priests and nuns, as residents of the town square etc. Repeatedly, people who can no longer speak for themselves are given the chance to speak: The euthanasia victims of the 'Home for the Disabled (Behindertenanstalt)' at Ecksberg are portrayed in a photo album compiled by the nurses.



Fig. 7: Photo album Ecksberg, Archive of the Ecksberg Foundation.

Fallen soldiers from the district of Mühlheim are given the chance to speak through individual remembrance cards.



Fig. 8: Remembrance cards, © Museum Mühldorf.

Thousands of dead persons who died in the concentration camps of the Bunker's construction site become human beings, who were killed, by the display of death rolls.



Fig. 9: Death roll subcamp Mühldorf. © Municipal Archive Mühldorf.

The babies of forced labourers who died in the 'Care Centre at Burgkirchen/Alz', are often unnamed. Their short lives are depicted through their dates of birth and death.



In order to fulfil the biographical approach, video-taped conversations with contemporary witnesses are installed at appropriate positions. These interviews were conducted with surviving prisoners of the concentration camp and local fellow citizens. During the time when the interviews are not played, the screens show a picture of the respective person during the Nazi era; as soon as a visitor picks up the headphones, a photograph of the person from the time when the interview was conducted appears.



Fig. 10: Interview with the contemporary witness Imre Vársányi. Photo: Anja Köhler, © Space4.

### b) The Localisation Approach

The places shown in the exhibition relate to the people who are introduced: the town of Mühlendorf, the bunker area in the Mühlendorfer Hart, and the “home” for disabled people at Ecksberg are frequently portrayed. In addition, further places within the district and the region are included – sometimes in hardly known roles. They appear as places of forced labour and detention camps, as places of death and survival and as graveyards. Partially, the exhibition reaches far beyond the district of Mühlendorf. In these cases, issues such as the home countries of the concentration camp prisoners or further Nazi armament projects are addressed.

When it comes to the depiction of places that are familiar to the visitors, the exhibition organisers also reveal unexpected features.

For example, the Mühlendorf town square is shown

– but it is completely flagged with swastika flags. Contrary to today’s ruins, the Bunker area will be



Fig. 11: View of section “Everyday Life During National Socialism”. Photo: Anja Köhler, © Space4.

depicted in its development condition of 1945. A film scene shot at the site of the bunker aliena-



Fig. 12: Photo: Polensky & Zöllner, © Municipal Archive Mühlendorf.

tes visitors to its ruins. Buildings that are still well-known today are shown in a state of wartime destruction or in their original state as Nazi buildings.

### 3. The General Impression

In the introductory text, the exhibition organisers point out their goal to display key facets of the Nazi dictatorship using the example of the district of Mühldorf.

In doing so, they raise awareness of the fact that initial, gradual changes in people's everyday life paved the way for the Nazi dictatorship. A dictatorship which not only accepted the hazard of World War II but wanted it to take place. A dictatorship which applied force in many ways. This exhibition repeatedly focuses on inhumane excesses of violence directed against enemies defined by the Nazi ideology. But also the kind of deadly violence that meant war for the civilian population is shown. A war which the Nazis wanted to prolong – not least by relocating the armament production to bunkers – when the war was already lost. Within the exhibition, subtler forms of violence which served to keep the local population in line are also addressed

The topical political dimension of this exhibition lies in changing the visitors' roles from distant observers to people who are involved, who are consistently perplexed and reflective. They are encouraged to compare the past to the present. In the end, the visitors should be emboldened to avoid and fight injustice and inhumanness whenever it is possible for them.

Through its execution, the exhibition focuses on the altercation with 'Death and Dying'. For example, it addresses fallen soldiers during the war, death through euthanasia and the death of forced labourers and war prisoners, but in particular, it addresses the death of thousands of concentration camp prisoners during the armament project, the death of local residents during the American bombardment, and the death sentences imposed in the Mühldorf trials.

'Death and Dying' are embedded in an everyday life which is defined by ideology and an obsession with power, by compulsion or acceptance. However, the focal point is what people are capable of doing to other people, when being human, and the rights and responsibilities associated with being human, are set aside.

In this way, the exhibition addresses one of the significant challenges to a reappraisal of the past,

resulting from the dehumanisation that occurred in the Nazi era: the question arises as to how we can give meaning to our remembrance of what happened for our today and tomorrow. This does not mean attempting to give some kind of meaning to the death and dying of that time. The aim can only be to take responsibility for our humanness today and tomorrow, aware of what was once possible.

## II. SECTIONS OF THE EXHIBITION – AN OVERVIEW

### 1 | Everyday Life Armament Production Extermination – The Mühldorf District under National Socialism

#### ***Everyday Life under National Socialism: The Dictatorship in Rural Areas***

*The Mühldorf district was heavily agricultural. It had 43.514 inhabitants in 1939. Many of them had lived through World War I, witnessed the end of the monarchy, revolutionary uprisings and, when the Weimar Republic was established, the first democracy on German soil.*

*As a consequence of the world economic crisis in 1929, radical anti-democratic parties experienced new popularity. By 1933, the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP) had come to power and occupied the most important political positions in the Mühldorf district.*

*The new political order created by the National Socialists and their supporters permeated all spheres of life. Solidarity with the "people's community" (Volksgemeinschaft) was celebrated and outsiders were persecuted for political, racial and genealogical reasons. With the start of World War II, Nazi Germany deported thousands of foreign forced laborers and prisoners of war to the region. For many years, their presence was the most visible sign of the war.*



Fig. 13: Adolf-Hitler-Platz in Mühldorf (today Stadtplatz), June 14, 1939. Adolf-Hitler-Platz was decorated with swastika flags in honor of the NSDAP local council in 1939. © Municipal Archive Mühldorf.

## The Subsections “Everyday Life” and “Violence”

- 1.1 Seizure of Power and Co-optation:  
The Establishment of Dictatorship
- 1.2 Jewish Population: From Citizen to  
“Public Enemy”
- 1.3 World War II: “Heroic Death” and  
“Ration Stamps”
- 1.4 Euthanasia: The So-Called Good Death
- 1.5 War Prisoners and Forced Labourers:  
Assignment and Racial Ideology

In the first three subsections, developments are described which took place in Mühldorf in a similar way to many other regions. The first station (1.1) delineates the way in the Nazi dictatorship and displays life in an increasingly established dictatorship. It shows the functionaries as well as the involvement of “ordinary” people within the context of their realigned professional lives, also their newly created leisure activities which were aimed at meeting the ambitions of National Socialism and their actions as part of a changed society. The various kinds of resistance are presented as well. They differ in time and the dependence of those involved.

A part of the daily life in this stabilising dictatorship was the acceptance of exclusion and the increasing pogrom of everyone who was excluded from the Nazi defined ethnic community. The corresponding subsection (1.2) portrays the story of the persecution of three Jewish families in a seemingly unemotional manner. This “cool” representation clearly shows that there is nothing to report on resistance on the part of the Mühldorfer residents...

The subsection 1.3 addresses war experiences. In the beginning, the levy of young men in Mühldorf is presented, afterwards their life and death as soldiers and finally, the way the local population dealt with the many deaths and other consequences of the war. Again, this is displayed in a clinical and analytic manner and the interpretation lies in the visitor's responsibility, especially with regard to any conclusion which affects their own lives.

The last two subsections focus on regional features. The story of euthanasia of the Altmühldorfer “home” for disabled people Ecksberg is told

(subsection 1.4). The last subsection (1.5) thematises the gunpowder factories near Kraiburg and Aschau and their employees who were often forced labourers. This section also highlights the lives of war prisoners in the region. Additionally, it includes the „Care Centre (Pflegeanstalt) at Burkgkirchen/Alz“, where forced labourers' new-borns were hospitalised and died in great numbers.

To further elucidate what has already been seen, each subsection has a display case with visual and textual sources, partially three-dimensional materials and interviews with contemporary witnesses. In addition, guidance texts by the exhibition organisers provide for the classification of the local and regional examples into larger contexts.

In every main section, an artistic feature is to be found which is appropriate for the respective subject: presented on felt banners, the first section contrasts various Mühldorfer biographies. On the one hand, they show the functionaries Fritz Schwaegler, district leader for Mühldorf and Altötting, and Hans Gollwitzer, mayor of the city of Mühldorf. On the other hand, the opposition is presented through the minister of Ecksberg, Gregor Lunghammer, and a member of the German Communist Party, Josef Wimmer. Stories of Jewish persecution are told using the examples of Siegfried Hellmann, a cattle dealer, the tradespeople Fritz and Eva Michaelis and Rita Baur, the Jewish wife of a non-Jewish tax officer.



## To subsection 1.1: Takeover of Power and Political Consolidation: Establishing a Dictatorship

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*In 1929, the economic crisis caused the spread of radical parties in Germany. The National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP) drew attention with its extreme positions and menacing appearances.*

*The conservative Bavarian People's Party (BVP) had been the strongest political force in the district until 1933. When the NSDAP took power in 1933, the Nazis established a dictatorship under Adolf Hitler's leadership. Compulsory organizations, such as the German Labor Front and Hitler Youth, were supposed to instill National Socialist values in the population. Opponents of the regime were aggressively persecuted. A silent majority and countless supporters helped stabilize the new dictatorship.*



Fig. 14: Sign on an NSDAP building, after 1933. © Municipal Archive Mühldor . Photo Anja Köhler © Space4.



## Example 1: Economy and Society

From the  
Display Cases

*The NSDAP tried to counter unemployment by initiating infrastructure projects and job creation measures. Several buildings were erected in the district in the 1930s. The NSDAP banned trade unions and founded the compulsory German Labor Front. Its sister organization, "Kraft durch Freude" (KdF, Strength through Joy), was established to organize leisure activities for the people and also to monitor them. In July 1939, KdF selected 200 citizens from the Mühldorf and Altötting districts who were deemed worthy by the National Socialists. They were invited to take a cruise to Norway. The travel group included district leader Fritz Schwaegerl and the mayor of Mühldorf, Hans Gollwitzer.*



Fig. 15: Community members help build a swimming pool in Aschau am Inn, 1938. Landratsamt Mühldorf.



Fig. 16: Building sign from the compulsory German Labor Front (DAF), after 1933. Museum Mühldorf. Photo Anja Köhler © Space4.



Fig. 17: Group photograph of passengers on the KdF cruise to Norway, 1939. © Municipal Archive Mühldorf.

*"The people on the embankment waved to us, we waved back and thanked the Führer with the Sieg Heil, for he had made the trip possible."*

*Report from a passenger on the trip, Mühldorf newspaper, July 7, 1939*

## Example 2: Youth

From the  
Display Cases

*The Nazi regime used its youth organizations, the Hitler Youth (HJ) and League of German Girls (BdM), to shape young people according to its own ideals. Its main demands were a readiness to make sacrifices and a willingness to go to battle. All other youth associations were banned.*

*The NSDAP reduced the influence of school nuns and teachers who were not loyal to the Nazi Party. It opened its own nursery schools and dismissed teaching staff in existing ones. The learning material was adapted to reflect the Nazi ideology.*



Fig. 18: School textbook with National Socialist content, 1935. Photo Anja Köhler © Space4.



Fig. 19: Youth march on the city square in Mühldorf, after 1933. Museum Mühldorf



Fig. 20: NSV nursery school sign (National Socialist Welfare Service), after 1933. Museum Mühldorf. Photo Anja Köhler © Space4.



Fig. 21: PPostcard from the Mühldorf upper school with pupils' signatures, 1942. Museum Mühldorf

### Example 3: Mühldorf biographies – pro und contra



**Hans Gollwitzer**  
**Mayor of the city of Mühldorf,**

1937-1945 and  
1952-1966  
\* 1896 in Erding  
† 1979 in Mühldorf

"At 2:30, civil servants, employees and worker representatives gathered in the conference room. Mayor Gollwitzer gave a brief speech in which he stated his intention to lead the city administration according to the exceptional spirit of National Socialism."

**Mayor's daily report, March 5, 1937**

In 1929, Hans Gollwitzer, a Protestant town pastor, co-founded Mühldorf's NSDAP chapter. After serving in World War I, he joined the rightwing Freikorps. He was also a member of the German Christians, a Protestant movement associated with National Socialism. District leader Schwaegele appointed him mayor in 1937. As a committed National Socialist, he advocated the discrimination and persecution of people who, according to the Nazi ideology, were not part of the "people's community" (Volksgemeinschaft).

Despite his Nazi past, he was re-elected mayor in 1952 and remained in office until 1966. Five years later he was awarded honorary citizenship from the city for his local political work.



**Gregor Lunghammer**  
**Paster of Altmühldorf and director of the Ecksberg asylum**

\* 1876 near Haag  
in Upper Bavaria  
† 1940  
Geisenhausen,  
near Landshut

"... God bless those who despised and persecuted me, who were hostile and who railed against and criticized me, for they have contributed greatly to making me humble, and taught me to carry my cross patiently for 21 years ..."

**Gregor Lunghammer's farewell sermon, August 15, 1937**

In 1916, Pastor Gregor Lunghammer became director of the Ecksberg asylum, which cared for mentally and physically disabled patients. Opposed by the NSDAP, he was vilified in the local press. Lunghammer resigned as pastor in 1937 in response to public pressure. In March 1938 he was arrested by the Gestapo and interrogated in Munich. He suffered a stroke while in detention. A court cleared him of all charges six weeks later. Lunghammer was released under the condition that he not return to Mühldorf. He died in 1940 from conditions caused by his imprisonment.

### Example 3: Mühldorf biographies – jewish fellow citizens



**Siegfried Hellmann**

\*1879 in Gunzenhausen  
† 1942 in the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp

**Fritz Michaelis**

\* 1892, in Stolp, Pomerania  
† 1952 in New York

**Eva Michaelis**

\* 1891 in Berlin  
† unknown

"My husband was arrested in Mühldorf following the known incidents of November 9, 1938. Ten days later I was summoned to the prison where my husband had to sign a statement agreeing to leave Mühldorf immediately."

**Statement made by Katharina Hellmann in a restitution case, March 12, 1948**

Siegfried Hellmann ran a horse trading business with his Catholic wife on what is today Friedrich-Ebert-Strasse in Mühldorf. Their children immigrated to London in the 1930s in response to the increased discrimination.

Siegfried Hellmann was arrested in Mühldorf on November 10, 1938 in connection with the November pogroms carried out throughout the Reich. He was released under the condition that he leave the city immediately. Siegfried Hellmann fled alone to Rotterdam where he lost his last possessions during a German air raid. He was arrested on May 5, 1942 and deported to Auschwitz, where he was murdered.

Josef Hermann Liebenstein was the second Jewish cattle dealer in Mühldorf. He was able to flee to the United States in April 1939.

"The window panes of the shop located at the property of Stadtplatz 68 were shattered on the night before Sunday, May 26, 1935. The words "Juda perish," "The Jews must die" and so on were written in large red letters on the window display to the right of the entrance."

**Report from the auxiliary police of Mühldorf, June 1, 1935**

Fritz and Eva Michaelis ran a men's clothing shop at Stadtplatz no. 68. The couple suffered discrimination after the Nazis came to power. On April 1, 1933, the Nazis declared a boycott of Jewish stores throughout the Reich. The Michaelis kept their store closed that day. An SA guard was posted in front of the entrance. The store was attacked in May 1935. Even the customers shopping in the store were publicly denounced. The couple fled to New York in 1937 in response to the growing hostility. The store was taken over by Daxenberger, the Mühldorf department store.



## To subsection 1.4: Euthanasia: The “Good Death”

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*Racial hygiene was a central component of the National Socialists' inhuman policies. In 1934 the Nazi leadership had people registered and sterilized against their will if they did not meet the Nazi's genealogical standards. In 1939 the Nazis began murdering people with physical and mental disabilities, referring to this euphemistically as “euthanasia” (Greek for “good death”). The patients of the Ecksberg home were also killed as part of this “T4” policy. T4 stood for the address Tiergartenstrasse 4 in Berlin, the location of the central office that coordinated the mass murder.*

*“Action T4” was officially put to an end in August 1941 following strong public protest. But the physically disabled continued to be threatened with death. By 1943 the Ecksberg asylum was again filled with patients from all over Germany. Within a short time, the staff let many of them die from undernourishment and neglect.*



Fig. 22: A glance at the section dealing with 'euthanasia' with the photo album as leading exhibit. Photo: Anja Köhler, © Space4.

Conf. Fig. 7: Photo album Ecksberg, Archive of the Foundation Ecksberg. Photo Anja Köhler © Space4.

## Example 1: Action "T4"

From the  
Display Cases

*In summer 1940, 342 people with physical and mental disabilities resided in the Ecksberg asylum. In July 1940, the institution's management was required to fill out forms describing the health condition of its residents. The fate of the patients was decided by doctors in Berlin on the basis of this information.*

*Most of the Ecksberg patients were transferred to similar institutions in Gabersee and Eglfing-Haar in September 1940. Later, 241 of them were killed with gas and cremated in the Hartheim asylum near Linz. From May 1944 to May 1945, Organisation Todt used the building for its armaments project "Weingut I."*



*Fig. 23: Deportation of the Ecksberg patients to Eglfing-Haar and Gabersee, September 1940. Archive of the Foundation Ecksberg.*



*Fig. 24: Ecksberg asylum with swastika flags, 1941. Archive of the Foundation Ecksberg.*

*Folder with photos from the photo album of the Ecksberg victims of Aktion T4. Next to the picture, the entrance date and the date of death are documented.*



*Fig. 25: Contemporary witness Sister Imelda (Karoline Unfried). She accompanied a group of charges from Ecksberg as they were transported to Eglfing-Haar on 17th January 1941. Ecksberg Archive Foundation.*

## Example 2: Wild Euthanasia

From the  
Display Cases

*After Action "T4" was officially discontinued, patients continued to be killed through intentional neglect and undernourishment. Today, these acts, which were not ordered by law, are referred to as "wild euthanasia." In August 1943, the Ecksberg asylum took in 500 new patients. Within 18 months, 187 of them had died of undernourishment.*

*One of the victims was Carl Rotthaus, who had suffered a brain lesion in World War I. He passed through several institutions before arriving in Ecksberg in August 1943. Inadequate care led to his death on November 4, 1943.*



Fig. 26: Carl Paul Rotthaus (far right) with his son Paul, his daughter-in-law Hanni and his grandson Dirk, June 1943. Privately owned.

Deutsche Reichspost			
MUEHLDORF		14.11.43	
PAUL ROTTHAUS		KASERNENSTR.	
17 - DOLLAGEN			
VATER GESTORBEN		BEERDIGUNG SAMSTAG 6/11 15.00	
IN ALTMANN		STATUS MUEHLDORF GEB. - ANSTALT	
ECKSBERG			
VERGE		11.11.43	

Fig. 27: Telegram announcing the death of Paul Rotthaus, November 1943. Privately owned.

## 2 | Main section: Armament Bunker and Subcamp Complex Mühldorf

### ***The "Weingut I" Armament Project and the Concentration Camp Subcamp Complex in Mühldorf: The Arms Race in Mühldorfer Hart***

*As the Allies were landing in Normandy, a huge armament project was underway in the Mühldorf region. In spring 1944, the Nazi leadership decided to move armament production into bomb-safe structures to protect it from Allied air attacks. Organisation Todt (OT), which was responsible for building projects under the Nazis, planned to build six large bunkers. Construction only began on two of them. One construction site was located between Landsberg and Kaufering; the other in Mühldorfer Hart, a forest between Mühldorf and Kraiburg. Neither building project was ever completed. Equipment for the Messerschmitt Me 262, the world's first jet fighter, was supposed to be produced in the Mühldorf bunkers.*

*As of July 1944, thousands of concentration camp prisoners were deported to the Mühldorf district to work on construction sites for an armament project called "Weingut I." Most of the prisoners came from Hungary. They were held in several temporary camps that made up the second largest subcamp of the Dachau concentration camp. The SS and German businesses in the area exploited the prisoners, most of whom were Jewish, to death. Nearly half of the estimated 8.300 concentration camp prisoners there died from the catastrophic working and living conditions.*



Fig. 28: Construction site for the armament project „Weingut I“ in the Mühldorfer Hart, 1944/1945. From July 1944 til May 1945 8.300 concentration camp prisoners were deported to the Mühldorfer district to work on construction sites. Municipal Archive Mühldorf.



## The Subsections about the “Armament Bunker and Subcamp Complex at Mühldorf”

- 2.1 Armament project “Weingut I”: Locations and Concentration Camp Prisoners
- 2.2 Living Conditions: Inhuman Treatment
- 2.3 Everyday Work: Living for Forced Labour
- 2.4 Guards: The Last Squad
- 2.5 Economy: Cooperation with the SS
- 2.6 Locals: Contributing, Looking away, Helping

While in the first main section „Everyday Life During the Nazi Era” many different topics had to be addressed and contextualised, the second main section focuses on one subject: The armament project in the Mühldorfer Hart and the concentration camps built for this project.

In terms of design, this department is of outstanding quality and does not need to shy away from comparisons to other concentration camp exhibitions worldwide. This applies to the choice of topics, the variety of exhibits and especially to the presentation which is finely tuned to the message of the exhibition. The exhibition organisers Mark Spohr and Edwin Hamberger as well as the design company Space4 from Stuttgart have done great work.

The curator do not succumb to the danger of wanting to tell the whole history of concentration camps, they rather focus on particularities of concentration camps within the relocating projects’ (cf. especially subsection 1, ‘armament project “Weingut I”: Locations and concentration camp prisoners’). Only in extermination camps were death rates higher than in the subcamps for the armament projects. Life and working conditions were even worse than e.g. in the main camp Dachau.

The clear and insistent, but nowhere intrusive language which the organisers apply to inform the visitors is impressive: “Nearly 4.000 of the 8.300 prisoners died due to inhuman living and working conditions. Over 2.200 victims were buried in a mass grave in the Mühldorfer Hart.” “The average lifespan was as few as 80 days.”

The portrayal of these catastrophic living conditions is a goal the organisers had for the subsection two in particular.



Fig. 29: A view inside the subsection living conditions. Photo: Anja Köhler, © Space4.

For this, a rich stock of interviews with contemporary witnesses, worldwide carefully researched visual and textual material as well as archaeological finds can be used.

Corresponding with this central piece of the section the other subsections are arranged as follows:



Fig. 30: Extract of the Exhibition Site Plan. Main Section 2. © Space4.

Not least due to this clever arrangement, the prisoners’ experiences in Mühldorf are integrated into historical contexts. This is complemented by the analysis of the forced prisoner population and the perfidious structure which the Nazis had established in their concentration camps. This structure is made clear though either the role of

functionary prisoners or the mixture of ideological, economical and power political interests of different actors who were all connected by their disdain of the value of the prisoners' lives. This entails the conscious and intentional dehumanisation of perpetrators and victims. Many of those involved accepted the death of prisoners.

- The members of the organisation Todt, which was responsible for the organisational grievances as well as the catastrophical living and working conditions for concentration camp prisoners;
- The employees of companies (e.g. Polensky & Zöllner) who were instructed with the construction work;
- The SS or Wehrmacht guards;
- The responsible persons of 42 well-known companies (e.g. AEG and Siemens), the leading banks and ministries who were united in the „Weingut Betriebsgesellschaft“ (a joined operating company).

“Detainees' Art” is used as a special element in the subsections: paintings and drawings which were painted after the liberation. Thus the prisoners' perspective is presented in a very emphatic way. A further challenge brilliantly overcome by the exhibition organisers can be found in the subsection 2.6 „Locals: Contributing, Looking away, Helping”.

Again, the framework conditions are outlined by apodictic facts: *“In 1939 43.514 people lived in the district of Mühldorf. Due to the building project “Weingut I”, over 10.000 people more came there in a very short time. These included several hundred skilled workers of the companies involved, about 1.800 forced and foreign labourers as well as 8.300 concentration camp prisoners. They were accommodated in camps in the district. In addition, administration offices were established, construction sites and access roads were set up, and enormous masses of building material were transported into the district.”*

The locals *“saw the concentration camp prisoners on their arrival at the train stations, during their marches to their working place and work. Some far-*

*mers borrowed prisoners as workforce and harvest helpers. Sporadically, locals helped the prisoners despite the risks.”*

Impressive quotations as well as interviews with contemporary witnesses are used as a way to address the visitors. This is probably a better method to engage the visitors in reflecting their own habits and ideals than openly criticising the people back then.

## To subsection 2.1: “Weingut I” Armament Project: Locations and Camp Prisoners

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*A large construction site was created in Mühldorfer Hart in May 1944. A semi-submerged bunker, 400 meters long, 85 meters wide, with a five-meter-thick concrete roof, was to be built within a few months.*

*A dense network of armament production sites and camps were established throughout the district. Thousands of people, mostly Jews, from all over Europe were deported to the Mühldorf concentration camps.*



Fig. 31: Media table, video animation: Here, reasons for the construction of the armament project, the dimensions of the bunker, the network of armament and camps in the district, and the composition of the inmate society are explained. Photo: Anja Köhler, © Space4.

Visitors can access further in-depth information by use of a tablet:

- concerning the bunker's architecture
- concerning the locations of armament and camps
- concerning the forced inmate society

**To subsection 2.2: Living Conditions:  
Inhuman Treatment**

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*The living conditions in the camps of the Mühldorf concentration camp complex were catastrophic. The provisional housing provided little protection from the weather. Prisoners suffered from acute undernourishment. Inadequate sanitary facilities caused disease to spread. The ill and weak prisoners were often deported to Auschwitz or to a death camp near Kaufering. Approximately 4.000 of the 8.300 prisoners died as a consequence of the inhuman living and working conditions in the camps. More than 2.200 victims were buried in a mass grave in Mühldorfer Hart.*



Fig. 32: Barbed wire fence around the concentration camp Mettenheim M 1, 1944/1945. Museum Mühldorf  
Foto: Anja Köhler, © Space4.



Fig. 33: Brief view of the exhibition section "Living Conditions in the Camps". Photo: Anja Köhler, © Space4.



## Example 1: Housing

From the  
Display Cases

*Prisoners in the Mühldorf camps were housed in wooden barracks, tent-like structures made of plywood (Finnenzelt) and mud huts. The over-crowded living quarters were always damp and cold.*

*Mud huts, built in Waldlager V/VI in the fall of 1944 as winter housing, were set a meter deep into the ground. According to the plans, they provided room for 20 people, but they were always overfilled. A small enclosed oven, which only worked occasionally, stood in the center of the mud hut.*



Fig. 34: Barracks for 10 people in the Mittergars concentration camp, June 11, 1945. National Archives, Washington D.C.



Fig. 35: Barracks for 100 people in the Mettenheim M 1 concentration camp, June 11, 1945. National Archives, Washington D.C.



Fig. 36: "Finnenzelt," tent measuring five meters in diameter in Waldlager V/VI, May 4, 1945. National Archives, Washington D.C.



Fig. 37: Mud hut for 20 people in Waldlager V/VI, May 4, 1945. National Archives, Washington D.C.

## Example 2: Food

From the  
Display Cases

*Although they were forced to perform hard physical labor, prisoners were given only a single piece of bread and substitute coffee in the morning, with an occasional bit of sausage, cheese or artificial honey. They were given a thin soup in the afternoon and evening. This so-called bunker soup was distributed only to the working prisoners during a short break. An extra piece of bread sometimes made the difference between life and death.*



Fig. 38: Bowl 1944/1945, archaeological finds from Waldlager V/VI, 1999. Museum Mühldorf.



Fig. 39: Cup, 1944/1945, archaeological finds from Waldlager V/VI, 1999. Museum Mühldorf.



Fig. 40: Interview Imre Varsányi concerning food. Photo: Anja Köhler, © Space4.



Fig. 41: The 23-year-old Hungarian survivor Lajos Kormos, 82 days after his liberation, July 23, 1945. National Archives, Washington D.C.

### Example 3: Prisoner Functionaries

From the  
Display Cases

The SS imposed a rigid hierarchy on the prisoners and assigned some of them to special functions. Some prisoners used their positions of power to help other inmates. Others used violence to assert their positions. According to survivors, Lorenz Fritsch, the camp clerk from the Mettenheim M 1 camp, belonged to the latter group.

During selection, Adolf Eisler, camp clerk in Waldlager V/VI, saved many prisoners lives. His responsibilities, however, also involved keeping camp operations running properly.

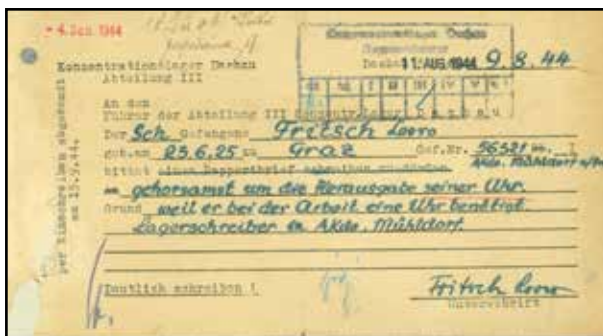


Fig. 42: Inquiry from prisoner functionary Lovro Fritsch to the Dachau concentration camp, September 4, 1944. International Tracing Service, Bad Arolsen.

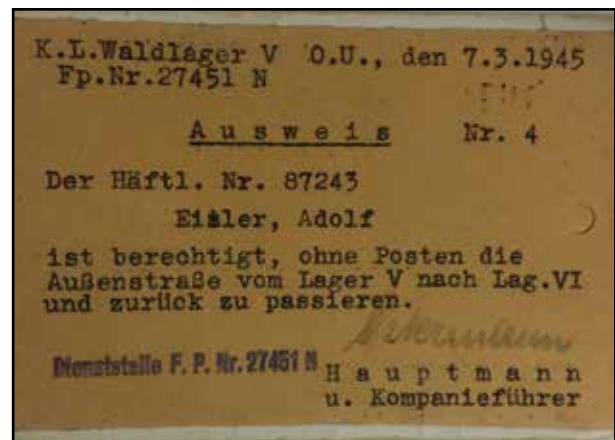


Fig. 43: ID belonging to Adolf Eisler, prisoner functionary, March 7, 1945. Privately owned.

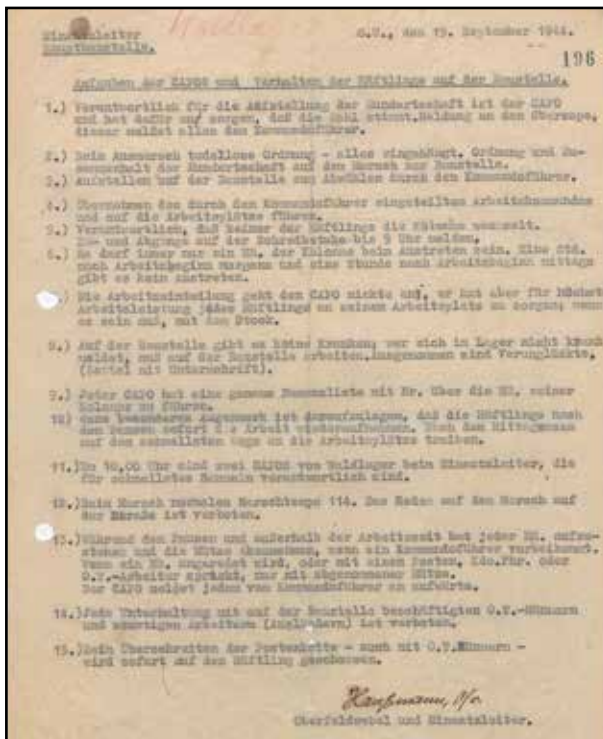


Fig. 44: Tasks of capos and prisoner conduct at the construction site, September 19, 1944. National Archive Berlin.

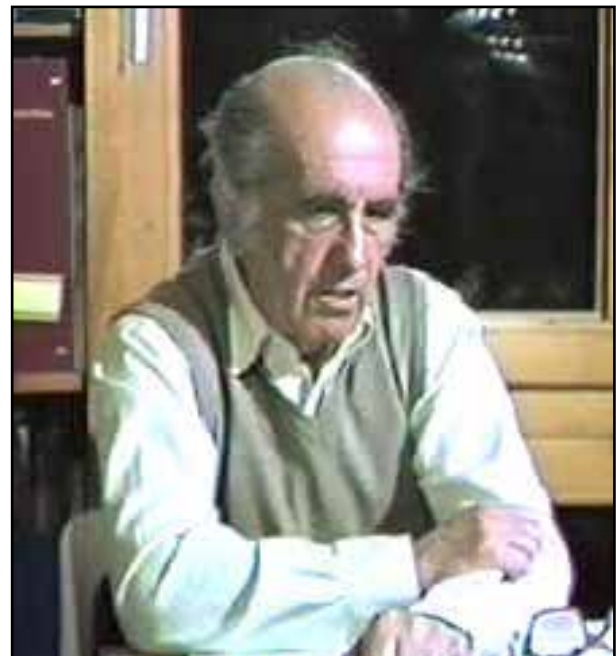


Fig. 45: Interview Adolf Eisler about prisoner Functionaries. Privately owned.



**To subsection 2.4: Guards:  
The Last Contingent**

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*The SS was responsible for organizing the camp complex and guarding the prisoners. Only a few leadership positions were filled by high-level officers who had made a career in the SS and gained long-term experience working in the concentration camps.*

*Two-thirds of the 330 men who served in the guard units were Wehrmacht soldiers who had been found unfit for military service on the front. The remaining third were so-called ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe. They guarded the camp, escorted prisoners to construction sites and monitored them there.*



Fig. 46: Giovanni Telleri, oil painting from the series "Mühldorf 1944," after 1945.  
Verein „Für das Erinnern – KZ-Gedenkstätte Mühldorfer Hart e. V.“ Museum Mühldorf.



## Example 1: Camp Management

From the  
Display Cases

The organization of the concentration camp complex was strongly hierarchical. The highest ranking SS men in the Mühldorf region were Martin Gottfried Weiss and Walter Adolf Langleist. Weiss coordinated prisoner work details in the armament projects in Kaufering and Mühldorf. Langleist was responsible for the concentration camps in the Mühldorf region. In late 1944, Maria Mandl became head of the women's camps in Waldlager V/VI and Mettenheim M 1. She had previously been head overseer of the Ravensbrück concentration camp and of the women's camp of the Auschwitz concentration camp.

The individual camps were headed by lower ranking members of the SS.



Fig. 47: SS-Obersturmbannführer Martin Gottfried Weiss (z) and SS-Sturmbannführer Walter Adolf Langleist (x) in Schwindegg, 1944/1945. National Archives, Washington D.C.

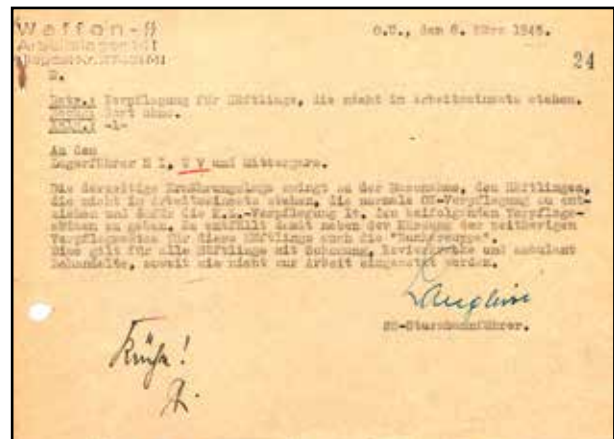


Fig. 48: Order from Langleist to cut food rations, March 8, 1945. National Archive Berlin.



Fig. 49: Organigram of the Mühldorf concentration camps. © Municipal Archive Mühldorf.



Fig. 50: Private photo of SS overseer Maria Mandl, 1930s. National Archives, Washington D.C.

## Example 2: Everyday Life of the Guards

From the  
Display Cases

*The barracks of the SS guards were located close to the prisoner camp. Only a few objects have been preserved as evidence of the SS men's presence there.*

*The SS men conducted themselves in various ways. The mostly-older Wehrmacht soldiers, who had been declared unfit to serve on the front, were transferred to the SS in 1944; they had no experience working as guards in a concentration camp. Overwhelmed by the demands placed on them and the pressure to adapt to the new situation, they often became violent. Many of the ethnic German guards, who had been conscripted into the SS much earlier, had experience working in the extermination camps. They were able to overcome any inhibitions they had more easily. The camp management organized entertainment for the guards, such as film screenings and concerts.*



Fig. 51: Canteen, 1944/1945, archaeological finds from the SS camp in Waldlager V/VI, 1999. Museum Mühldorf.



Fig. 52: Flashlight 1944/1945, archaeological finds from the SS camp in Waldlager V/VI, 1999. Museum Mühldorf.



Fig. 53: Compass, 1944/1945, archaeological finds from the SS camp in Waldlager V/VI, 1999. Museum Mühldorf.



Fig. 54: Report on a film shown in the SS camp in Waldlager V/VI, February 9, 1945. National Archive Berlin.

## To subsection 2.5: Economy: Cooperation with the SS

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*Organisation Todt (OT), a militarily construction and engineering agency, was in charge of construction management. It contracted the Polensky & Zöllner building company to carry out the construction work. In May 1944, OT and Polensky & Zöllner began ordering building material and machinery from all over Europe for delivery to the district. The companies involved in the building project accelerated the building schedule in compliance with the demands of Organisation Todt. Plans called for the work in the bunker to be administrated in the future by the "Weingut Operating Company." The members of its advisory board reveal the close connection that existed between the SS and the economy.*



Fig. 55: Main construction site of the "Weingut I" armament project, 1944/1945. © Municipal Archive Mühldorf.



Fig. 56: Identification plate from a crane, 1941, archaeological find from Waldlager V/VI, 1999. Museum Mühldorf

## Weingut Operating Company

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*The "Weingut Operating Company" was established to run and administrate the bunker. It was supposed to rent the space to forty-two well-known companies that would produce aircraft electronic equipment and motor machinery. The company was presided over by an advisory board with prominent members. The board met for a meeting in Zangberg in December 1944. The participants toured the construction site and concentration camps. No one appeared disturbed by the inhuman conditions they witnessed.*

Members of the Weingut Operating Company:

director of the Bank of German Aviation, vice president of the Reich Bank, AEG management board, Siemens & Halske management board, head of the electrical engineering committee, member of the Carl Zeiss company management, ministry directors of the Reich Ministry for Armament and War Production, of the Reich Aviation Ministry, of the of the Reich Finance Ministry etc.

## Example 1: Organisation Todt

From the  
Display Cases

*Organisation Todt had built fortifications and streets in the occupied territories. In 1943 it was assigned to work in the Reich. OT built forced labor and concentration camps, provided for the prisoners and assigned them to work at other companies. It was responsible for organizational failures as well as for the miserable working and living conditions in the concentration camps. OT's skilled workers were supposed to instruct the forced laborers and concentration camp prisoners on the construction site and push them to work harder. This often led to violent attacks. Although officially forbidden, there were a few incidents of friendly contact between OT employees and prisoners.*



Fig. 57: Group photo of OT employees in the Mühldorf district, 1944. Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site.



Fig. 58: Giovanni Talleri, pencil drawing from the series "Mühldorf 1944," after 1945 Verein „Für das Erinnern – KZ-Gedenkstätte Mühldorfer Hart e. V."

*"Since, despite repeated warnings, German supervisory staff has been found engaging in dishonorable dialogue with concentration camp inmates, severe punishments will be imposed in the future." Circular from the OT construction site management.*

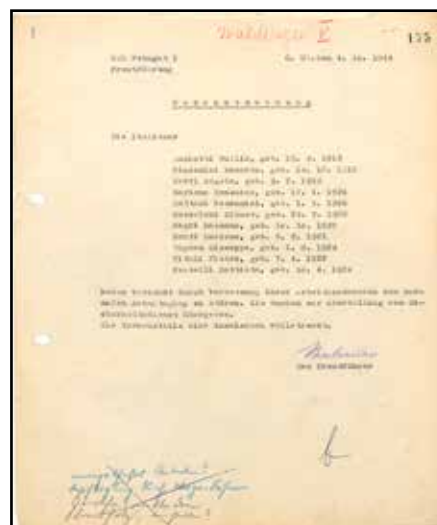


Fig. 59: Announcement of the execution of Italian prisoners of war, from Fritz Seebauer, OT front leader and work deployment leader, October 4, 1944. National Archive Berlin.







### 3 | Main section: „End of War in the District of Mühldorf“

#### ***The End of the War: Occupation of Mühldorf and Liberation of Prisoners***

*In March and April 1945, Germany's approaching defeat was announced by Allied bombing of the district. The air raids caused progress to stall on the construction site of the "Weingut I" armament bunker. The SS evacuated the camps, forcing the 3,640 concentration camp prisoners on a horrific journey that lasted many days. At the same time, prisoners of war and concentration camp prisoners from Buchenwald and Flossenbürg were being marched through the region. U.S. soldiers reached the district in early May and liberated 600 prisoners and thousands of forced laborers who had been left behind in the camps.*

*The Americans prosecuted the people who had been in charge of the Mühldorf concentration camp complex. They established civil order and introduced denazification programs. When the war ended, foreigners who had been deported to Germany as laborers, displaced persons (DPs) and people who had been expelled from their homes outside of Germany, arrived in the district. They were provided for by the American military government.*



*Fig. 60: Waldlager V/VI concentration camp two days after the liberation, May 4, 1945. On May 2, 1945, American soldiers liberated Waldlager V/VI. In the coming months, they provided care to the concentration camp prisoners, exhumed bodies from mass graves, punished Nazi criminals and denazified the population. U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of National Archives, Washington D.C.*

## The Subsection about “End of War in the District of Mühldorf”

- 3.1 Aerial War: Smoke and Dust
- 3.2 Evacuation: The Mühldorf Death Train
- 3.3 The American Invasion: Liberation and Occupation
- 3.4 Displaced Persons, Expellees and Locals: Forced Togetherness

The list of subsections already suggests what becomes apparent on site: the section comprises two very different topics - the termination of the concentration camps on the one hand and the end of the war as experienced by the local population on the other.

The termination of the concentration camps is impressively portrayed through the illustration of the drama of the evacuation. The presentation of the Mühldorf Trials, in which those responsible for the inhuman living and working conditions of the concentration camp prisoners were to be made accountable, is equally powerful. The difficulties that large sections of the population had with their attitudes towards the Nazi past are also compellingly portrayed.

The second block deals with the bombardment of the town of Mühldorf and the Kraiburg gunpowder factory, the Americans as occupiers and the relationship between locals and expellees.

However, the two thematic blocks (concentration camp termination and bombardment) are not sufficiently linked together. The choice of exhibits in particular impedes this connectivity, as each exhibit is associated with just one of the thematic blocks. The bombardment of the station, for example, is represented by a deformed piece of rail as a leading exhibit. This does not cause people to establish a connection between the attacks on the town and the concentration camps in the forest. Perhaps the connection could have been established if a photo of camp prisoners ordered to carry out dangerous clean-up work had been selected as leading exhibit.

One approach, that can be seen in places, might have been able to establish this connectivity: to collate different views, for example, from en-



Fig. 61: Verbogene Bahnschiene, 19. März 1945. Museum Mühldorf. Foto: Anja Köhler, © Space4.

counters between local residents, German expellees and former camp prisoners. It is exactly this approach in the first main section that encourages the visitor to think about what happened.

The large picture of the woodcamp, taken a few days after its liberation, does not completely get to the heart of the matter in this section either: how we deal with what people did to other people.

\*\*\*

Hereafter, subsections and in-depth analyses, which focus on the termination of the concentration camps, are purposely presented. This picks up the thread of the narration from the first two main sections and continues with this theme in the last section.

### To subsection 3.2: Evacuation: The Mühldorfer Train of Death

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*On April 26, 1945, the SS evacuated 3,640 prisoners from Mettenheim by train. The train was not identifiable as a prisoner transport and was attacked several times by low-flying airplanes. At least 155 people died. The prisoners were given very little food during the journey. After surviving a many-day odyssey, they reached Starnberger Lake, where they were set free. Survivors later referred to the journey as a "train of death."*

*Prior to this, on April 27, a tragic incident occurred in Poing, east of Munich: The prisoners there had been set free, only to be forced back onto the trains a short time later by Luftwaffe soldiers, SS men and civilians, who shot at least 50 prisoners. A few prisoners hid in nearby barns and were liberated by U.S. soldiers a few days later.*



Fig. 63: Multimedia map: The Mühldorf Mühldorf Train of Death. Photo: Anja Köhler, © Space4.

A film documentary recorded by an American soldier and an interview with a contemporary witness are integrated into the map.



### To subsection 3.3: Arrival of American Troops: Liberation and Occupation

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*In early May 1945, American soldiers occupied the Mühldorf district. They were welcomed as liberators by the concentration camp prisoners, prisoners of war, forced laborers and regime opponents. The majority of the local population, however, regarded them as occupiers. The Americans arranged food and care for the camp prisoners; they had the dead exhumed from mass graves, prosecuted Nazi criminals and denazified the population.*



Fig. 64: American military newspaper, May 2, 1945, privately owned.  
Photo: Anja Köhler, © Space4.

Waldlager Camp, May 3, 1945

*„We had been so looking forward to this day, but we were also overwhelmed by the fear that we would experience it, but not survive it.*

*Now that we have survived it, we are overjoyed and want to enjoy and appreciate our re-acquired freedom to the very fullest. „*

*Riba- Dolfi“*

## Example 1: Concentration Camp Liberation

From the  
Display Cases

Six hundred prisoners had been left behind in Waldlager V/VI. On May 2, Walter Langleist, commander of the Mühldorf camps, arrived with SS military troops to murder the inmates. Ostermann, the head of the camp, opposed the liquidation order and the killing squads withdrew. In return for this, the prisoners put down in writing that the camp leader and his men had always conducted themselves correctly. Despite the crimes they had committed, this "Persilschein," a certificate clearing them of any wrong-doing, would later protect them from prosecution. American soldiers liberated the Waldlager camp a few hours later and arrested the SS men who had stayed behind. The soldiers cared for the survivors in temporary infirmaries in Ampfing and Ecksberg. They designated the Mühldorf hospital a quarantine station.

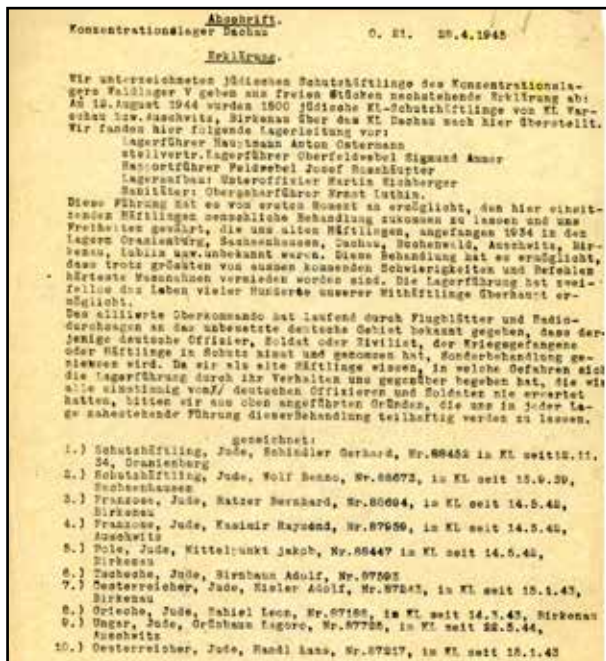


Fig. 65: Prisoners' statement clearing the camp leadership of any wrongdoing, April 28, 1945. © Municipal Archive Mühldorf.



Fig. 66: SS-Obersturmbannführer Martin Weiss after his arrest in Waldlager V/VI, May 1945. National Archives, Washington D.C.



Fig. 67: Treating a survivor in a temporary infirmary in Ampfing, May 4, 1945. National Archives, Washington D.C.



Fig. 68: Sign from the Mühldorf hospital, which had been established as a quarantine station, 1945 Museum Mühldorf.



## Example 2: Memorial Cemetery for Concentration Camp Prisoners

From the  
Display Cases

More than 2.200 camp prisoners had been buried in mass graves in Mühldorfer Hart. After the Americans discovered the graves, they ordered former members of the NSDAP to exhume the bodies and provide a respectable burial site for them in memorial cemeteries. The local population was forced to attend the funeral ceremonies and walk by the open coffins. Over the following five years, several memorial cemeteries for concentration camp prisoners were established by the Americans in the district.



Fig. 69: Exhumation of a mass grave in Mühldorfer Hart, June 1, 1945. National Archives, Washington D.C.



Fig. 71: Funeral held in the concentration camp cemetery in Mühldorf, June 22, 1945. National Archives, Washington D.C.



Fig. 70: Notification of a funeral for concentration camp victims, June 22, 1945. Official announcement.



Fig. 72: Funeral ceremony in the concentration camp cemetery in Burghausen, September 1945. House of photography, Dr. Robert-Gerlich-Museum Burghausen.

### Example 3: War Crimes Trials

From the  
Display Cases

The Americans tried war criminals in the Dachau Trials in late 1945. In the main trial, Walter Langleist, Viktor Kirsch and Martin Weiss, the SS leaders who had been assigned to Mühldorf, were sentenced to death and executed.

The Mühldorf Trial, the only American trial addressing crimes committed in a concentration camp subcamp, was conducted from April to May 1947. SS men, OT members and employees of Polensky & Zöllner were put on trial. Five of the 14 defendants were sentenced to death, but only one was executed. Dr. Erika Flocken who had worked as a doctor for OT, was the only woman to stand trial. Additional trials were held later.

German preliminary proceedings ended without an indictment in the 1960s.



Fig. 73: Newspaper article on "The Mühldorf Trial," April 3, 1947. Oberbayerisches Volksblatt.



Fig. 74: Chief prosecutor Morton Roth in "The Mühldorf Trial," April 1 to May 13, 1947. National Archives, Washington D.C.

<b>Angeklagte des KZ-Außenlagerkomplexes Mühldorf, 1943 bis 1948</b>	
<b>Dachauer Hauptprozess (15. November–13. Dezember 1945)</b>	
Johann Viktor Kirsch (*1897)	SS-Oberscharführer / KL Kauferting und Mittergars (Lagerführer)
Todesstrafe, vollstreckt 28.05.1946	
Walter Adolf Langleist (*1893)	SS-Sturmabführer / verschiedene KL und Kommandant ALK Mühldorf
Todesstrafe, vollstreckt 28.05.1946	
Martin Gottfried Weiss (*1905)	SS-Obersturmbannführer / verschiedene KL / WVHA-Sonderauftrag Mühldorf
Todesstrafe, vollstreckt 28.05.1946	
<b>Mühldorf-Prozess (01. April–13. Mai 1947)</b>	
Franz Auer (*1911)	SS-Oberscharführer / Arbeitsdienstführer M1
Todesstrafe, vollstreckt 25.11.1948	
Karl Bachmann (*1898)	Direktor Polensky & Zöllner (München)
Freispruch	
Wilhelm Bayha (*1895)	SS-Oberscharführer / Kommandoführer M1
10 Jahre Haft / entlassen 24.02.1953	
Heinrich Engelhardt (*1911)	SS-Oberscharführer / SS-Büro M1
Lebenslang / 25 Jahre (1948), 15 Jahre (1951), Bewährung (1953), endgültig entlassen (1955)	
Dr. Erika Flocken (*1912)	Arztin der OT / Zwischenzeitlich für die Betreuung des ALK Mühldorf zuständig
Todesstrafe / Lebenslang (Mai 1947), 38 Jahre (1956), Bewährung (1957), endgültig entlassen (1958)	

Hands-on-list: defendants of the Mühldorf concentration subcamp complex in the Dachau Trials (1945–1948).

### To subsection 3.4: Displaced Persons, Expellees and the Local Residents: Forced Cooperation

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*There were 14.000 liberated prisoners of war, forced laborers and concentration camp prisoners in the district in May 1945. They were categorized by the Americans as displaced persons (DPs). In addition, increasing numbers of people who had been expelled from their home countries had also arrived in the region. Supply shortages and a lack of housing caused tensions between the local residents, the expellees and displaced persons. The DPs soon left the district, but many expellees settled here permanently. At first they lived in the former concentration camps and forced labor camps, but new apartments and settlements were gradually established.*



*Fig. 75: In 1946, a couple who had been expelled from their home country received an oven for their new apartment on the Mühldorf square in exchange for a ration coupon. Acquiring one's own apartment was the first step to becoming a permanent resident. Museum Mühldorf.*



## Example 1: Holocaust Survivors

From the  
Display Cases

Concentration camp survivors lived in several displaced person camps in the district while waiting to emigrate. Jewish orphans who had survived the Holocaust in Eastern Europe were looked after in the Aschau Camp.

After the war ended, many Jews who had fled anti-Semitic uprisings in Eastern Europe arrived in the district. They founded Jewish communities in Kraitburg, Aschau, Ampfing and Mühldorf. Here, too, the Jewish displaced persons were not welcomed by the local residents. The district was often only an interim station for Holocaust survivors on their way to Palestine or North American.



Fig. 76: Jewish residents of the DP camp "Children's Center Aschau," 1946 to 1948. Privately owned.



Fig. 77: Jewish residents of the DP camp "Children's Center Aschau," 1946 to 1948. Privately owned.



Fig. 78: Invitation from the Jewish committee of Ampfing, December 7, 1947. Staatsarchiv München.



Fig. 79: Repeal of accusations against former concentration camp prisoners, February 14, 1947. Notification.



**Example 2: Expellees**

From the  
Display Cases

*At the end of the war, more than twelve million people of German descent were expelled from their homes in Eastern Europe and the former German-occupied territories. By 1950, more than 18,000 people had found a new home in the Mühldorf district.*

*They were housed in former forced labor camps, concentration camps and armament production factories. They established a new residential settlement, Waldkraiburg, on the grounds of the DSC factory of Kraiburg. It soon developed into the most densely populated town in the district.*

*The history of Waldkraiburg is presented in the Waldkraiburg museum and the industry museum "Bunker 29."*



Fig. 80: Mettenheim M 1 concentration camp as a camp for expellees, ca. 1947. Museum Mühldorf.



Fig. 81: Forced labor camp "Holzlager Pürten" as a camp for expellees, ca. 1947. © Municipal Archive Waldkraiburg.

### *Distribution of the population in the district (October 1, 1946)*

*Total 64.438 Persons*

<i>Evacuated (bomb damage, etc.)</i>	<i>2.814</i>	<i>4,4%</i>
<i>Refugee/Expellee</i>	<i>13.887</i>	<i>21,5%</i>
<i>Displaced Persons</i>	<i>4.808</i>	<i>7,5%</i>
<i>Local Resident</i>	<i>42.929</i>	<i>66,6%</i>

## 4 | Main section: „Aufarbeitung der NS-Zeit ab 1945“

### **Confronting the Past: Between Forgetting and Remembering**

*After the war ended, U.S. soldiers confronted the German population with the atrocities committed by Nazis in the Mühldorf district. People were quick to repress the horrible events associated with construction of the bunker. The grounds around the armament bunker ruins were gradually reclaimed by nature.*

*In the early 1980s, public awareness of the concentration camp complex and armament project grew as a consequence of research conducted by local historians and an exhibition presented in the Mühldorf district museum. Since then, the memory of National Socialist crimes has been kept alive by dedicated citizens and politicians who have lobbied for a memorial to commemorate the victims of the concentration camp complex.*

*Many former prisoners, who had also lost family members during the Nazi era, have struggled their entire lives with their memories of the past. After the war, they tried to start a new life, processing their traumatic experiences in very different ways.*



Fig. 82: Mühldorf concentration camp cemetery, on Ahamer Strasse, ca. 1948. © Municipal Archive Mühldorf. Some of the local concentration camp cemeteries were cleared away in the 1950s on the initiative of local communities. Today, concentration camp cemeteries still exist in Mühldorf, Kraiburg, Neumarkt-Sankt Veit and Burghausen.

## The Subsection about „Coming to terms with the Nazi era after 1945“

- 4.1 Coping with the past:  
"Overthrown giants"
- 4.2 Coming to terms with the past:  
"...until everything shattered"
- 4.3 Survivors: marked by the trauma

In particular, in sections 4.1 and 4.2, a thread is picked up again, which had already been created, when the end of the war and the end of the Nazi dictatorship were addressed: The problems large section of the population had when it came to dealing with what had happened and their own roles in it.



Fig. 83: Wedding photo Aranka Moses and Josef Bessermann, 1945. Privately owned.

Again, various perspectives were pursued in the presentation. These perspectives bring unexpected as well as little noticed information to light. This can be either the very common weddings between former prisoners or the fact that some of

the newly laid out concentration camp graveyards were reopened in the 1950's or that some parts of the Bunker area were sold to private investors.

In section 4.2 the background story of the Harberkasten exhibition and the memory site at the Mühldorfer Hart is told (cf. Chapter "Armament Bunker and Mühldorf Subcamp Complex"). These stories are not told in a linear way if they took unexpected turns. Thus, it is presented, that the student, who, together with his teacher, shot a film about the misery of Mühldorf concentration camp prisoners, now politically represents radical right-wing positions and consequently prohibited the screening of the movie.



Abb 84: Accompanying booklet of the film „... noone wants to die at 22“, 1986. © Municipal Archive Mühldorf.

The last section 4.3 focuses again on concentration camp prisoners and describes their ways of coping with the past. Art and literature are presented as possible means of coping.



**To subsection 4.1: Coming to Terms:  
„Fallen Giants“**

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*After the war, the concentration camp cemeteries and bunker construction site remained the most visible signs of the Nazi past. In summer 1947, the Americans dynamited the entire bunker facility with the exception of a single arch from the roof. In the 1950s, a number of concentration camp cemeteries were cleared away.*

*References to the armaments project and the camp complex were rare. One exception is the "Heimatbuch," a book on the history of the region, published by the district in 1962. It erroneously refers to an underground train station that operated in Mühldorfer Hart from 1937 to 1944. The book makes no mention of work performed by concentration camp prisoners.*

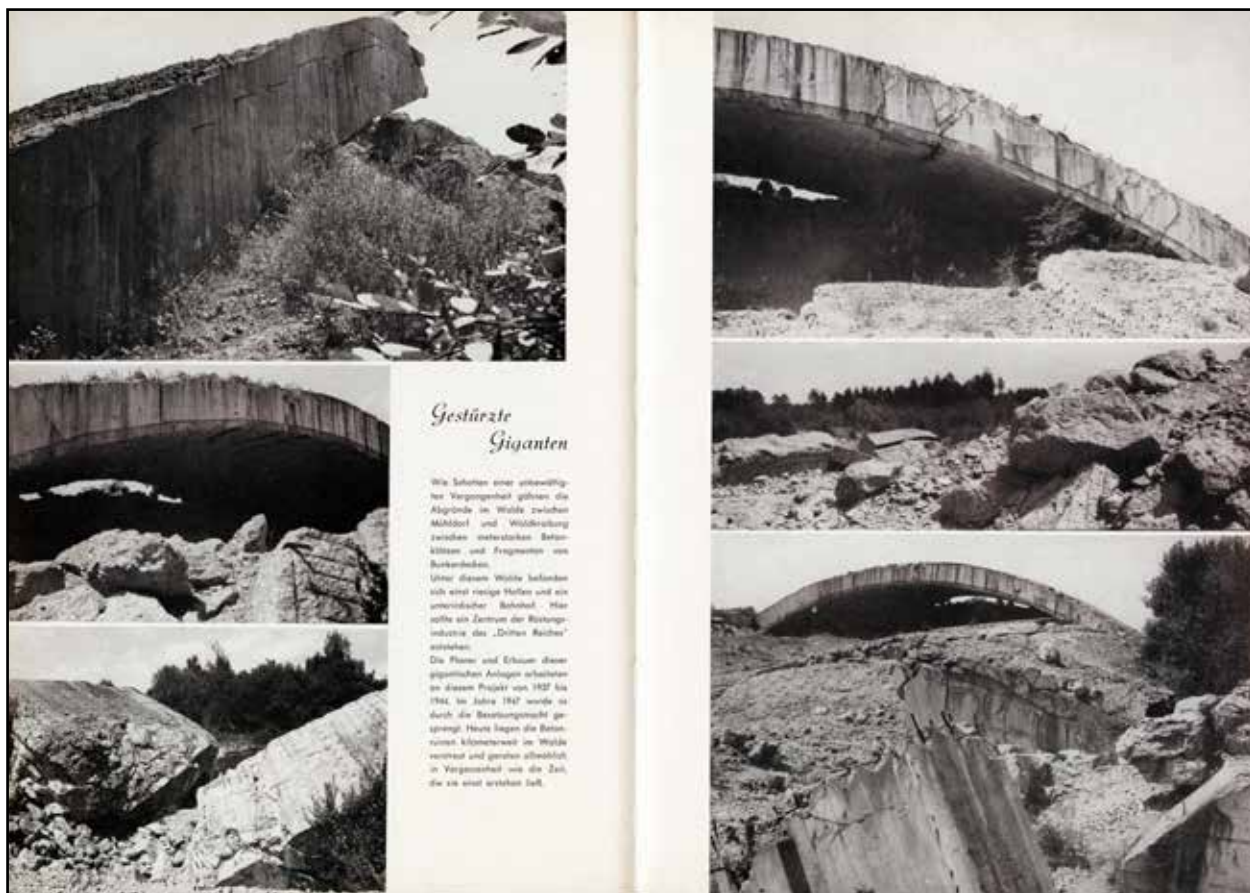


Fig. 85: „Der Landkreis Mühldorf. Ein Heimatbuch“, 1962.



## Example 1: Commemoration

From the  
Display Cases

*In 1945, residents reacted negatively to the Americans' demand that they participate in burying concentration camp victims. They regarded the ceremonies as "occupier despotism." Public participation in later memorial services was low. Some of the concentration camp cemeteries were cleared away in the 1950s on the initiative of local communities. The human remains were transferred to the central memorial at Leitenberg near Dachau. As elsewhere in Germany, the monuments and memorials to victims, which caused public discomfort, began to disappear. The cemeteries that still exist today serve as a meeting place for the victims' relatives.*



Fig. 86: Call to participate in the concentration camp liberation ceremony, April 30, 1948. Oberbayerisches Volksblatt.

*"We would have liked to have seen greater participation from the Mühldorf public in the ceremony, which left a lasting impression on everyone who attended. With the exception of representatives of government offices, trade unions and political parties, practically no one from the Mühldorf population was present. That is both an embarrassment and a missed opportunity to publicly document a change in attitude. A pity, a real shame..."*  
Oberbayerisches Volksblatt, May 13, 1947.



Fig. 87: Clearing away the concentration camp cemetery in Ampfing, 1955. Parish of Ampfing.



Fig. 88: Clearing away the concentration camp cemetery in Ampfing, 1955. Parish of Ampfing.

## Example 2: Bunker Ruins

From the  
Display Cases

*After the war, the building companies removed their machinery from the site. They did not reflect on their participation in the building project. Building material, which had been left behind at the bunker ruins, was used by local businesses.*

*In 1960, the bunker grounds served as the set for a television series called "Am grünen Strand der Spree" (On the Green Beach of the Spree). In the 1980s, radical rightwing groups started congregating on the bunker grounds. A few citizens and survivors of the Mühldorf concentration camps were able to prevent the planned demolition of the bunker ruins in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1991, on the initiative of the local history curator Ernst Aicher, the grounds were designated a landmark. In the following years, residents used the grounds as a local recreational area and adventure playground.*



Fig. 89: Removal of building material from the bunker ruins, 1947. © Municipal Archive Mühldorf.



Fig. 90: "On the Green Beach of the Spree," Private Wilms' diary, 1960. WDR mediagroup dialog GmbH.

## To subsection 4.2: Confronting the Past: „... until it all fell to pieces“

Exhibition Text  
Leading Exhibit

*In the 1980s, a few citizens began conducting historical research that caused public awareness of the forgotten Nazi history to grow. In 1985, the exhibition “Until it all fell to pieces,” opened in the Mühldorf district museum and received much attention. The association “Für das Erinnern – KZ-Gedenkstätte Mühldorfer Hart e. V.” was founded in 2002 and has invited survivors, citizens and politicians to memorial ceremonies held for the victims of the Mühldorf concentration camp each year on April 28. Other victim groups have only recently begun to receive public attention.*

*In 2010, a working team of scholars, politicians and various institutions was formed to create dignified memorial sites around Mühldorfer Hart for the victims and to provide historical information in an effort to curb the growth of right-wing extremist movements.*



Fig. 91: Exhibition Poster “... Until it all fell to pieces,” organized by the volunteer museum director, Dr. Hans Rudolf Spagl, 1985. Museum Mühldorf.

The exhibition described in this article and the opening of the first two memorial sites in Mühldorfer Hart on the 27th of April 2018 are the result of the unceasing efforts of all parties involved.

WHOEVER REFUSES TO REMEMBER THE INHUMANITY IS PRONE TO NEW RISKS OF INFECTION.

Speech by President Richard von Weizsäcker during the Ceremony Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the End of War in Europe and of National-Socialist Tyranny on 8 May 1985 at the Bundestag, Bonn



## **I. UNDERSTAND CONNECTIONS – PREVENT FORGETTING. THE CONCEPTUAL IDEA FOR THE MEMORIAL SITES IN MÜHLDOERFER HART**

In Autumn 2012, the State Building Authorities of Rosenheim carried out a design competition on behalf of the “Stiftung Bayerische Gedenkstätten” (Bavarian Memorial Foundation) to design the memorial site in the Mühldorfer Hart forest. The concept by the office of Latz + Partner (Kranzberg) was unanimously awarded first place among seven invited participants.

Several factors played a crucial role in this decision. First of all, the design deals conservatively with the historic remains of the armament bunker, the “Waldlager” (woodland camp) and the mass grave; secondly, it consistently highlights the connection between these three historical areas within a much wider-reaching network; thirdly, it takes into consideration the fact that these places have been significantly altered in the course of more than 70 post-war years and today largely defy comprehension.

### **1. Layout of the Memorial Site**

In the following paragraphs, the main features and design ideas will be described with the aid of the competition documents submitted by Latz + Partner and an explanatory report, which was part of the stipulated construction documents.

In the design concept, the architects described the initial situation in this way:

*“The bunker construction site in Mühldorfer Hart was the centre of a system of air and rail transport, production and storage facilities, builders’ shacks, prisoner camps and graves. Protected by the forest, the Nazi armaments programme was to be expanded at any cost. The individual components of this network have only partially been preserved, but the relationship between them is vital in order to understand this place.*

*The construction site with its corresponding infrastructure lies in the forest, as if the result of storm damage. Partly recaptured by the forest, the interventions of the past are no longer completely visible and, without further information, are not comprehensible. The outward signs of its history are disappearing. Today the forest appears from the outside to be unchanged, is however in its entirety the site of a criminal past.”*

The designers counter this contradiction between

an apparently idyllic forest and the remains of a crime scene, no longer visible today, with a clear aim, *“Remembering and sensitisation towards the historical context are paramount. By superimposing a new, abstract level on the existing remains, the past should be remembered and the inexplicable be made comprehensible. With the aid of simple, spatial interventions and very little factual information, the casual visitor should also be able to understand what he sees. ... [It is] not the aim of the memorial site to reproduce the past, but to make the available remains visible and comprehensible - to remember”.*

In this respect, it is necessary, *“to avoid confusion with historical events in all of the newly introduced elements and not to establish any misleading connections. It must be clearly evident at all times, that it is a medium (e.g. a path) and not a relic or a reconstruction. At the same time, the site presents the greatest challenges to the durability of the materials used. They will be largely subjected to weather conditions and potential damage by third parties and, despite this, must not be allowed to lose their legibility.*

*For this reason, and in order to avoid introducing any unwelcome or potentially confusing material into this sensitive context, the materials characteristic of the bunker construction site – concrete and steel - will deliberately be used again.”*

### **2. Design Elements of the historical sites**

#### **a. Memorial Stones**

The first of the newly introduced elements should remind us that the whole of the Mühldorfer Hart represents a historically contaminated area: *“The bunker ruins, the “Waldlager” and the mass grave tell the same story in completely different ways. What is important, however, is that these three sites are not complete, not independent. They are part of an overriding network which is represented by the Mühldorfer Hart.*

*Memorial stones with a symbolic portrayal of the Mühldorfer Hart attract the attention of forest and memorial site visitors to the history of the site and its context. The stones are positioned at historically, or rather, spatially important locations in the forest, so that one “accidentally” comes upon them in the woods. Through their alignment with the*

*compass directions and the marking of the location, the stones also serve as landmarks within the forest and between the three memorial sites."*

The memorial stone is an artificial cubic stone made of grey concrete. On the upper side, it shows a stylised map of the Mühldorfer Hart with the historic areas of the armament bunker "Waldlager" and mass grave. On the side, the lettering "Memorial Site Mühldorfer Hart" indicates that alongside the three areas, the entire forest calls us to remember.

The stone, whose appearance reminds one of old boundary stones, has a somewhat abstract function in providing a point of reference, which is made clearer in one location: on the four corners of the "Waldlager", the memorial stones point out the camp's large, geographical expanse which can no longer be seen in the forest today.

## b. Information Areas

Anyone approaching the historical areas of the armament bunker, "Waldlager" and mass grave in the forest, will initially notice a relatively compact concrete structure from the outside measuring eight metres in length and 2.7 metres high:

*"The visitor enters each of the three memorial sites through an introverted, outwardly demarcated room. [Here] he obtains the essential information needed in order to understand the relationship between the individual remains. With the help of this abstract knowledge, he can make sense of what he sees.*

*The same information room exists at each of the three memorial sites. These rooms are deliberately screened off towards the outside in order to focus the observer's attention: they act as a kind of channel which releases the visitor onto a new level.*

*The room itself consists of two elevated "u-shaped" concrete elements. The concrete should be finished with a rough surface in order to allow a maturing process and the formation of a patina as it will be exposed to the elements in the forest. A roof is not planned. The upper edges have been chamfered so that the upward view into the forest is as unobstructed as possible and climbing made impossible. In addition, the concrete slabs will be elevated, creating the impression that they are floating."*

The aim is to avoid confusion with the historical building structure and, on the practical side, to enable rain water to drain away into the forest floor.

On the long, inner sides of the information rooms, plaques will be mounted with pictures and texts in German and English. On one side there will be

the identical introduction to the Mühldorf camp complex and the historical sites: *"In this way, the visitor will always receive information about the entire Mühldorfer Hart. He can see the entire context on every site, regardless of whether he visits all three sites, two or even only one."* On the other side, there will be more detailed information about the specific site, for example, the "Waldlager".

The text and visual information will be concise – they should simply convey essential facts. For a detailed analysis of the fate of the prisoners, the permanent exhibition in the Mühldorfer Haberkasten (granary) provides modern media and three-dimensional objects. In the forest, the sites themselves are the exhibits – their creation is the subject here.

## c. Narrative Paths

From the information rooms, visitors step onto the actual historic grounds. *"Paths at this location do not only help people to understand, but are also a part of the understanding process themselves.*

*They are not axially directed towards a goal (e.g. from the entrance to a particular place), but vary in width and bend intentionally. The paths therefore remain on a human scale and direct the view into the forest. The paths avoid obstacles and make it clear that there is no single, historical path but rather, scattered exemplary remains which were connected in order to facilitate remembrance.*

*For reasons of security as well as propriety, the paths should prevent visitors from walking "here and there" through the memorial sites. Therefore, the marked paths should be clearly recognisable, without detracting from the location. Also, all three sites are archaeological monuments which most definitely may not be encroached upon in a way that is usual on such sites. As a result of these considerations, the idea emerges to lay elevated walkways across the forest floor and to lead them to the historic remains, so that the visitor will be encouraged to turn back."*

The "narrative path" of concrete leads the visitor through the trees to a point of destination from which historically important remains can be seen: the roll call ground, depressions in the ground made by mud huts, the stone enclosure of a latrine, the mass grave. At the end of the slightly ascending pathway, the visitor can rest on a bench and let his thoughts wander.

During construction, great care should be taken not to damage the surrounding archaeological monuments, and at the same time, to create a safe

and barrier-free wayfinding system where the visitor can intuitively find his way, without fencing. This is achieved through a construction, whereby the custom-made concrete parts are positioned on steel girders, which in turn rest on soil bolts, secured deep in the earth. This construction method is perhaps relatively complex but it guarantees the necessary accessibility, requires little maintenance once built and, above all, is reversible – all of the parts can theoretically be completely removed, so that the surrounding archaeological monument can be preserved.

#### **d. Understanding Dimensions**

The size of the historic area cannot be fully appreciated today. Through the use of several simple measures, however, the earlier dimensions can at least be outlined. In the “Waldlager”, the information room is located at the original entrance to the camp. From here, the narrative path leads along the former main axes of the camp. These are kept free of vegetation and therefore show the extent of the camp as visual axes.

The path bends to the right towards the former roll call ground. When the camp was still in operation, this place was, of course, free of vegetation – mornings and evenings, the prisoners had to report to agonizingly long roll calls. After long consideration, it was decided not to fell trees in order to make the former area of the roll call ground visible again. Instead, the trees that are now situated on this former place will be marked with a white stripe, at least indicating its size.

#### **e. Remembrance Bars**

During the discussions between the architects, the Foundation and the working group of the external concentration camp at Mühldorfer Hart, it became clear that the design measures (information rooms, narrative paths, removal of vegetation) were not sufficient to convey the significance of the historic area. In particular, the view of former prisoners of the place of their suffering was missing – even more so, as the texts in the information rooms had been made deliberately concise. This deficit was to be resolved by installing so-called “remembrance bars” made of steel – quotations from contemporary witnesses can be read on the bars at prominent locations, for example, at the former roll call ground or near the depressions in the earth left by a mud hut. These are mostly former prisoners, but sometimes also local residents. Through the col-

lection of information and numerous interviews carried out over many years by the Mühldorfer voluntary historical supporters, it was possible to find appropriate quotations for many locations, which now, in accord with the design measures, better explain the significance of many of the locations. Biographical information about the contemporary witnesses can be found in the information rooms.

### **3. Waldlager Memorial Site**

The Waldlager was one of several prisoner camps in the concentration camp complex at Mühldorf. In contrast to the other sites, numerous ground distortions and several concrete foundations still exist. The designers describe the challenge that the “Waldlager” presented them with: *“The existential nature of the victims’ suffering can only be guessed at when one sees the remains of the mud huts and understands their significance. The size of the camp was also a challenge; its overriding spatial camp structure was still partly recognisable in the forest, but without background information incomprehensible.”*

Latz + Partner mastered this challenge through the combination and clever arrangement of the design elements sketched above: the *Information Area* is located at the former main entrance to the camp. From here, a fork in the narrative path leads to the roll call ground, another fork leads into the former camp area. The *remembrance bars* with quotations from former prisoners installed on the paths make it clear what it meant to be housed in the abysmal mud huts which no longer exist. They bring an emotional angle to the experience – in addition to the historical explanations in the *Information Area*.

For practical reasons, compromises had to be made with regard to the sizing of the memorial site: as a result, the main axes of the camp were made visible by permanently removing the vegetation. At their own risk, visitors can have a close look at the remains of the foundations of the planned, but never completely constructed agricultural buildings lying further away. The size of the roll call ground can be visualised through markings on the trees that have grown up there in the mean time.

#### 4. Memorial Site of the Mass Grave

*"Of the three sites, this one is the most diffused, the one most difficult to demarcate", wrote the designers in their explanatory report. "As in the "Waldlager", the visitor enters the channel coming from the Forststrasse, and receives information there about the relationship between the three sites as well as additional information about this special place. Afterwards, the narrative path leads him north".*

Over 2.000 dead people were scantily buried here. After the war, they were exhumed and buried in surrounding cemeteries. *"It is not possible to convey these dimensions and it does not seem sensible to reproduce specific areas that define its alleged spatial extent. This site, lying so peacefully within the forest, should rather become demystified".*

For this purpose, Latz + Partner made land-scaping changes to the surface at this stage:

*"A clearing of trimmed trees (1.7 m high) represents the victims who were brought to this place by the madness of the Nazi system, and confronts the visitor with an unexpected, shocking image. The visitor is not prepared for this image - it awaits him at the end of the narrative path - and captures two of the few mass graves still visible and thereby, the entire horror of this place."*

The mass grave differs from the of armament bunker and "Waldlager". At the former end point of life, space must be provided for grief and thoughts. This place is particularly important for former prisoners and their

#### 5. Next Step: the Armament Bunker

The armament bunker is without doubt the most striking and significant historical remain in the Mühldorfer Hart. The analysis by Latz + Partner from the year 2012 still applies: *"The bunker ruins are the remnants of an immense, inhuman extermination system and a manifestation of systematic madness. ... In the course of the past decades, the forest has recaptured the area piece by piece, the traces of the past are becoming increasingly blurred. The visitor comes upon a wild and romantic (adventure) landscape, and can only escape its fascinating appeal with difficulty. The remaining bunker vault presents itself powerfully and triumphant and impresses by its size.*

*These images need to be supplemented. The observer must not be allowed to see the existing remains*

*without knowing their historical context. He must understand the suffering caused by this construction and the system behind it".*

Equally relevant is the architect's competition proposal: as at the other locations, access should be channelled through an information room. The area will be accessed by an existing path. From this path, a walkway turns off: *"With the help of one of the five arches of a supported steel walkway, the visitor arrives at a platform above the bunker ruins. Here, he gains an overall view of the expanse of the ruins [the detonated bunker, U.F.] and of the still preserved seventh vault, and can imagine the expanse of the ruins."*

The spatial distance from the preserved bunker vault should also provide emotional distance: it is not the fascination of the advanced armament technology that lies in the foreground, but the contemplation over the circumstances that gave rise to it.

The only part further planned is a meeting point for memorial events to the west of the seventh vault.

There are still significant obstacles to the completion of these building measures: considerable amounts of ammunition were blown up around the armament bunker, weapons and contaminated waste first have to be located and eliminated in a time-consuming process. The question of liability for public safety still has to be clarified as well, whereby the interests of the private owners must be taken into consideration. We are, however, confident that, following the "Waldlager" and the mass grave, the armament bunker – the central location and the reason for forced labour and the mass mortality of the concentration camp prisoners – will also be made accessible to the public as a memorial site in the foreseeable future.



## II. THE INFORMATION ROOMS

### 1. Fundamental Information: General Introductory Text to the Memorial Sites in Mühldorfer Hart

#### a) Segment 1: Weingut I and the Concentration Camp Subcamps

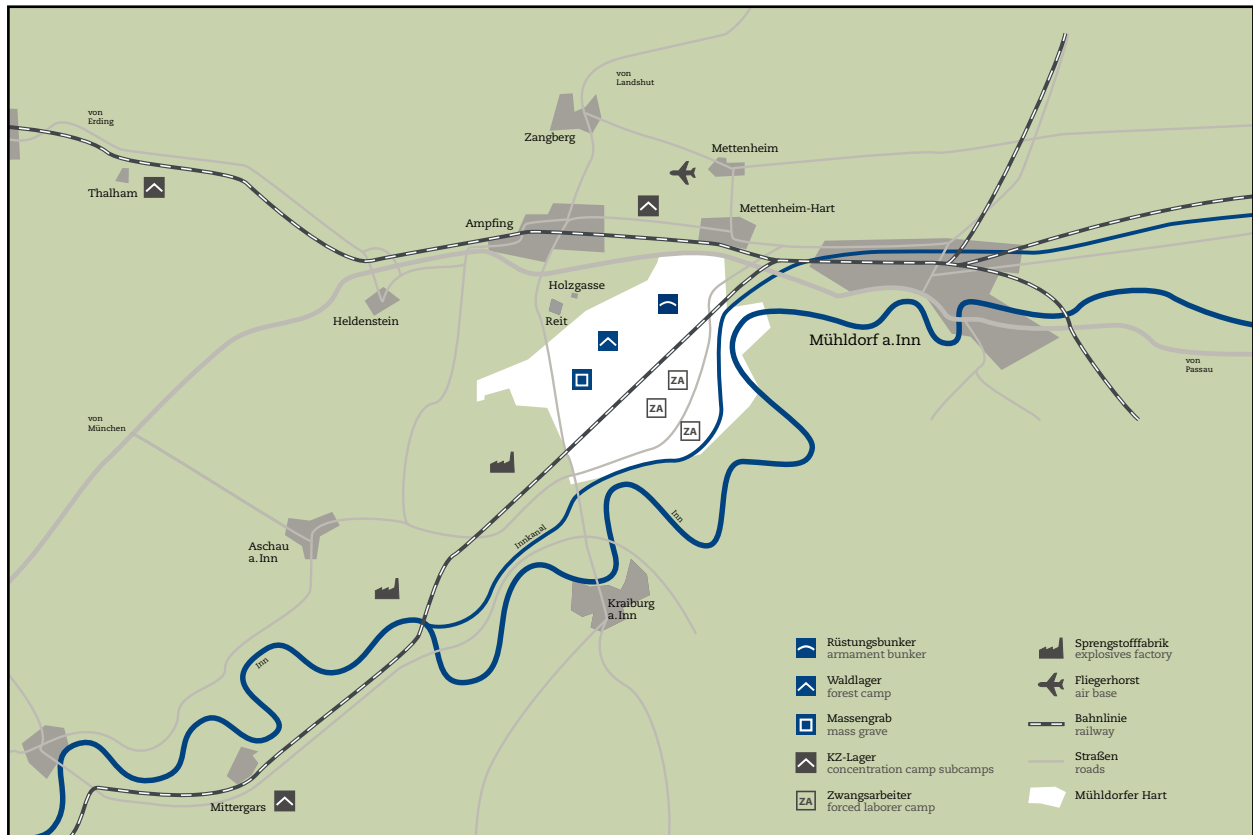


Fig. 1: The Mühldorf subcamp complex 1944/45. Graphic: engelhardt, atelier für gestaltung.

*In spring 1944, the Allies launched increasingly successful air-raid attacks on the German armaments industry. This led the Nazi leadership to move armament production into bombsafe structures.*

*Organisation Todt (OT), responsible for building projects, planned the construction of six large bunkers in the Reich territory. Only two were actually built: one in Landsberg am Lech, another in the Mühldorfer Hart forest. This is where equipment for the Messerschmitt Me 262 jet fighter was to be produced.*



Fig. 2: Countries of origin of the prisoners in the Mühldorf camp complex. Graphic: engelhardt, atelier für gestaltung.

Thousands of civilian forced laborers, prisoners of war and Jewish concentration camp prisoners were deported to the Mühldorf district to work on the massive building project that went by the code name "Weingut I". The complex with its four camps was the second largest subcamp of the Dachau concentration camp.

Most of the 8,300 prisoners in Mühldorf, including 800 women, came from Hungary. They had been deported in May 1944 to Auschwitz where they were selected for forced labor in the Reich territory.

The prisoners were forced to carry out strenuous construction work. Their housing was primitive. They suffered from hunger and illness and were subjected to constant harassment by SS and civilian personnel.

Nearly half of all prisoners in the Mühldorf camp complex did not survive the war.

The bunker was never completed. It was demolished after the war.

The prisoner numbers refer to the country of origin recorded in the incomplete historical documents.

## b) Segment 2: The three Concentration Camp Memorial Sites

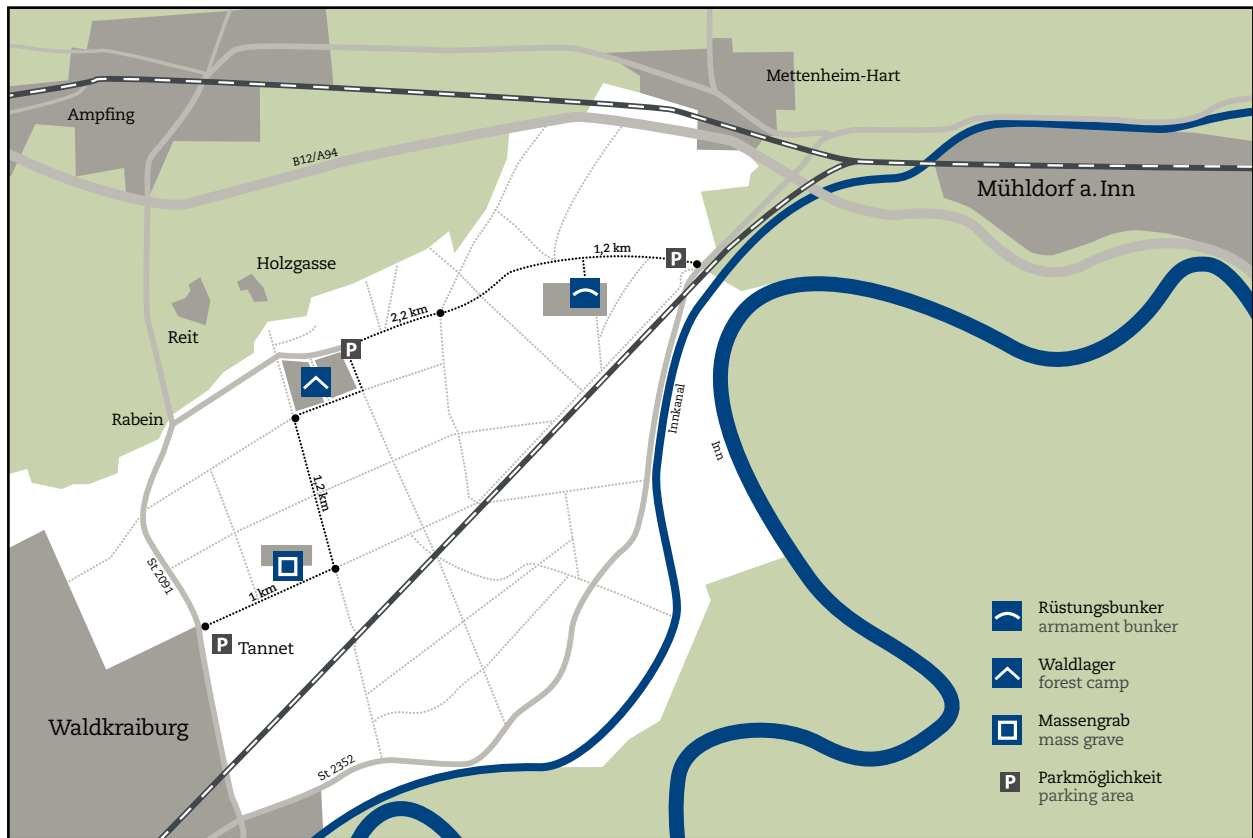


Fig. 3: The Mühldorfer subcamp complex 1944/45. Graphic: engelhardt, atelier für gestaltung.

Remains of the bunker construction site and traces of the camp still exist in Mühldorfer Hart and its environs. The forest camp and mass grave have been incorporated into a memorial and information site for visitors. The armament bunker is not accessible.

## Armament bunker

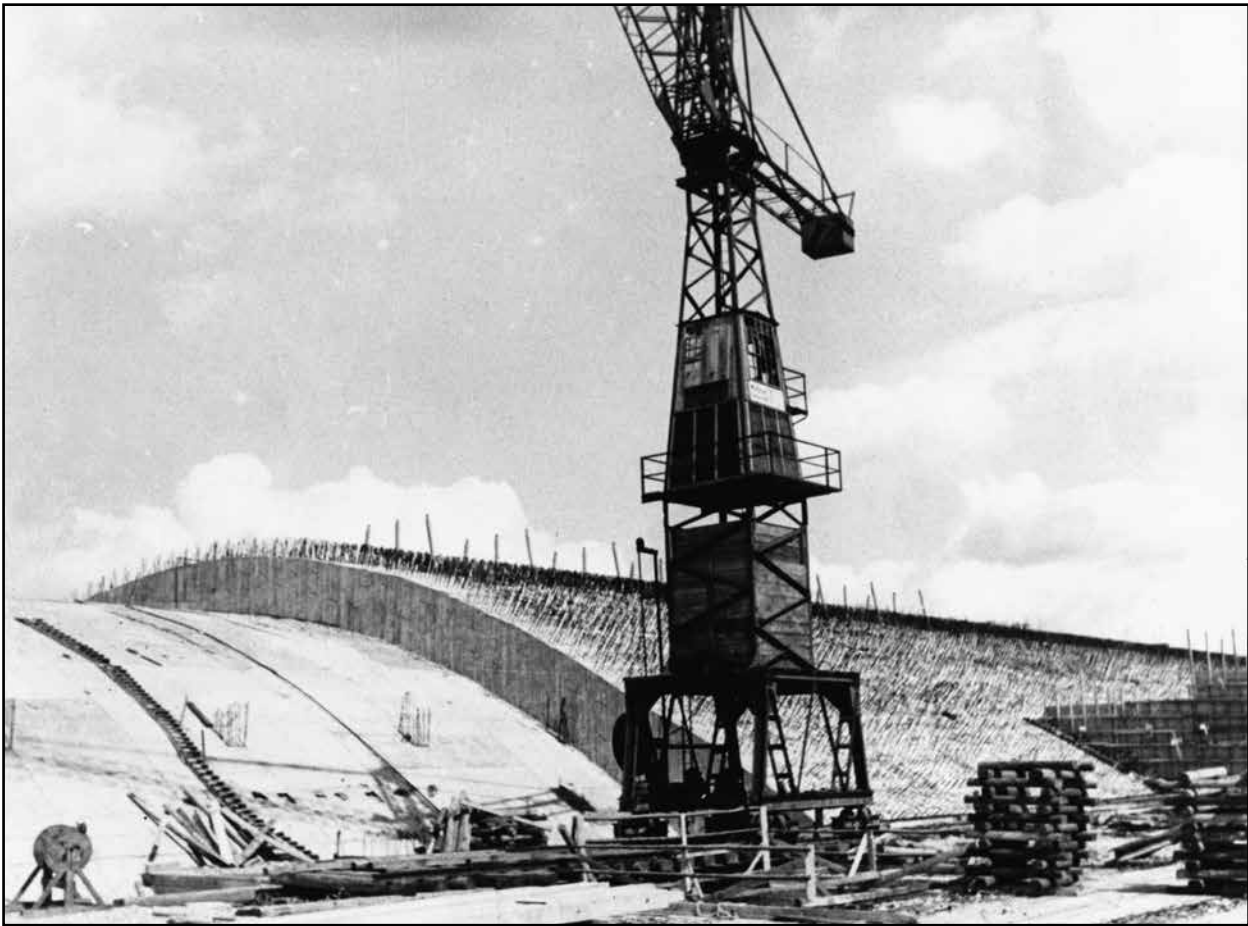


Fig. 4: Bunker construction site, April 1945. National Archives, Washington.

*Plans called for the bunker in Mühldorf to be 400 meters long and 85 meters wide. The concrete roof was to be five meters thick. To carry out the work, the OT hired the Polensky & Zöllner building company along with other reputable firms. Concentration camp prisoners, forced laborers and prisoners of war had to work at the construction site under catastrophic conditions and enormous time pressure. About half of the bunker had been completed by the end of the war.*



## Forest Camp



Fig. 5: Mud huts in Forest Camp 5/6, May 1945. National Archives, Washington.

*In terms of size, Forest Camp 5/6 was the largest camp in the Mühldorf subcamp complex. Beginning in July 1944, prisoners were housed in tent-like structures made of plywood. In fall 1944, additional ditches were dug out and covered over to form huts. About 2.000 men, and 250 women in a separate area, were crowded into these mud huts.*

## Mass grave



Fig. 6: A U.S. soldier and liberated prisoners examine a section of the mass grave, May 7, 1945  
National Archives, Washington.

*Approximately 4.000 of the 8.300 prisoners died from the inhuman living and working conditions. The SS deported sick and weak prisoners to Auschwitz and to the Landsberg-Kaufering camp complex. Some 2.249 victims were hastily buried in a mass grave in Mühldorfer Hart. On orders of the U.S. military administration, after the war they were reburied in cemeteries in Mühldorf and its environs.*

## c) Segment 3: After 1945



Fig. 7: Lajos Kormos, a 23-year-old survivor from Hungary, with a U.S. soldier, Mühldorf, July 1945. National Archives, Washington.

*On May 2, 1945, U.S. troops liberated the prisoners and organized their food and care. The U.S. military administration had the dead exhumed and given a dignified burial. It also organized criminal proceedings against SS guards, OT personnel and employees of Polensky & Zöllner. The entire armament bunker – except for one arch – was blown up in 1947. The remains of the camp and construction site continued to be used: The population took building material; war ammunition was detonated near the bunker; local businesses used concrete surfaces as storage area. The camp was mostly forgotten.*

*In the early 1980s, citizens began researching this history and presenting it in publications, exhibitions and films.*

*The permanent exhibition, "Everyday life, Armament Production, Extermination. The Mühldorf District under National Socialism," opened in 2015.*





Fig. 8: Burial and funeral ceremony, Mühldorf, June 28, 1945. National Archives, Washington.



Fig. 9: U.S. military court hearing in the trial against SS personnel and other perpetrators from the Dachau concentration camp, Dachau 1945. National Archives, Washington.

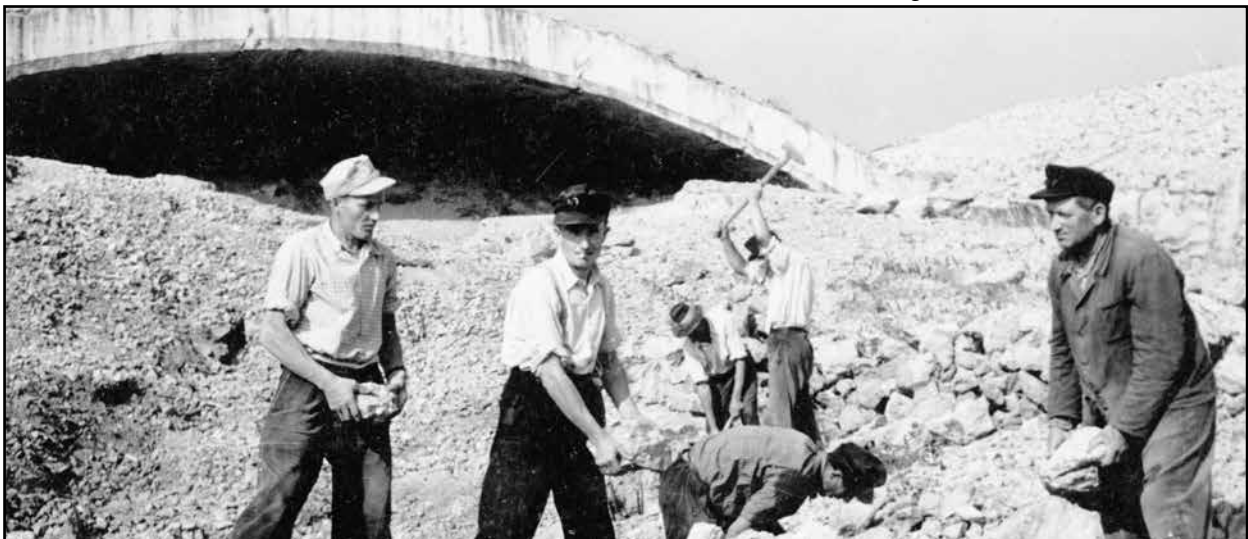


Fig. 10: Demolition of the armament bunker, 1947. Municipal Archive Mühldorf.

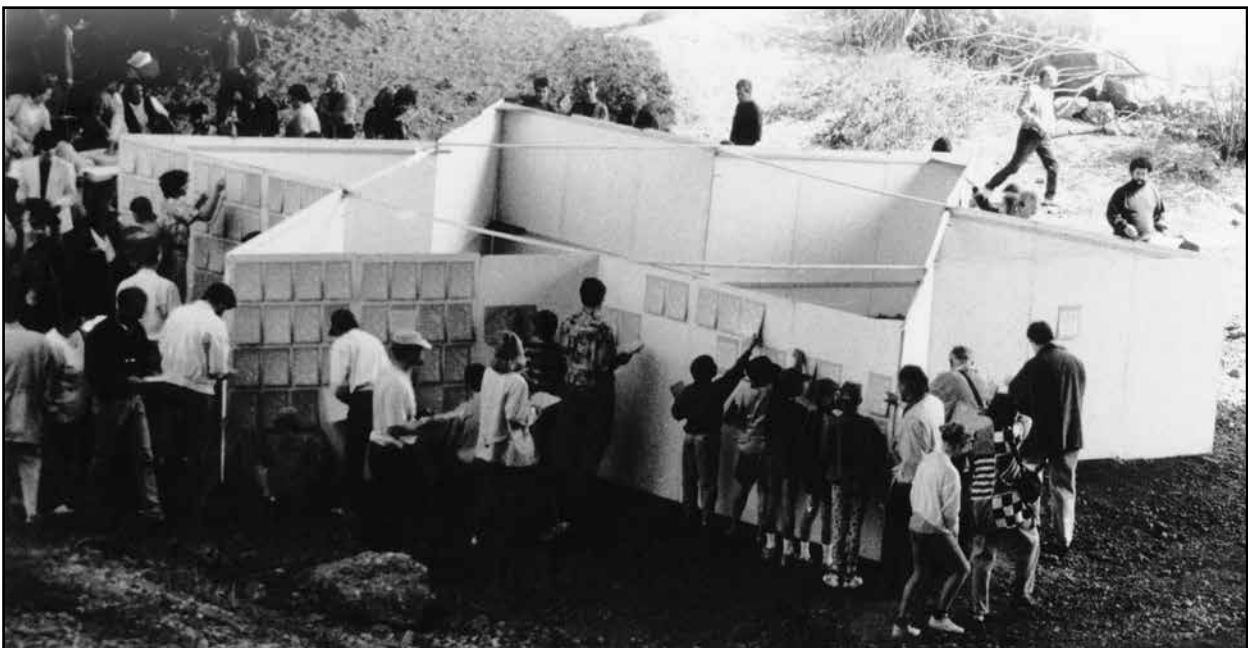


Fig. 11: Symbolical installation of a Star of David, May 1, 1993. Josef Wagner, Mühldorf.



## Imprint

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International Tracing Service, Bad Arolsen  
Dachau concentration camp memorial site  
Flossenbürg concentration camp memorial  
site  
National Archives, Washington D.C.  
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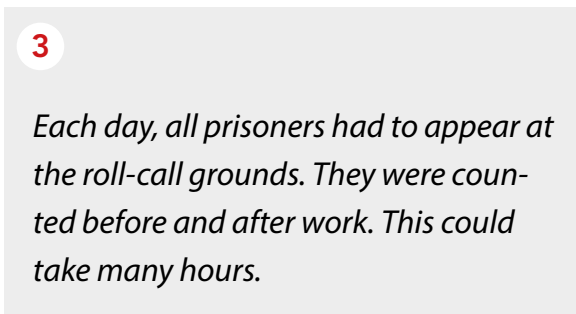




*As of July 1944, prisoners were housed in Finnenzelten, tent-like structures made of plywood.*



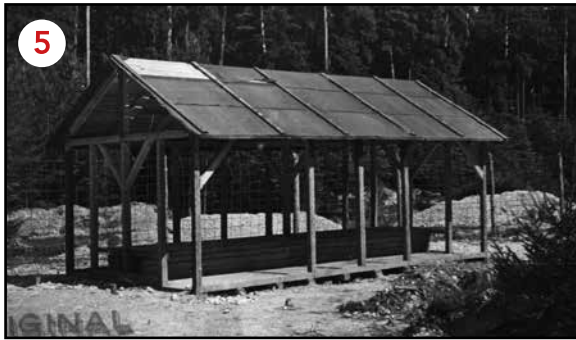
*The winter camp was erected with rows of mud huts in fall 1944. A single damp, cold hut was shared by approximately 30 men.*



*Each day, all prisoners had to appear at the roll-call grounds. They were counted before and after work. This could take many hours.*



*Prisoners worked in the sick barracks as doctors and nurses. They had hardly any medicine or medical instruments.*



*Open-pit latrines served as toilets. Prisoners had to empty them. Disease spread quickly.*



*The SS punished prisoners by locking them in the detention bunker.*

7

*A service building with canteen kitchen and storage rooms had been planned. Only the building foundations were completed.*



*The camp was enclosed by a reinforced barbed-wire fence that was lit at night. SS guards also prevented escapes.*

9

*The SS was housed outside the prison camp.*





**b) Segment 2: Traces of the “Waldlager”**

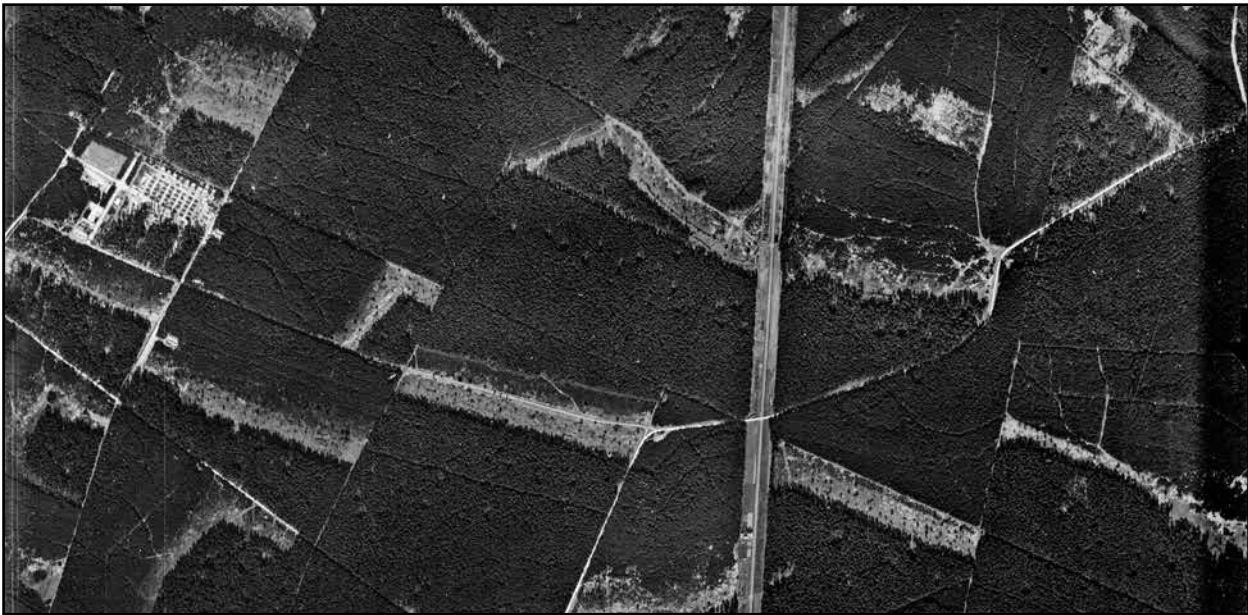


Fig. 13: Aerial photograph of Forest Camp, U.S. Air Force, April 23, 1945. Bavarian Agency for Surveying and Geoinformation.

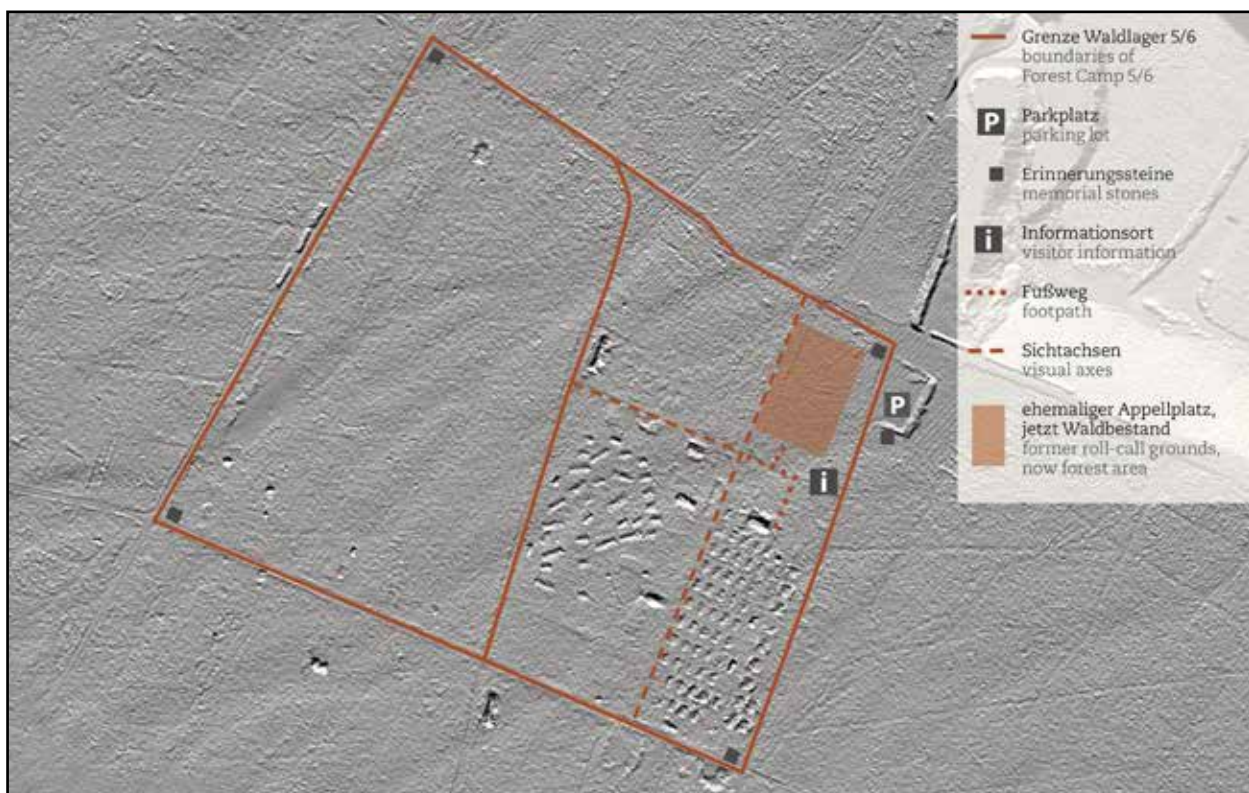


Fig. 14: Forest Camp, Shading (digital terrain model), 2017. Map: Bavarian state office for the preservation of monuments.

Only a few foundation remains and soil deformations from the former prison camp are discernible today. With modern technology it is possible to show the remnants of the camp structures. The position of the mud huts in orderly rows is particularly visible.



## Historical photographs – current situation



*Fig. 15: Mud huts in the forest camp, May 4, 1945. National Archives, Washington.*



*Fig. 16: Remains of a mud hut, 2009. Bavarian state office for the preservation of monuments.*



*Fig. 17: Open latrine, May 1945. National Archives, Washington.*



*Fig. 18: Concrete foundations of a latrine, 2009. Bavarian state office for the preservation of monuments.*



*Fig. 19: Double-lined barbed-wire fence, May 1945. National Archives, Washington.*



*Fig. 20: Holes for fence posts, 2009. Bavarian state office for the preservation of monuments.*

### 3. "Waldlager"

#### a) Contemporary witnesses



1945. Municipal Archive Mühldorf.

#### **Adolf Eisler**

1915 born in Vienna  
 1944 deported to concentration camps in  
 Auschwitz, Warsaw, Dachau  
 August 1944 deported to Mühldorf sub-  
 camp (Waldlager 5/6),  
 worked as a camp clerk; met Riwa Galperin,  
 an inmate in the women's camp  
 1945 returned to Vienna, married Riwa  
 Galperin; worked for the municipal  
 administration



1946. Museum Mühldorf.

#### **János Gosztanyi (János Geiringer)**

1926 born in Budapest as János Geiringer  
 November 1944 deported to Mühldorf  
 subcamp (Waldlager 5/6)  
 1945 return to Budapest; worked as stage  
 and film actor, director, author



1946. University of Missouri Press.

#### **Rudolf Tessler**

1926 born in Viseu-de-Sus (Romania)  
 1944 deported to Mühldorf (Waldlager)  
 via Auschwitz and Dachau  
 April 1945 liberated in Seeshaupt  
 emigrated to the U.S., worked as a real  
 estate agent in Chicago



2005. Hartung-Gorre publishers, Constance.

#### **Mordechai Henrik Gidron (Henrik Grünwald)**

1931 born as Henrik Grünwald in Budapest  
 August 1944 deported to Auschwitz, then to  
 camp Mettenheim I, where he was liberated in  
 April 1945  
 Return to Hungary  
 April 1949 Emigration to Israel  
 Lives in Tel Aviv





2013. © BR/www.die-quellen-sprechen.de

### **Georg Heller**

1923 born in Budapest  
 February 1945 deported to Mühldorf  
 subcamp from Auschwitz via Dachau  
 Late April 1945 escaped from armament  
 bunker construction site; liberated in Poing  
 1947 doctorate in mathematics; studied  
 Roman and Slavic languages, worked as a  
 translator  
 1956 escaped to Germany during the  
 Hungarian Uprising  
 Lives in Munich



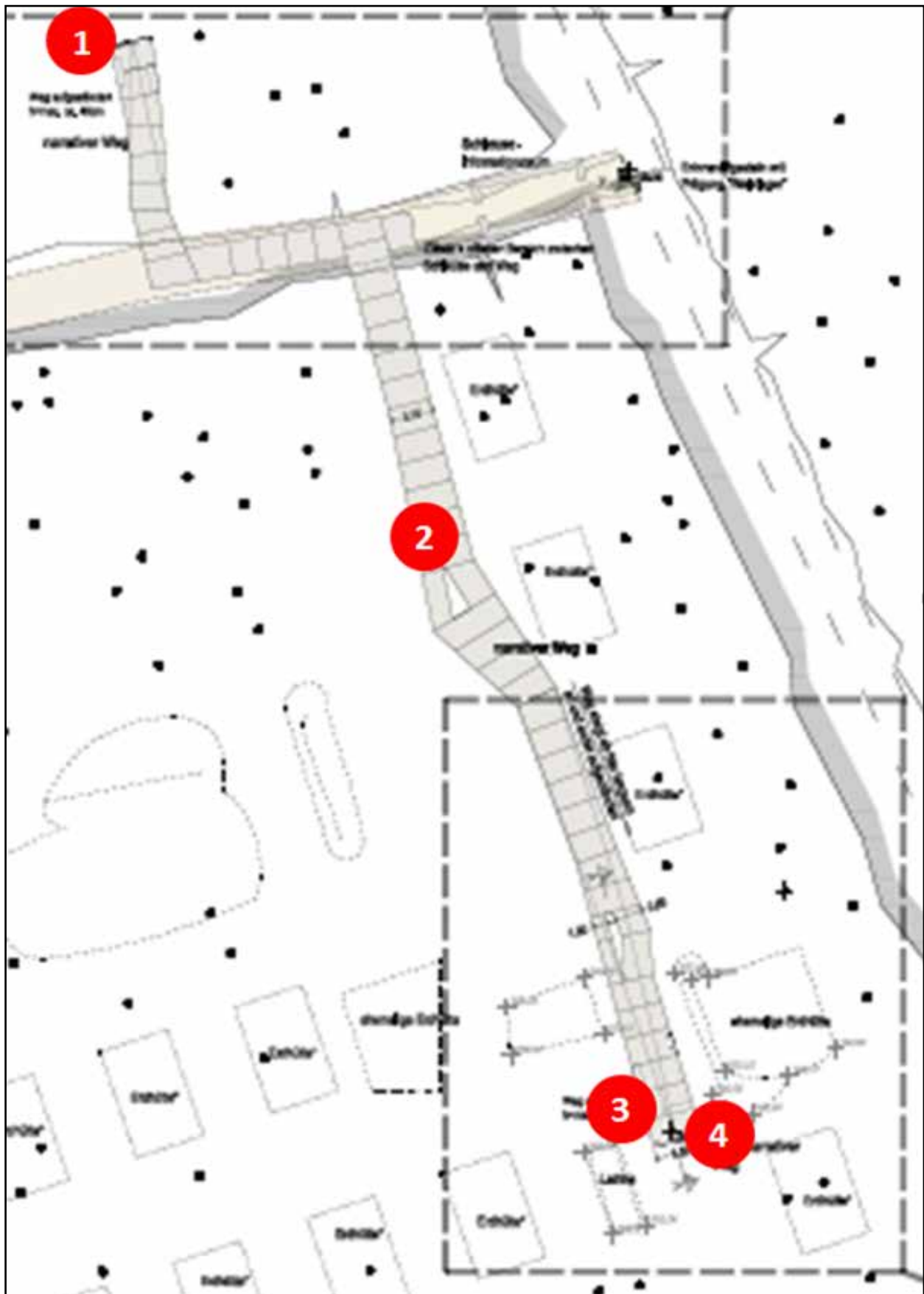
Date unknown. Becky Seitel.

### **Jack Bass**

#### **(Jürgen Bassfreund)**

1923 born as Jürgen Bassfreund in  
 Bernkastel-Kues  
 1943 deported to Auschwitz  
 January 1945 deported via Groß-Rosen  
 and Dachau concentration camps to  
 Mühldorf (Waldlager)  
 May 2, 1945 Liberation  
 Until 1947 housed in several DP-camps  
 1948 emigrated to the U.S.

### b) Selection of Quotations about the “Waldlager”



## 1 Roll Call Ground – Panels 1a/b

I had a pencil and an erasure. So I was able to show the people how to make a roll-call plan. And that is how the prisoners were lined up, in the early morning before marching out and in the evening after marching back, and they were counted. No one could ever be missing. It was okay for the dead to lie there, but they had to lie there and be counted... the count was everything.

*Adolf Eisler, former camp clerk, interview 1986*

Roll call was so important to them. One might have thought we were important people. They were counting us constantly and we truly had no value.

*János Gosztanyi (then János Geiringer), former prisoner, 2010*

## 2 “Waldlager” Narrative Path – Panel 2

The block eldest had control over the kettle with the soup and its distribution. When he put a little less in a prisoner’s bowl, then more was left for his underlings. That’s how he used his power, and it was power over life and death.

*Rudolf Tessler, former prisoner, autobiography, 1999*

## 3 “Waldlager” Mud Huts – Panels 3a/b

There was a ditch concealed behind a wooden door. Three or four steps led to a long shaft, 5 or 6 meters long, one-and-a-half meters wide, and nearly a meter deep. To the right and left of this center shaft were the sleep areas – a thin layer of straw on thin boards. The hut was just under two meters high. The ceiling was a primitive wood framework, covered on top with moss and leaves – the similarity to a molehill is not off the mark.

*Georg Heller, former prisoner, recollections, 2009*

It was just pieces of wood, and that’s where we had to sleep. It was cold, it was winter, it was terrible.

*Jack Bass (damals Jürgen Bassfreund), ehemaliger Häftling, Interview 1997*

## 4 “Waldlager” Latrine. Panel 4

I had to run to the latrine frequently due to severe diarrhea and when I let my pants down, I discovered that my body was covered with a huge amount of lice.

*Henrik Mordechai Gidron (then Henrik Grunwald), former prisoner, autobiography, 2005*

#### 4. Mass Grave: On-Site Information

##### a) Segment 1: Mass Death

*The death rate was especially high among concentration camp prisoners who were forced to work on armament building projects. Widespread death occurred as a result of the strenuous physical labor, but also because of the exceptionally bad housing, hygiene and food in the hastily-erected camps. The unskilled labor performed at the construction site did not require any previous training and prisoners were easily replaced. Hence their death was taken for granted.*

*In fall 1944, 830 sick and weak prisoners were transported to Auschwitz where they were murdered. In early April 1945, the SS sent 1,050 prisoners to a death camp in the Kaufering camp complex. Many died during these transports.*

*American troops reached the Mühldorf district on May 2, 1945 and liberated 600 prisoners and thousands of forced laborers. Before this, however, the SS had deported more than 3,600 inmates from the camp on freight trains. Many died during this transport as well.*

*According to investigations by the American military administration, 3,934 concentration prisoners died in the Mühldorf camp complex. Within ten months nearly half of all prisoners had died.*

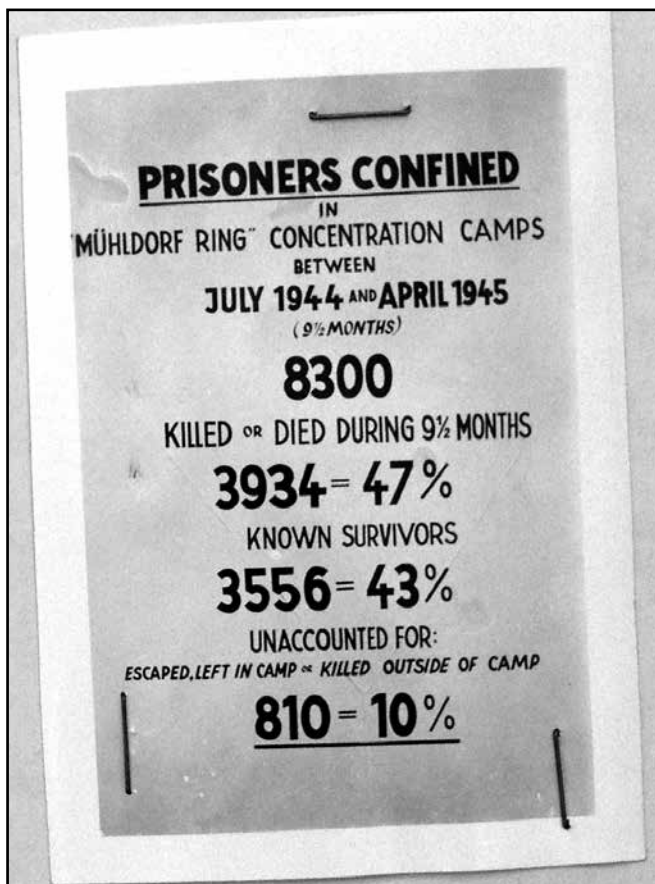


Fig. 21: Compilation of the prisoners at the Mühldorf concentration camps, by American prosecutors, 1947. National Archives, Washington.



## b) Segment 2: Removing the Dead

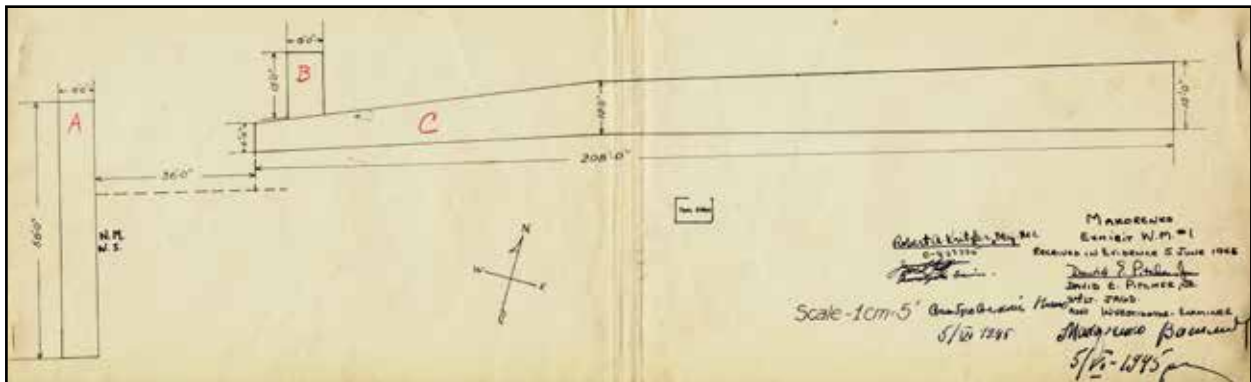


Fig. 22: Diagram of the mass grave (plan view), May 5, 1945. National Archives, Washington DC.

American investigators drew the diagram of the mass grave (A, B and C) on the basis of information provided by the liberated Ukrainian prisoner Vasily Makarenko. He reported that the section marked "C" in the diagram was 208 feet long.



Fig. 23: Mass grave and Forest Camp 5/6, detail from an aerial photograph taken by the U.S. Air Force, April 1945.

Inmates died every day in the camps and at the construction site. In a remote area of the woods, prisoners had to dig a grave three meters deep and several meters wide. A work detail with twelve prisoners and four guards used a horse-drawn cart to transport the dead to the site.

The naked emaciated corpses were placed in layers in the grave. As the number of dead rose, the grave was extended. The former prisoner Vasily Makarenko reported that from April 17 to 26 the work detail had to bury as many as 300 dead.

### c) Segment 3: Dignified Burial

*In June 1945, the American military administration made former NSDAP functionaries exhume the first dead bodies.*

*It demanded a dignified burial of the dead at various concentration camp cemeteries in the region. Local residents were required to attend the funeral ceremonies so that they would be forced to confront the atrocities committed near their homes.*

*After more dead were discovered, the mass grave in Mühldorfer Hart was cleared away entirely in 1946.*

*In the 1950s, the gravesites were removed in Altötting, Ampfing, Ecksberg and Lohen near Mittergars. The human remains were transferred to a memorial cemetery at Leitenberg near Dachau. The concentration camp cemeteries in Mühldorf, Kraiburg, Neumarkt St. Veit and Burghausen still exist today.*



Fig. 24: Exhumation of a mass grave in Mühldorfer Hart, June 1, 1945. National Archives, Washington.



Fig. 25: Funeral ceremony at the Mühldorf concentration camp cemetery, June 22, 1945. National Archives, Washington.



Fig. 26: Altötting concentration camp cemetery, 1950. KZ-Gedenkstätte Flossenbürg / Flossenbürg Memorial Site.



A k t e n n o t i z

Besprechung mit Capt. Forys am Ostermontag, 22-4-1946. 10.00 Uhr

BETREFF Exhumierung von Leichen ehem. KZ Häftlinge an der Fund-  
stelle im Ampfinger Forst in der Nähe des Kronprinzensteins.  
( Bericht des Kom. d. L.P. Dobin) - und Beisetzung auf dem  
Mühldorfer Friedhof.

Capt. Forys wünscht, dass mit der oben angegebenen Aktion unverzüglich  
d.h. am Dienstag, den 23-4-46 begonnen und <sup>diese</sup> auch so schnell als irgend-  
möglich beendet wird.

Für die Arbeiten des Exhumierens sowohl als auch der Herstellung  
der benötigten neuen Gräber auf dem Mühldorfer Friedhof sind 26 Alt-  
parteigenossen lt. beiliegender Liste vorgesehen, die sofort durch  
die Polizei zu verständigen sind.

12 Mann sollen auf dem Mühldorfer Friedhof eingesetzt werden und  
14 Mann im Ampfinger Forst. Den Transport der Leichen ist von 2  
LKW durchzuführen, die von der Fahrbereitschaft zu stellen sind.

Verantwortlich für die Aktion ist der Landrat. Er beauftragt einen  
seiner Herren mit der Durchführung der Organisation. Ausserdem  
haben sowohl bei der Exhumierung als auch an der neuen Begräbnis-  
stätte 2 Beamte der Landpolizei anwesend zu sein. Bei der Exhumierung  
hat ausserdem jeweils ein Arzt anwesend zu sein, der von der M.R. be-  
stimmt wird. Für die ersten 3 Tage ist Dr. Angstwurm Kraiburg vorge-  
sehen. Der Arzt ist für die Identifizierung der Leichen, soweit dies  
überhaupt noch möglich ist, verantwortlich. Gegebenenfalls ist im  
Bericht der Zustand der Leiche ( liegt vermutlich so und so lange  
in der Erde) zu bezeichnen. Ferner ist darauf zu achten, dass die  
Gräber auch total entleert werden und keine Leichenteile zurückbleiben.  
Ausserdem sind die Kreuze in jedem Falle mitzugeben, da diese eventl.  
zur Identifizierung der Leichen beitragen.

Die erforderliche Anzahl ~~KREUZE~~ Särge für die Überführung muss zur  
Verfügung stehen.

Von den zur Arbeit eingesetzten Leuten ist jeweils einer im Forst  
und einer auf dem Friedhof für die auszuführenden Arbeiten verant-  
wortlich zu machen, was nicht heissen soll, dass diese beiden Leute  
als Aufseher herumstehen, sondern selbstverständlich auch mit Arbeiten  
müssen.

Nachdem die Gräber im Forst völlig entleert worden sind, ist für  
tadellose Einebnung zu sorgen. Keinesfalls dürfen eventl. Hölzer-  
reste aus den Gräbern us.w. herumliegen, diese sind sofort an Ort  
und Stelle zu verbrennen.

Dienstag Früh sind Capt. Forys die Namen der Leute zu melden, die  
zur Durchführung der Aktion angetreten sind - die Namen der Vorarbeiter  
besonders anführen.

Herr Landrat meldet, wem er mit der Organisationsauftrag hat.  
Die Landpolizei meldet, wer von ihren Leuten abgestellt wurde und  
wo.

Für die Verständigung der einzelnen Leute des Arbeitskommandos ist  
die Landpolizei verantwortlich - desgl. hat die L.P. Dr. Angstwurm  
Kraiburg zu verständigen.

Capt. Forys wünscht den Abschlussbericht schnellstens zu sehen.

Fig. 27: Order of the American military administration to exhume the corpses at Mühldorfer Hart, April 22, 1946.  
Stadtarchiv / municipal archive Mühldorf.



## 5. In-Depth Information: Mass Grave

### a) Contemporary witnesses

Along the paths within the area of the former mass grave you will find selected quotes from contemporary witnesses.



1946. History Center and Museum Mühldorf

#### **János Gosztanyi (János Geiringer)**

1926 born in Budapest as János Geiringer  
November 1944 deported to Mühldorf  
subcamp (Waldlager 5/6)  
1945 return to Budapest; worked as stage  
and film actor, director, author



2002 Neumarkt St. Veit municipal archive

#### **Lorenz Wastlhuber**

1931 born in Mettenheim  
1944/45 lives in his parents' home adjacent to prisoners' camp Mettenheim I  
After 1945 farmer in Neumarkt St. Veit;  
served as town council and deputy  
mayor



1986. Foto: Josef Wagner

#### **Adelheid Jaist, geb. Boch**

1925 born in Mühldorf  
1944/45 lived in Mühldorf and  
worked in Ampfing, passing daily  
by the prisoners' camps  
After 1945 worked at her parents'  
bakery



June 1945. National Archives, Washington

#### **Wassili Makarenko**

1922 born in Saporosh'e  
(USSR, today Ukraine)  
June 1941 arrested in German POW camps  
January 1944 deported to Dachau and to  
Gendorf subcamp  
February 1945 deported to Mühldorf; worked in the gravedigger's commando  
April 1945 liberated at camp Waldlager



**1 Narrative Path – Panel 1:**

I sat between the dead because there wasn't any other room. I sat between them and I was not bothered by it. It didn't mean much to me.

I am not saying that it was a comfortable feeling, but that is how we related to death.

*János Gosztonyi (then János Geiringer), former prisoner, 2010*

**2 Narrative Path – Panel 2:**

That there were prisoners in there, that they were tortured, tormented to death and buried in large numbers in the forest – many people knew that.

But specific details about how they were treated... only a very, very few knew about that.

*Lorenz Wastlhuber, former neighbor of Camp M 1 in Mettenheim, interview 1986*

**3 Narrative Path – Panel 3:**

What I can't get over – that we went to bed every day and although it was war, we didn't suffer from hunger, and that something like that can happen a few kilometers away.

*Adelheid Jaist, lived in Mühldorf at the time, interview 1986*

**4 At the Mass Grave – Panel 4:**

The work group at the mass grave was composed of a kommando of 12 prisoners and 4 SS-guards. When we got out to the grave, we changed into our digging uniforms in the little hutment on the south side of the long grave.

We then moved to the west end of the long grave, and the kommando was split up with some men working down in the excavation arranging the bodies and the other men shoveling on dirt as directed by the SS-men.

The bodies were all very thin with the ribs showing out and no flesh on them. Their legs were as thin as a bone.

*Vasily Makarenko, former inmate, testimony, June 1945*

DO NOT LET YOURSELVES BE FORCED INTO ENMITY AND HATRED OF  
OTHER PEOPLE, OF PAGE 12 OF 12 RUSSIANS OR AMERICANS, JEWS OR  
TURKS, OF ALTERNATIVES OR CONSERVATIVES, BLACKS OR WHITES.  
LEARN TO LIVE TOGETHER, NOT IN OPPOSITION TO EACH OTHER.

Speech by President Richard von Weizsäcker during the Ceremony Commemorating  
the 40th Anniversary of the End of War in Europe and of National-Socialist Tyranny  
on 8 May 1985 at the Bundestag, Bonn



## I. CLASSIFICATION

The industrial museum Bunker 29 was opened in 2008. It is a branch of the town museum of Waldkraiburg. The funding was made possible with help from EU resources (LEADER plus), resources from the city of Waldkraiburg and the Industriegemeinschaft Waldkraiburg und Aschau e.V. (Registered Industrial Association of Waldkraiburg and Aschau). Anja Kuisle, Büro für Technikgeschichte (office for history of technology), Munich, was assigned with the conception and scheduling. She was supported by the museum's director, Elke Keiper. The project was carried out by the Werkstatt für Gestaltung (workshop for design) from Augsburg. A regional team including representatives of the Industriegemeinschaft (Registered Industrial Association) was part of the development.



Fig. 1: Bunker 29. Photo: Ulrich Schreiber  
© Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg.



Fig. 2: City map. © Waldkraiburg.

The exhibition examines the background of the city of Waldkraiburg and its early industrial history. It focuses on the fact that the development of the city was connected to the area of the Kraiburg gunpowder factory, which was an armament factory during the Third Reich, and that German expellees were the first population group. Another topic is the importance of certain local entrepreneurs and their merger into the "industrial society".

A characteristic feature is the fact that the museum building is also the central exhibit. The exhibition building is one of over 400 buildings comprising the Kraiburg gunpowder factory. It was one of six identically constructed kneading machine buildings. Each of them held four similar kneading machines that worked independently and were used for the powder production on the basis of nitrocellulose which was made in the nearby Aschau factory.

Architecturally speaking it is an one-storey ferro concrete bunker with a flat roof. The floor area adds up to nearly 120 square metres with six rooms. Each room is accessible through a door

from the outside and the roof had a planting for camouflage on one side. Each of the 400 buildings that belonged to the gunpowder factory had its own serial number. Today's museum had the number 29.

There were eight further gunpowder factories in the Third Reich and they were all built based on identical plans and at places with similar conditions: thick forest, secure water supply, gravelly land and a connection to the train and road network.

Bunker 29 is the last building of the Kraiburg gunpowder factory which has mostly survived in its original shape. The bombardment shortly before the end of war and the blasting operations during the occupation period destroyed around 100 buildings. The others have either been converted or integrated into current buildings in Waldkraiburg.

### Address:

Schweidnitzer Weg 6, 84478 Waldkraiburg

Information of **opening hours/guidances:**  
(08638) 959 308

## 1. The Layout of the Museum

The layout is largely determined by the building's authenticity. Both the outdoor facilities and the inside of the bunker were designed.

### a) The Outdoor Facilities

It is fairly difficult to redesign the original site of the gunpowder factory even though the area is mostly undeveloped and is still surrounded by fores. Nevertheless, the camouflage vegetation covering the bunker has been reproduced. It was carried out, in accordance with the regulations, using "bushy foliage".



Fig. 3: Plantation for camouflage on the bunker roof.  
Photo: private collection © Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg.

Some of the authentic concrete pillars belonging to the former railings were used for the fencing around the property. Two other main exhibits were positioned there: A so-called „One-Man-Bunker“, which should save one person in case of an attack as well as a telephone post. At one time, they were spread all over the area of the gunpowder factory. An authentic telephone, which was an exhibit in the Stadtmuseum, was mounted on the concrete pillar.

### b) The Interior Exhibition

Each of the six rooms has been given a topic. Short texts give an overview. They carry the following titles:

- (1) The Kneadling Machine – Part of the Undercover Factory
- (2) New Start – Destroyed Bunker and Homeless People

- (3) Rebuilding the Business – the Dickow Pump Factory
- (4) Using the Rolling Mill – the Kraiburg Gum Factory
- (5) Producing Sweets – The Bonbon Factory Negro
- (6) Designing Future – Industry and Industrial Society since 1946

The size of the rooms (20 square meters) is unsuitable for common museum designing concepts, especially if planned for groups of the size of school classes. Therefore, new design ideas had to be developed.

## 2. The Main Idea of the Design: walk-in stage scenery

Walk-in stage scenery means that each room provides the stage for its theme. It is shaped with authentic exhibits, faithful reproductions, large pictures and installations. Colours, sounds and smells complement each room to create an overall atmospheric impression. The aim is not only to inform the visitors but also to let them immerse in the various display sets and the different topics.



Fig. 4: Walk-in stage scenery Room 3. Photo: private collection © Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg.

But there are fundamental differences between the stage scenery and a theatre. Instead of actors, the visitor is informed through an audio file. This acoustic presentation is started by a button and lasts around five minutes. These audio files are

compiled from information texts, interviews of contemporary witnesses and sound compilations. This presentation can be combined with movie scenes and animated videos.

A greater difference is that a theatre creates a new reality - that should not happen. That is the reason why the information ought to be correct. The curator was responsible for the conceptual content of the audio files. The foundation of the exhibition is intense research which is reflected, for example, in the list of objects and pictures:

3	3/1	Goldrahmen: Gründegasse	Papierbild gerahmt	Monika Ruß
	3/2	Goldrahmen: Kinderbild	Papierbild gerahmt	Monika Ruß
	3/3	Goldrahmen: Comedian Harmon	Papierbild	Monika Ruß
	3/4	Goldrahmen: im Auto	Papierbild	Monika Ruß
	3/extra 1	Goldrahmen: Fabrik	Papierbild	Monika Ruß
	3/extra 2	Goldrahmen: Transport mit Pferd	Papierbild	Monika Ruß
	3/5	Hof (Fensterbild)	Papierbild gerahmt	Fa. Dickow
	3/6	Mannschaft vor erster Pumpe	Papierbild	Matthias Ebenbühler
	3/7	Pumpenzeichnung	Prospekt	wird gezeichnet
	3/8	Blatt mit Diagrammen	Prospekt	wird gezeichnet

Fig. 5: List of paintings Kuisle. as of Juli 2007.

The texts are read by three professional actors who take on the same role in each of the six audio files. At the beginning and the ending the same speaker introduces or concludes the scene and the topic. A "neutral" speaker is responsible for presenting the facts. The historic quotations are read by the third actor. The recordings of the contemporary witnesses in Waldkraiburg are edited in as originals.

### 3. Historical Contextualisation

During the research and the exhibitions contentrelated conception it was important to contextualise the local stories in wider historical contexts.

This is done in two different ways. The first one is to address the historical framework in the audio files. Additionally, the carefully selected and researched authentic exhibits create the ambience in the room. In contrast, the second way only indirectly reveals historical connections by incorporating them into narrations concerning the selected business. The visitors must connect their general insights to past, present and future.

An example for the first, direct way is the detailed thematisation of the gunpowder factory and its specific construction in room 1. This is optically done through the kneading machine which the

audio file directly connects to the Nazi war and armament policy.

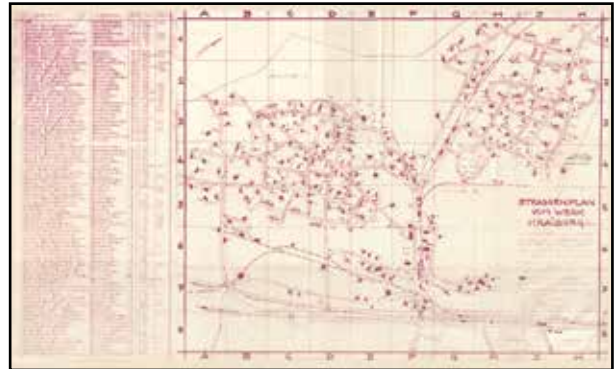


Fig. 6: Map of the gunpowder factory as a part of the video installation © Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg.

Rooms 2 to 5 focus on the altered conditions during the post-war era and how people dealt with the available buildings as well as the infrastructure. The historical framework already addressed in the audio files and guidance texts includes the occupation policy of the Allies. An example is the relocation of families and factories into this area, the order to dismantle technology or the threat of further explosions at a time when the buildings were being used as residential homes and work places by expellees.

Room 6 focuses on another aspect: The design of the walls shows that the layout of present-day Waldkraiburg is a result of the former logistics of



Fig. 7: Map of the view of walls in room 6. Photo Ulrich Schreiber © Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg.

the specialised production of gunpowder, the camouflage and the protection against bombardments.



The slogan “from bunker to a town of experiences”, which has been positioned on the access roads to the city of Waldkraiburg for years, shows that the town knows how to deal with the challenges that have arisen from its history.



Fig. 8: Tourist sign at the entrances to the town. Photo: private  
© Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg.

In the following paragraphs, the curator’s approach to contextualising the (industrial) history of Waldkraiburg is described: the implicit inclusion of the historical contexts in the stories of selected factories.

Most of the time, only small clues in the audio files, guidance texts or the stage scenery are used to suggest an epoch-spanning integration of the first enterprises in Waldkraiburg in rooms 3-5. An important part is the carefully researched selection of businesses: two of the chosen businesses were successful re-foundations and in addition to that one start-up.

The curator chooses the production of consumer goods as an example for a start-up. She selected the company Negro that produced sweets. This example clarifies the dependence on time-specific conditions: the production of sweets is only useful once basic needs are satisfied. The company Negro is also an illustration of a factory which only existed for a few years. The named reasons were changes in the sector and the lacking interest of the next generation to take over the factory.

The examples for re-establishment are companies in the branches of mechanical engineering and the chemical industry. These are still very important for present-day Waldkraiburg and they illustrate the change across the whole region, which was very agricultural at the beginning of the post-war era. Waldkraiburg proved itself as the

structural catalyst in this region. With just a few words the curator illustrates the connection between past, present and future.

Her choice to focus on the companies pumps Dickow and gum factory Kraiburg was also supported by other reasons. Both entrepreneurial families have strongly influenced the development of Waldkraiburg. Their companies are still family-owned which is a rarity in the globalised market of today. They have established themselves as successful and future-oriented industrial enterprises. Nevertheless, they are still connected to the city. This narrative thread is an important element to display Waldkraiburg’s identity in the exhibition: The role of industrials not only as economical initiators but also as a social and political power.

The decision to focus on two re-establishments gives the curator the possibility to point out that economic history can make other epochal connections compared to e.g. political history. Even though the beginning and end of National Socialism were also significant caesuras in the economy, they do not mark a general new start or strict end. Moreover, it shows certain continuities in contrast to the political breaks.

This can be seen by the chosen examples: both are already rooted in the Weimar Republic; both were ranked as essential for the war effort during the Nazi era. Therefore, they were able to produce during the war and the Dickow company was able to technically enhance their pumps because they were important for the Nazis e.g. as fuel pumps.

Another side effect of classification “essential for the war effort” is illustrated by the company Schmidt: secured access to resources and substitute material. Besides, both families work in a network which was established before and during the Nazi era.

Both companies were able to resort to their technical know-how and their existing contacts for the re-establishment. Nevertheless, these were not a guarantee of success. Examples of the difficulties which had been overcome were war-time destruction and the decisions of the occupying forces. Additionally, managers of companies that were essential for the war effort were often imprisoned and investigated because of their support of the Nazi regime.



#### 4. Joint Historical Work

As already described, the curator of Bunker 29 focuses on economics to contextualise history – as is appropriate for an industrial museum. In the nearby municipal museum “Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg” the emphasis is on society, politics and culture. Waldkraiburg, its background and history are presented as an example for development during the war and post-war Germany. Important themes are the living conditions in the Nazi gunpowder factory, the forced migration of the German descent population after the war and the construction of a “new home” in Waldkraiburg.



*Fig. 9: Focus on the “forced migration history” in the municipal museum Waldkraiburg. Photo private collection ©Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg*

Another historically themed initiative worth mentioning is the “Path of History” in Waldkraiburg. It is a circular path that leads to buildings and places which had an important role in the city’s history (either gunpowder factory or expellee settlement).



*Fig. 10: Signs that identify the “path of history”. Photo: private collection © Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg.*

## 5. Overall Impression

The stand-up display in front of the museum which is also a part of the Walk of History clarifies the aims of the exhibition:

### *Bunker 29 – Industrial Museum of Waldkraiburg-Aschau*

*From June 1946, the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs moved the businesses of German expellees onto the site of the former Kraiburg factory. At the beginning, their legal and political situation was very unclear. As a result, the businessmen founded the Industrial Association "IGW" in the factory in 1947. This enabled them to jointly advocate their own interests. The IGW took on communal responsibilities from 1947 to 1950 and was a major driving force behind the foundation of the commune of Waldkraiburg. The exhibition in Bunker 29 brings the post-war years to life. It shows the circumstances of the new beginning through the example of several businesses. Today, IGW is an amalgamation of modern enterprises that combine business interests with social responsibility. They are presented in the last room.*

### *Details of **opening times** and **tours**:*

*Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg*

*Telephone 08638 / 959308*

It refers to information, historical contextualisation as well as the identity-defining role of the industry for Waldkraiburg then and now.

The entire complex of Bunker 29 with the outdoor and indoor exhibitions emphasises the features and unique characteristics of the museum in different ways: as a building it is a source for the origin of Waldkraiburg in the Nazi's armament industry. The interior tries to narrate the beginnings of Waldkraiburg in order to create an arc between that time and today.

The design of the departments as walk-in stage scenery and the professional audio presentation "selected" information for visitors can be seen as a balancing act. Some of the contextualisations can only be found by very critical and mindful visitors and listeners. Therefore, it is the task of the guides to support visitors in the contextualisation of Waldkraiburg's industrial history. This is a challenge for the voluntary guides – but also for the continuous support through the head office.



Fig. 11: Guided tour with Eva Köhr. Photo: private collection © Stadtmuseum Waldkraiburg.





## II. SECTIONS OF THE EXHIBITION – AN OVERVIEW

A guidance text and photo that illustrates the room's enactment as a scenery are shown. Additionally, the exhibits and contemporary witnesses who were interviewed are listed for the enactment. Both information is presented to the visitor through guidance boards in each room.

Finally, chosen exhibits, design elements and excerpts out of the audio files deepen the impression of the department.

### 1. The Kneading Machine – Part of the Undercover Factory

Section Text  
and Walk-in Stage Scenery

*The combat noise audible at the beginning points to the history of this building and its function: Bunker 29 had been constructed during the second world war and was part of a plant for the manufacture of ammunition (gun powder). The Fig. reviation D.S.C. stands for "Deutsche Spreng Chemie". The locations of numerous ordnance factories in the Third Reich are shown on the map.*



Fig. 12: Spatial Impression. Photo Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



### In-Depth Information

#### Exhibits:

*Universal Mix and Kneading Machine. Manufacturer Werner & Pfleiderer, Stuttgart, made in 1958. In use until approximately 1995 at Nitrochemie Aschau. Donated by Nitrochemie Aschau for the reconstruction of Bunker 29 in the year 2000.*

*Staircase.*

*Rebuilt according to original plans in the year 2000.*

#### Contemporary Witness:

*Julia Breintner, Waldkraiburg*



Fig. 13: Kneading Machine in Detail. Photo: Ulrich Schreiber.  
© Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



Fig. 14: Model Staircase. Photo: Ulrich Schreiber.  
© Waldkraiburg Town Museum.

### From the Audio Presentation

*The city of Waldkraiburg is situated on the former site of "Werk Kraiburg". It was a clandestine and camouflaged factory. It consisted of more than 400 buildings, railway tracks and a perfect infrastructure, hidden in the forest beneath the trees. This was supposed to protect it from enemy air raids.*

*Bunker 29 was one of six kneading machine buildings in the Kraiburg plant. The so-called powder raw mixture was kneaded thoroughly in large machines located in these buildings. You see here one of the kneading machines used in this process.*

## 2. New Start – Destroyed Bunker and Homeless People

### Section Text and Walk-in Stage Scenery

*The factory was closed at the end of world war II and the machines were dismantled and used for reparation efforts.*

*German refugees and displaced people were now housed in the former plant's living quarters where forced laborers from Eastern Europe had lived before. The refugees had mostly come from today's Czech Republic and Poland. These people arrived with but a few personal belongings and started to build a new home with much energy and ingenuity, practically from zero.*

*Bit by bit also the plant's former production buildings were made inhabitable. This was back-breaking work: "Even with a compressor, it took two to three days to break through the reinforced concrete and get an opening so that windows could be installed in the strong bunker walls." But this was the only way for many small companies to start their workshops. As many contemporary witnesses remember, during their childhood these premises were like a huge adventure playground ....*



Fig. 15: Spatial Impression. Photo Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum.

### In-Depth Information

#### Exhibits:

*Air Hammer. Donated by Seisreiner, Aschau, 2008*

*From the collection of a construction company in Waldkraiburg. It is highly likely that this hammer was used in the conversion of the bunker into residential and business buildings in Waldkraiburg.*

*Shovel and Pickaxe. Donation from private collection.*

*Kneading Machine Motors. Donated by Nitrochemie, Aschau during the reconstruction of Bunker 29 in the year 2000.*

#### Contemporary Witnesses:

*Herta Binz, Waldkraiburg*

*Horst Frömsdorf, Waldkraiburg*

*Rosa Just, Waldkraiburg*

*Heinz Kundlatsch, Waldkraiburg*

*Fritz Schmidt, Waldkraiburg*

*Peter Schmidt, Aschau*



Fig. 16: Kneading Machine Motor. Photo: Ulrich Schreiber.  
© Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



Fig. 17: Polystyrene Installation for the Display Design. Photo: Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum

### 3. Rebuilding the Business – the Dickow Pump Factory

#### Section Text and Walk-in Stage Scenery

*Representative for the fate of many companies in Waldkraiburg, the story of the Dickow company is told in this room. You see the photographs of the four brothers: Hermann, Carl, Walter and Wilhelm, who successfully produced various types of pumps in Görlitz and Gablonz prior and during the second world war. These two cities were located in the zone that was occupied by the Soviets after the war and therefore it was unthinkable to continue the businesses there. In 1946 Carl Dickow arrived with his family at the site of the former D.S.C. Werk Kraiburg. He decided to try another start here and set-up a new factory.*



Fig. 18: Spatial Impression. Photo Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



### In-Depth Information

#### Exhibits:

*Office Furniture. Donations and loans from private collections. All objects are originals from the 1940's.*

*Pump, Model L 18 S, Serial Number 401161 Make: Dickow, Year of Manufacture: 1940*

*This pump was not sold by Dickow in 1946, but exchanged for food.*

#### Contemporary Witnesses:

*Julia Breintner, Waldkraiburg*

*Matthias Ebenbichler, Kraiburg*



Fig. 19: Office Furniture. Photo: Ulrich Schreiber.  
© Waldkraiburg Town Museum.

### From the Audio Presentation

*When Carl Dickow died in November 1946 on the aftereffects of an operation, the company seemed to be doomed once again. But Carl's widow did not want to give up and managed to get her broth-in-law released from war captivity. However, years had to pass before modern pumps could be produced again. Lack of materials, bureaucratic hurdles and missing buyers made operations difficult. The breakthrough finally came when - after some time - former employees with their wealth of experience and knowledge could be brought to Waldkraiburg. The new Dickow company always remained smaller than the old one was. But it could latch-on to the successes of old and is today one of the global market leaders in the manufacture of high-value specialty pumps.*

#### 4. Using the Rolling Mill – the Kraiburg Gum Factory

##### Section Text and Walk-in Stage Scenery

*Friedrich Schmidt had learned that there existed “rolling mills” on the premises of the former ammunitions plant. Rolling mills are machines needed for the production of gun powder but also to produce rubber. Here is such a “rolling mill”. However, it turned out that it was not easy at all to get these rolling mills for setting-up a production facility. They were – just like all other machinery – goods for reparation. The badly needed rolling mills were dismantled and shipped off, in spite of already signed leasing contracts. But the founder of the fledgling company finally discovered buried machines and obtained permission to recover and restore them. During the first decades of operation, the products of the Gummiwerk Kraiburg were mainly destined for the repair of automobile and truck tires.*



Fig. 20: Spatial Impression. Photo Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum.

### In-Depth Information

#### Exhibits:

*"Fütterwalzwerk" Rolling Mill. Make: Berstorff. Year of Manufacture: 1940. In operation until 1992. On loan from Gummiwerk.*

*Kraiburg. Restored and preserved by Gummiwerk, Kraiburg 2008.*

*Skins of semi-finished products in the manufacture of vulcanized rubber. Semi-finished products in the manufacture of vulcanized rubber. On loan from Gummiwerk, Kraiburg 2008.*

*Lorry Tyre. Reproduction of a Retreaded Tyre. On loan from Gummiwerk, Kraiburg 2008.*

#### Film Recording:

*Extract from a Cine Film by Fritz und Peter Schmidt, around 1955.*

#### Contemporary Witnesses:

*Alfred Pfaffenberger, Kraiburg*

*Josi Reiter, Kraiburg*



Fig. 21: The Schmidt Company was informed of the rolling mill in Kraiburg by the Berstorff Company. Photo: Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



Fig. 22: The Tyre Model in the Background. Photo: Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum.

*The Gummiwerk of back then developed into a modern factory. The Gummiwerk KRAIBURG of today is producing highly specialized rubber products, such as rubber rolls that are needed in the production of skis and snowboards.*

## 5. Producing Sweets – The Bonbon Factory Negro

Section Text  
and Walk-in Stage Scenery

*Konrad Neumann and Josef Groß were the founders of the Waldkraiburg candy factory. Shortly after the war they started to produce cakes, chocolate and candy in a building of the former D.S.C. plant. They had borrowed the money for the equipment and machinery. The production of candy worked best and so they specialized in this. Using part of both their family names, they called their company "Negro".*

*Negro candy was produced manually at that time and was sold in all of Bavaria and later on also in other parts of Germany. Negro made up to 80 different kinds! For example: Banana, egg liqueur, strawberry, hazelnut, raspberry, honey, herb sugar, mocha briquettes, Münchner Kindl, orange, peppermint, polar ice, lemon.....*



Fig. 23: Spatial Impression. Photo Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



### In-Depth Information

#### Exhibits:

*Embossing Roller. Waldkraiburg Town Museum, Acquisition 2008.*

*Glazing Pot. Waldkraiburg Town Museum, Acquisition 2008.*

*Sweets in a Glass Jar. Original representative sight glass of the Negro Company:*

*Mixed Advertisements Nr. 12, 1975. Donation from a private collection.*

#### Scenic Photo:

*Production at Negro, Assembly. Photographs from Waldkraiburg Town Archive Collection*

#### Contemporary Witnesses:

*Antonie Neumann, Waldkraiburg*

*Traude Ringelhan, Ampfing*



Fig. 24: Embossing Roller and Glazing Pot. Photo: private.  
© Waldkraiburg Town Museum.

### From the Audio Presentation

*Up to 100 people, among them many women, had found jobs at the Negro candy factory. Each day they produced as much candy as they could load onto two trucks with trailers. Today this factory is no longer there.*

*Embossing rollers, as are exhibited here, shaped the sugar paste into candy. Inside the coating drum the candy finally got its fine white sugar frosting.*

## 6. Designing Future – Industrial Association of Waldkraiburg and Aschau, since 1946

Section Text  
and Walk-in Stage Scenery

*The premises of the former gun powder factory were actually unsuitable for living and working. There were no shops, no hospital, no street lighting ....*

*But the people had no other place to go. So they took the things into their hands. At the beginning there were eight founders of companies who got together in January 1947 and founded the "Association of industrial companies at Werk Kraiburg" (Industriegemeinschaft). Within a few months this "Association" grew to more than 60 member companies. The managers had actually founded their association to look after their companies' interests, but the people approached them with all sorts of concerns.*

*There was no graveyard where to bury the dead. The "InGe" looked after this. A school for the children was needed, a church, an own newspaper, a little culture ....*



Fig. 25: Spatial Impression. Photo Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum.

### In-Depth Information

#### Exhibits:

*Objects in the Display Cases: The members of the IGW introduce themselves.*

#### Music:

*Bavarian Polka of the 12 Pilsener, played on instruments made by Miraphone e.G., Waldkraiburg.*

#### Contemporary Witness:

*Hubert Rösler, Waldkraiburg*



Fig. 26: The Gunpowder Factory "behind" the Current Town Plan. Photo Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



Fig. 27: The Companies Today. Photo Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum

### From the Audio Presentation

*Well, what was needed was a new municipality.*

*This was finally achieved on April 1, 1950 when the municipality of "Waldkraiburg" was founded.*

*The Industriegemeinschaft (association of industrial companies) still exists today. It continues to be involved also in social and cultural issues. The exhibition in Bunker 29 is an example for this engagement.*

*At the end, brass music can be heard, played on instruments built by "Miraphone", a Waldkraiburg company.*



## 7. The Open-Air Exhibition

The outside area was laid out with original remains of the gunpowder factory. They have been moved, so they are not in their original position.



Fig. 28: One Man Bunker. Photo: private.  
© Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



Fig. 29: Factory Telephone Photo: private.  
© Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



Fig. 30: Factory Telephone from the Collection in the Town Museum. Photo Ulrich Schreiber. © Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



Fig. 31: The Rear Side of Bunker 29. Photo Ulrich Schreiber.  
© Waldkraiburg Town Museum.



In 1985, hence before the fall of the Berlin Wall, before the expression of the hopes associated with this event and before the emergence of new, global conflicts and threats, the Federal President at that time, Richard von Weizsäcker, said:

“DO NOT LET YOURSELVES BE FORCED INTO ENMITY AND HATRED OF OTHER PEOPLE,  
OF RUSSIANS OR AMERICANS,  
JEWS OR TURKS,  
OF ALTERNATIVES OR CONSERVATIVES,  
BLACKS OR WHITES.  
LEARN TO LIVE TOGETHER, NOT IN OPPOSITION TO EACH OTHER.”

(Richard von Weizsäcker on the 40th Anniversary of the End of World War II in Europe)

In the same speech he said, “Whoever refuses to remember the inhumanity is prone to new risks of infection”.

The three locations in the district of Mühl Dorf presented in this book are dedicated to remembering National Socialism. They describe what was “humanly possible” (Harald Welzer) here, where we are. They encourage visitors to consciously think about the people who lived at that time. Their everyday life, the armament projects that existed in the district, the annihilation that destroyed the lives of people who wanted to live in dignity and peace. By keeping the memory of the past alive, the three projects in Mühl Dorf, Mühl Dorfer Hart and Waldkraiburg also remind us of the responsibility each individual has for his own present and our shared future.