

Their names remain visible

Fourth Stolperstein laying in Meimbressen – Heinrich Neutze received a plaque of honour

by Wanda Curic

Meimbressen – In September 1935, SA men from Weimar and Fürstenwald forced their way into several Jewish homes in Meimbressen. The Goldwein family's house was not spared either. But Ruth Goldwein stood in the men's way and refused them entry. She was then taken away, interrogated and finally admitted to the Marburg State Mental Hospital. She died there a year later.

Today, a Stolperstein commemorates Ruth Goldwein. Together with the stones for her family members, it lies exactly where the family's house once stood. The building was demolished in 1965 to make way for the widening of the road between Meimbressen and Ehrsten.

The stories of the Goldweins and 24 other Jewish people from Meimbressen took centre stage at the fourth Stolperstein laying ceremony. Eighteen descendants of the Goldwein, Löwenstein and Frankenberg families had travelled there especially for the occasion. For them, it was a journey into the past – and at the same time a visible sign that the history of their families has not been forgotten.

Pupils from the Heinrich-Grupe School in Grebenstein spoke there about the people whose names are now once again visible in the townscape. They recounted their life stories and fates

Caption for large photo: Stumbling Stones for the Goldwein family: The family home was demolished when the access road from Meimbressen to Ehrsten was widened in 1965.

Caption for small photo: Honoured for their wide-ranging voluntary work: Mayor Maik Mackewitz (left) and Andreas Güttler, Chair of the District Council (right), presented Heinrich Neutze (centre) with the Kassel District's bronze plaque of honour. PHOTOS: WANDA CURIC

Elena Padva, director of the Sara Nussbaum Centre for Jewish Life in Kassel, provided musical accompaniment on the guitar during the laying ceremony. At the first site where a memorial stone was laid for the Goldwein family, Heinrich

Neutze, chairman of „Judaica in Meimbressen e.V.“, said: *„As long as we read and see the names, we can remember.“*

Lea Raps' visit demonstrated just how personal this memory can be. Her father, Willy Löwenstein, had lived and worked at the Frankenbergs' house for eight years, from 1925 to 1933 – as part of the family.

In 1934, Löwenstein fled to Israel and lived there until his death in 1989. Raps had come to Meimbressen with her daughter Dana Bracha and her husband Eliezer Raps.

„I know my father enjoyed living in Meimbressen because he took lots of photos,“ she said. The pictures capture many fond memories. Some had been taken by her father from the window of the Frankenbergs' house. For Raps, these photos remain a link to her father to this day.

„I'm also very happy that I can finally speak German again,“ she said. Her father had taught her the language. This, too, makes her feel connected to him.

Alongside the moving moments, the laying of the Stolpersteine held a special surprise in store for Henrich Neutze. Andreas Güttler, district chairman of the Kassel district, together with Mayor Maik Mackewitz, presented him with the Kassel district's plaque of honour.

In addition, „Judaica in Meimbressen e.V.“ received a grant of 1,4900 € from the Kassel District Cultural Foundation for the laying of the memorial stones.

„The laying of Stolpersteine is particularly worthy of support – especially against the backdrop of the current political situation,“ said Güttler.