

81 (06/2024)



# MEMORIA

MEMORY • HISTORY • EDUCATION



## WITH HELP FOR PRISONERS OF KL AUSCHWITZ. FAMILY MEMOIRS OF PROF. ANDRZEJ LINERT

NEW EXHIBITS IN  
THE COLLECTION OF  
THE STUTTHOF  
MUSEUM IN  
SZTUTOWO

TOUR FOR YOUNG  
PEOPLE AT THE  
ANNE FRANK  
HOUSE

ON VARIOUS  
FORMS OF  
COMMEMORATION  
IN PUBLIC SPACE" |  
REPORT

SURVIVOR  
WALDEMAR  
NOWAKOWSKI  
ADDED TO THE  
COLLECTIONS

SPECIAL AUDIO

"EVOKING  
MEMORY: A DEBATE

WORKS AND  
DOCUMENTS OF  
AUSCHWITZ

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

NEW EXHIBITS IN THE COLLECTION OF THE STUTTHOF  
MUSEUM IN SZTUTOWO

SPECIAL AUDIO TOUR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE  
AT THE ANNE FRANK HOUSE

WITH THE HELP FOR PRISONERS OF AUSCHWIT.  
FAMILY MEMOIRS OF PROF. ANDRZEJ LINERT

"EVOKING MEMORY: A DEBATE ON VARIOUS FORMS OF  
COMMEMORATION IN PUBLIC SPACE" | REPORT

ARTISTIC WORKS AND DOCUMENTS OF AUSCHWITZ  
SURVIVOR WALDEMAR NOWAKOWSKI ADDED TO THE  
COLLECTIONS OF THE MUSEUM

PERSONAL STORIES ABOUT THE LOOTING AND  
RESTITUTION OF JEWISH CULTURAL PROPERTY

SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE VARIA MAGAZINE ON THE 80TH  
JUBILEE OF THE STATE MUSEUM AT MAJDANEK

"WHAT VOICE DO WE HAVE?"

We invite all of you to work closely with us. We would be grateful to receive information about events, projects, publications, exhibitions, conferences or research that we should share with our readers. We also accept proposals for articles.

Paweł Sawicki, Editor-in-Chief

Our e-mail: [memoria@auschwitz.org](mailto:memoria@auschwitz.org)

Please do share information about this magazine with others, particularly via social media.

All editions: [memoria.auschwitz.org](http://memoria.auschwitz.org)

# NEW EXHIBITS IN THE COLLECTION OF THE STUTTHOF MUSEUM IN SZTUTOWO

The Stutthof Museum in Sztutowo came into possession of an extraordinary find. These are eleven chamotte discs discovered during cleaning and conservation works carried out in the former camp area. So far, the museum's collection has included only one such item, so the discovery of an entire collection of discs in one place, in addition in such good condition, is extremely important for the museum.

Crematorium discs were used in many concentration camps. Made of chamotte, they were characterized by high fire resistance. Cremated along with the deceased's body, they were supposed to confirm the authenticity of the ashes. The numbers stamped on the discs probably meant the number of the crematorium list.

The custom of marking ashes with chamotte discs used in the Third Reich probably dates back to the period before the outbreak of World War II. The regulations describing the procedures accompanying cremation are described in the Act of May 15, 1934. It discusses, among others, the storing of the ashes in a separate room, in officially closed urns. Then, the importance of special marking of ashes was emphasized, so that it would be possible to identify the deceased at any time.

In the case of cremation of bodies in German concentration camps, the Ordinance of Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler issued on February 28, 1940 for KL Sachsenhausen was applicable, but it was also applied in other concentration camps. The instructions list in detail what procedures must be followed in the cremation process. Each incineration had to be preceded by the issuance of a medical certificate confirming death. The bodies of those who died as a result of accidents, long illness, suicide, or were shot while escaping from the camp were previously subjected to autopsies. The bodies of the deceased were not released to their families, but cremated no later than within 24 hours of the written consent of the camp commandant. The crematorium manager was obliged to keep a crematorium list, which could be verified in light of the above-mentioned Ordinance. The inspection included compliance of the list of the deceased with the register of cremations, the aim of which was to detect possible cremations that were contrary to the regulations.

Further on in the Ordinance there are more detailed instructions regarding the cremation process itself. The bodies should be burned individually, placed in a wooden coffin. Coffins could not be equipped with non-flammable metal elements, handles, etc., and their size and properties should be adjusted so as not to constitute an obstacle to combustion. A special mark with the number of the list of the deceased had to be placed at the head of the coffin. The history of chamotte discs tied to corpses or placed in the mouths of the dead probably originated from this procedure. After incineration, the furnace chamber had to be cooled and metal parts had to be removed with a special magnet (e.g. dental details that had not been previously removed) and then the ashes had to be collected and placed together with a chamotte disc (so-called Aschenkapseln) in a metal urn. According to the above-mentioned Regulation, urns with parameters meeting the requirements of DIN 3198 were delivered by the "Topf & Söhne", the same company that was responsible for the construction of crematoria in the Buchenwald and Auschwitz-Birkenau camps.



---

# SPECIAL AUDIO TOUR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE ANNE FRANK HOUSE

---

**3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024** — Starting today, young visitors to the Anne Frank House can explore the museum with an audio tour created especially for them. A virtual Anne Frank guides young visitors through the front house and the Secret Annex in this audio tour, sharing her story. A new online video tour is available for those unable to visit the museum.

'Welcome to the Anne Frank House.

I am Anne Frank, and I will be your guide. It's great to have you here because my story is important. You'll soon find out why,' the new audio tour for young people begins. Young people have lent Anne Frank their voices for the different language versions and lead the visitors through the Anne Frank House.

## **Anne's Story**

As they walk through the rooms, visitors hear Anne Frank's story, set against the backdrop of the Second World War and the persecution of the Jews. At the entrance to the Secret Annex, for instance, they hear: 'You are about to enter our hiding place. I spent 761 days in this place. Every day, I was afraid of being arrested, but writing in my diary helped me a lot. Writing allowed me to vent. After a while, we placed a revolving bookcase in front of the entrance. It is the bookcase that you are looking at. We hoped it would keep the Nazis from finding us.'

The new audio tour is aimed at museum visitors aged 10 to 15 and is available in eight languages (Dutch, English, German, French, Hebrew, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese).

## **Video tour**

Not all young people have the opportunity to visit the Anne Frank House. Therefore, a new video tour has been created alongside the audio tour. This video tour is in English and can be seen from today 3 PM (CET), in 14 short episodes, on YouTube and Facebook. In the coming weeks, we will also share the episodes on Instagram and TikTok. This video tour guides young viewers through the Anne Frank House using footage filmed in the museum, with a virtual Anne Frank as their guide. The video tour is enhanced with historical images and clips from the Anne Frank video diary.

'The actors playing Anne Frank in the new audio and video tours address the young audiences directly. Anne Frank comes up close and personal. We were able to create these audio and video tours because of the 2022 Culture Fund Award, and we are immensely grateful to the Culture Fund for the award.'

Ronald Leopold, executive director of the Anne Frank House



# WITH HELP FOR PRISONERS OF KL AUSCHWITZ

In towns located in the vicinity of KL Auschwitz, established in June 1940, prohibited aid activities were undertaken spontaneously by the local population from the very beginning. With time, entire families and groups of people related to them, friends and acquaintances, participated in such activities. Rushing to help, they did so, risking their own health and lives. Aid activities were organized secretly, observing all the rules of conspiracy. People living in the Oświęcim region, but also on its outskirts were involved.

An extensive and well-documented collective work of 640 pages entitled "Ludzie dobrej woli. Księga pamięci mieszkańców Ziemi Oświęcimskiej niosących pomoc więźniom KL Auschwitz pod redakcją Henryka Świebockiego." Oświęcim 2005 ("People of Good Will. Book of remembrance of the residents of the Oświęcim region helping prisoners of KL Auschwitz edited by Henryk Świebocki") describes the form of aid provided to prisoners and the organizational shape of this phenomenon that developed as a result. It contains 1,216 names of good-hearted people who were selflessly involved in aid activities during the occupation. The evidence collected there raises no doubts and is an expression of the enormous commitment of the Polish population to the prisoners, a testimony to the patriotism and heroism of residents of the Oświęcim region.

Unfortunately, for understandable reasons, further areas located outside the Oświęcim region and its immediate outskirts were beyond the scope of researchers' interest. Aid was also organized there, as evidenced by the aid activities carried out from 1941 until the end of the camp's existence by several female residents of Komorowice, a village located on the northern outskirts of Bielsko.

Territorially, according to official data from October 1, 1943, the village included Komorowice Śląskie and Komorowice Krakowskie. Komorowice Krakowskie, with its German name Batzdorf Ost, was inhabited by 3,487 people. However, 972 people lived in Komorowice Śląskie - Batzdorf West<sup>1</sup>. The percentage of the Polish population in both parts of Komorowice during the years of occupation ranged from 90% to 98%, and this population structure remained without major changes until the end of the war. In this situation, during the entire period of the Nazi occupation in Komorowice, it was not possible to create a strong German base that would radiate its political and social culture.

However, a small group of Polish people, despite the radical repressive measures used by the Germans, took up the fight against the occupier. Examples included aid activities for prisoners of KL Auschwitz, carried out risking their own lives in the name of solidarity and deep moral and ethical beliefs by a group of women from Komorowice. Their disagreement with the prevailing social conditions and rebellion against the crimes committed resulted in the collection of food, medicines and clothing, as well as in mediating forbidden correspondence of the imprisoned.

koleżankami. For some, this activity was a consequence of their closest family members or friends staying in KL Auschwitz, for others, it was selfless support for people in need and an expression of disagreement with the prevailing injustice. Such reasons primarily motivated the

---

<sup>1</sup> As part of the so-called German Municipal Order (DGO), both of these districts were parts of a larger official district, the so-called Amtsbezirk, which also included Bestwina and Janowice.



Anna Moroń with her daughter Honorata in the first half of the 1940s. In the background is Mrs. Moroń's mother (Saduś), née Chowaniec. Andrzej Ślebarski's private archive.

several of their friends<sup>2</sup>.

Helena Kraus born on February 18, 1919 in Komorowice Krakowskie, was the daughter of Alojzy and Maria Kraus, née Gacek. Her father was, like Matylda Pikoń's father, a railway worker. After graduating from the five-grade local primary school in Komorowice Krakowskie, she attended Adam Asnyk's Secondary School in Biąta, where she passed her high school final exams in 1937. Years later, recalling her school years, she wrote: "Matylda was one of my best friends when I was young. Our friendship dates back to our school days. Although we did not attend the same school, we walked together every day to Biąta - where our schools were located. /.../ Then we went for walks and trips together. It turned out that we were interested in learning French and we started taking lessons and studying together"<sup>3</sup>.

Just before the war, in 1937-1939, she studied philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Unfortunately, the war interrupted her studies. During the occupation, she lived in Komorowice and worked in a factory. In the opinion of her godson Andrzej Ślebarski, "she was a person who was always selflessly helping others. With a great sense of aesthetics and good taste. Very consistent in implementing her resolutions. Extremely open to knowledge. Well-read. She knew German well"<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this sketch, the following accounts were used, collected in the Collection of Statements of the Archives of Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau: accounts by Józef Haszczewski, Aleksander Kalczyński, Anna and Józef Moroń, Stanisława Morończyk and Honorata Wawro, née Moroń. Additionally, Matylda Pikoń-Linert's account from October 1987, contained in the file of Matylda Pikoń, married name Linert, No. 269, Archive of the General Elżbieta Zawadzka Foundation, pp. 22-27. Archive of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Digital Library.

<sup>3</sup> Helena Kraus "Wspomnienie poświęcone Matyldzie Linertowej z d. Pikoń" ("Recollections dedicated to Matylda Linert, née Pikoń"). The typescript is in the author's collection, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Professor Andrzej Ślebarski to the author dated April 29, 2024. The author would like to thank the author of the letter for biographical data regarding Helena Kraus and her family involved in helping prisoners.

In turn, Matylida Linert was born on January 28, 1917 in Komorowice Krakowskie into a peasant family, the daughter of Konstanty Pikoń and Tekla Pikoń, née Pyś. From an early age, brought up in the spirit of Catholicism and hard work on the farm, as well as with a deep patriotic awareness, she began her education in 1923 at the local five-grade primary school in Komorowice Krakowskie. In the years 1931-1933 she attended Saint Hildegard's Private Teachers' Seminary in Biała, and then transferred to Queen Jadwiga's State Teachers' Seminary in Kęty, where she passed her high school final exams in 1936. Initially, she started working as a part-time teacher on September 1, 1937 at the Primary School in Komorowice Krakowskie.

During her high school years, from June 6 to July 5, 1935 she participated in a course organized by the State Office of Physical Education and Military Training in Garczyn near Kartuzy. She recalled the circumstances of her participation in it as follows: "My parents didn't want to let me go, so I saved for the whole year (PLN 10) and crocheted scarves. I said that I had been selected by the school and that it was free of charge. I came from a village where girls were not educated, but were intended to live in a family. At home during the holidays I had to work on the farm."<sup>5</sup>

Fascinated by the atmosphere during the FMT (Female Military Training) camp, the following year she participated in a third-level instructor course at the camp organized as part of the central training conducted by the Organization for the Training of Women for Home Defence and received the qualifications of a poviast instructor of Physical Education and Military Training as well as permit no. 308. Continuing her interest in state defence, in the summer of 1936 she additionally completed a general military course of the 2nd degree of Military Training and received the officer rank of "Guide" with permit no. 133, issued on September 15, 1936 by the Poviast Military Training Command in Biała of the 3rd Podhale Rifle Regiment. For this reason, in the years 1936-1939, as an instructor of Female Military Training, she conducted training for the FMT troop, of which she was the commander, existing at the Seminary for Preschool Teachers. She conducted similar training at the Vocational School of Cutting and Sewing in Biała, where she conducted anti-gas defence and first aid classes. She conducted further training during the summer months at camps in Garczyn, Redłowo near Gdynia and in Spała near Warsaw. At the same time, a year before the outbreak of the war, she co-organized the consolidation of a troop in Istebna.

The mystery of her involvement in FMT activities during the occupation is revealed in her memoirs written on November 5, 1974: "The drill training developed in me a soldier's attitude, boldness and energy in expressing myself. I got rid of shyness and fear, and gained self-confidence and the desire to imitate and impress others with my actions and dedication to others."<sup>6</sup> This last statement of hers seems to contain an answer to her need to constantly act for those in need, regardless of unfavourable circumstances and her own safety. At the same time, answering the question about how she assessed the influence of FMT on shaping her personality, she further noted: "It stimulated my self-esteem and I got rid of the feeling of inferiority."

In the months before the outbreak of World War II, in August 1939, she participated as part of Female Military Training in Biała in the preparations of the "Emergency Service" rally under the command of the head of FMT, Elżbieta Zawadzka, pseudonym "Zo." Therefore, when war broke out, as part of the FMT Social Emergency Service, she was assigned to auxiliary military service and received an order to assist in the evacuation of the civilian population in Komorowice. After the war, Elżbieta Zawadzka wrote in an opinion piece issued for her: "On my orders she remained in Komorowice after the Germans entered. From XI 39 to XII 40 she was a member of the Silesian underground PWK network, led by me on the orders of Janina Karaś, the chief of O

---

<sup>5</sup> Matylida Pikoń, married name Linert. Questionnaire regarding service in FMT, November 5, 1974, p. 11; Survey on the educational work of FMT, p. 2. File of Matylida Pikoń, married name Linert, No. 269, Collections of the General Elżbieta Zawadzka Foundation. Archive of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Digital Library. <https://kpbc.umk.pl/dlibra/publication/201065/edition/202732> [Access May 22, 2024].

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 11: <https://kpbc.umk.pl/dlibra/publication/201065/edition/202732> [Access May 22, 2024].

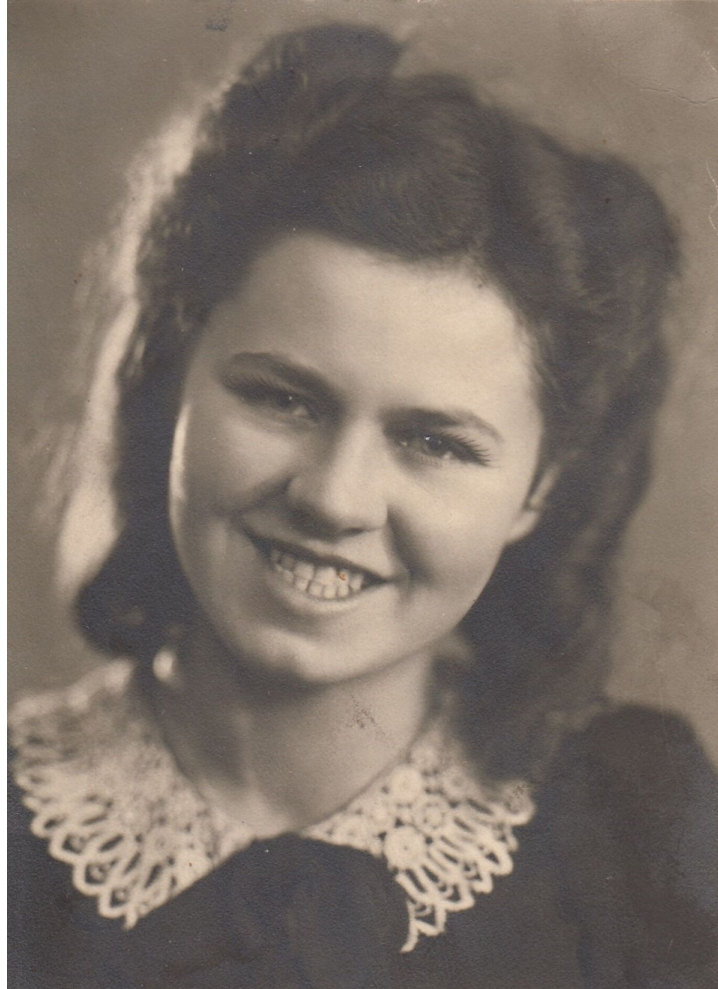


Matylda Linert in the  
post-war 1940s.  
Author's private archive.

---

<sup>7</sup> Lech Krzyżanowski states that "on September 4, 1939, the Germans closed the schools in Komorowice." See Wacław Gójniczek, Lech Krzyżanowski, Jerzy Sperka: "Komorowice Krakowskie, Komorowice Śląskie. Dzieje dwóch miejscowości, potem czterech, a dzisiaj dzielnic(y) Bielska-Białej" ("Komorowice Krakowskie, Komorowice Śląskie. The history of two towns, then four, and today a district(s) of Bielsko-Biała"). Bielsko-Biała 2024, p. 238.

Helena Kraus w latach  
okupacji hitlerowskiej.  
Archiwum Andrzeja  
Ślebarskiego.



Stanisław Stanclik, who worked in one of the printing houses in Krakow, supplied her with the necessary textbooks and books from the General Government. He carried them across the border of the General Government and left them with the railway guard in Inwałd. Helena Krywult picked them up there. Schools officially resumed in September 1943, when they were organized for Polish children on the outskirts of the village in Jan Pyka's house. Teaching sessions took place until January 8, 1945<sup>8</sup>.

However, most of her time and effort during the occupation were spent organizing help for prisoners of KL Auschwitz working in Bór-Brzeszcze. The first prisoners arrived there in January 1941 and worked, among others, on the construction of a flood embankment along the Vistula River. Others widened and extended drainage ditches running from the meadows and pastures located in Bór towards the Vistula, and also cleaned ponds and bred fish, horses, cows and pigs. With time, with the planned expansion of the concentration camp in the hamlet of Brzeszcze Zieleniec, prisoners in extremely difficult conditions subjected to slave labour were forced to dismantle houses and barns of displaced Poles. The material obtained in this way was used to build the camp in Birkenau. The hungry and destitute received help, among others, from those living in Brzeszcze at 131 Nazielce Street - Anna and Józef Moroń. Their house was located near the emerging camp in Birkenau and was not subject to displacement<sup>9</sup>. Situated away from other houses and in the vicinity of the camp that was to be built, it allowed its residents to be in contact with working prisoners, especially since the latter stored their work tools in their barn.

Anna Moroń was related through the Ślebarski family to Helena Kraus living in Komorowice.

---

<sup>8</sup> This information requires verification because Lech Krzyżanowski writes that during the occupation, schools for Polish children in Komorowice "were not opened." See W. Gojniczek and others. ..., op. cit. p. 238.

<sup>9</sup> Recollections of Józef Moroń, born on November 2, 1900 in Bór and of Anna Moroń, née Saduś, of January 2, 1964 in Nazielleńce, p. 3. APMA-B. Collection of Testimonies, vol. 69, p. 34 (see "Ludzie dobrej woli. Księga pamięci mieszkańców Ziemi Oświęcimskiej niosących pomoc więźniom KL Auschwitz pod redakcją Henryka Świebockiego" ("People of Good Will. Book of remembrance of the residents of the Oświęcim region helping prisoners of KL Auschwitz edited by Henryk Świebocki"). Oświęcim 2005, pp. 511-512.)

---

<sup>10</sup> Helena Kraus "Wspomnienie poświęcone Matyldzie..." ("Recollections dedicated to Matylda..."), op. cit., pp. 1-2

<sup>11</sup> Accounts by Józef Moroń born November 2, 1900 in Bór and Anna Moroń..., op. cit. APMA-B. Collection of Testimonies, vol. 69, p. 4

<sup>12</sup> The mentioned couple of the teacher and the organist was Matylda and her husband Antoni Linert. Accounts by Anna and Józef Moroń from August 2, 1964 in Nazielańce, APMA-B. Collection of Testimonies, vol. 69, p. 4

<sup>13</sup> Helena Kraus "Wspomnienie poświęcone Matyldzie" ("Recollections dedicated to Matylda...") p. 2.

The process of delivering aid itself was not easy and carried the risk of arrest. Matyllda, by bribing guards and kapos, from January 1941 to November 1943, delivered food, medicines, injections, warm underwear and sometimes writing utensils every week. In the winter, she also delivered socks, earmuffs, warm shirts and sweaters she got from the residents of Komorowice. Helena Kraus, a relative of the Moroń family, took part in these activities and "delivered food stamps, food, medicines and clothes for prisoners"<sup>14</sup>. Her circle of friends also included a teacher Stanisława Morończyk who lived in Brzeszcze, at 3 Kosynierów Street<sup>15</sup>. The latter, when the Gestapo began to be interested in her aid activities, hid for two winter months in 1942 in H. Kraus's apartment in Komorowice<sup>16</sup>. Moreover, in light of M. Linert's accounts, a pre-war employee of the Education Department in Biała, Jadwiga Błotko, née Kołodziejczyk from the Komorowice area, as well as Aniela Puczka and the above-mentioned Maria Kamińska, living in Komorowice Śląskie, with her daughter Władysława, whose brother was imprisoned in KL Auschwitz, were involved in these activities<sup>17</sup>.

These young women from Komorowice, rushing to help prisoners from KL Auschwitz, when they appeared in Brzeszcze, were diminutively called "Ladies from Bielsko" by prisoners who did not know their names. As Helena Kraus wrote, all of them, according to their means and time, delivered the following to the Moroń's house: "bread, sugar, tea, coffee, margarine, sometimes cold meats and butter. Because I worked in a factory, I could only go there on Sundays. Matyllda was registered as a helper on her parents' farm, so she could travel more often. That's why she went there most often. Unfortunately, it lasted only about two years, because someone probably from the prisoner supervision reported it to the camp authorities."<sup>18</sup> Years later, Matyllda Linert described this event in her accounts from November 5, 1974: "In 1943, I almost fell into the hands of the Gestapo when I brought food to Mrs. Moroń. After unpacking and storing the food and food stamps in the potato cellar, I was in the apartment. Then three prisoners I knew and a kapo, but not one I knew, entered the apartment. I said hello to the prisoners, and when I spoke to the kapo in German, he looked at me with a menacing and evil look. Embarrassed, I sat down next to the stove and started adding wood to the fire. When the kapo took the keys to the shed and the prisoners went to get their work tools, I secretly escaped to the Jawiszowice railway station. The kapo informed the camp authorities in Oświęcim. Immediately the police arrived on horses. A search was carried out at Mrs. Moroń's place and food supplies and food stamps were found. Mrs. Moroń was arrested and sent to the camp in Oświęcim. She did not reveal who provided her with food and medicines. She took the blame. The daughter, Honorata, was brought in, but her description did not match mine. She was a brunette and 15 years younger than me. They were looking for a light blonde, saying that "the Holy Spirit did not multiply as much food"<sup>19</sup>.

The three men whom Matyllda Linert greeted were, according to one of them, locked in a bunker within the camp for three days, without access to food or water. They emerged half-conscious. "One of them, named Józef Haszczewski, told me this when, after we regained independence, he came to Komorowice to thank us "girls from Bielsko" for the food and medicines that were secretly transported to the camp. Then he received a coupon for clothes from Helena Kraus and he got a job, and moved to Bielsko-Biała, 8/30 Spółdzielców Street,

---

<sup>14</sup> "Ludzie dobrej woli. Księga pamięci mieszkańców Ziemi Oświęcimskiej niosących pomoc więźniom KL Auschwitz pod redakcją Henryka Świebickiego" ("People of Good Will. Book of remembrance of the residents of the Oświęcim region helping prisoners of KL Auschwitz edited by Henryk Świebicki"), Oświęcim 2005, p. 445.

<sup>15</sup> See Stanisława Morończyk. "Ludzie dobrej woli. Księga pamięci mieszkańców Ziemi Oświęcimskiej niosącej pomoc więźniom KL Auschwitz pod re redakcją Henryka Świebickiego" ("People of Good Will. Book of remembrance of the residents of the Oświęcim region helping prisoners of KL Auschwitz edited by Henryk Świebicki"), Oświęcim 2005, pp. 197-198.

<sup>16</sup> Accounts submitted on November 18, 1982 by Stanisława Morończyk, born December 4, 1920 in Brzeszcze, a teacher by profession, living in Brzeszcze, 3 Kosynierów Street, about her participation in the resistance movement. APMA-B. Collection of Testimonies, vol. 99, pp. 88-90.

<sup>17</sup> It was Konstanty Kamiński, born on September 16, 1920, in Komorowice, a turner by profession, prisoner number 1406. Transferred in 1944 to KL Ravensbrück, he died there. In the cited work "Ludzie dobrej woli..." ("People of Good Will...") the authors write that his mother and sister were "probably" residents of Brzeszcze. See p. 295.

<sup>18</sup> Helena Kraus "Wspomnienie poświęcone Matyldzie..." ("Recollections dedicated to Matyllda..."), op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Accounts by Matyllda Linert, née Pikoń from November 5, 1974, residing in Komorowice 447, powiat Bielsko-Biała, pp. 16-17. File of Matyllda Pikoń, married name Linert, No. 269, Collections of the Generał Elżbieta Zawadzka Foundation. Archive of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Digital Library. <https://kpbc.umk.pl/dlibra/publication/201065/edition/202732> [Access May 22, 2024].



Panorama of Komorowice Krakowskie from the area of Komorowice Śląskie against the background of the Beskid Niski mountains visible in the distance. Photo from the NAC collection of 1937.

---

<sup>20</sup> Accounts by Matylda Linert, included in the FMT Service Questionnaire from November 5, 1974, p. 24. File of Matylda Pikoń, married name Linert, No. 269, Collections of the General Elżbieta Zawadzka Foundation. Archive of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Digital Library.



From left, Władysław Ślebarski, Helena Kraus, Helena Ślebarska, with Zygmunt Kraus - Helena's brother - at the back. Family archive of Andrzej Ślebarski.

As a side note to the information about Mrs. Moroń's imprisonment, let us note that she was probably arrested twice. Aleksander Kalczyński, a member of the fishermen commando, recalled in his accounts: "One day, Lutek Włodarczyk made it clear that Mrs. Moroń was having problems harbouring escapees from the camp. The situation ended well, but how terrified we were when we found out that Mrs. Moroń had been arrested and was in block eleven. Even the SS who went with us to the Moroń's house, told us what to say and lie if we were interrogated at Politische Abteilung. They were more afraid than we were. A few days later, my friend Lutek, while in Stamlager, saw Mrs. Moroń being released from block eleven."<sup>21</sup>

The young daughter of the Moroń's family, Honorata, years later, speaking in her accounts about the help provided by the residents of Komorowice, at the beginning mentioning Helena Kraus, said: "She is a very merited person." Speaking about Matylda Linert, she said: "Matylda Linert from Komorowice also brought us food. She also personally helped prisoners, although she had no family or friends in the camp."<sup>22</sup> Being aware of the death of several young residents of Komorowice: Józef Niesatki, Józef and Władysław Habdas in KL Auschwitz had significant meaning. Local teacher Wiktor Błotko died in a similar camp in Mauthausen. In this situation, it is commonly believed that the driving force behind young women's aid activities was a deep sense of injustice and rebellion against images of senseless violence, tinged with the groundless sadism of the torturers, for whom basic human needs were also an opportunity for bestiality. Matylda recalled: "I witnessed when the camp inspection found the prisoners eating, forced them to throw the bread and soup into the Vistula. They often ran into the shed and looked for food there. It was then that I bought a padlock with two keys to lock the tool

<sup>21</sup> Accounts by Aleksander Kalczyński attached to the documents of M. Pikoń-Linert, pp. 45-51. APMA-B. Collection of Testimonies, vol. 50, pp. 9-14. File of Matylda Pikoń, married name Linert, No. 269, Collections of the General Elżbieta Zawadzka Foundation. Archive of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Digital Library.

<sup>22</sup> Accounts from October 27, 2004 by Honorata Wawro, née Moroń, born January 2, 1928 Brzeszcze-Nazieleńce, residing in Brzeszcze-Nazieleńce, 6 Młyńska Street, p. 7. APMA-B. Collection of Testimonies, vol. 158, p. 97.

---

<sup>23</sup> Accounts by Matyllda Linert, included in the FMT Service Questionnaire from November 5, 1974, p. 25. File of Matyllda Pikoń, married name Linert, No. 269, Collections of the General Elżbieta Zawadzka Foundation. Archive of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Digital Library.

<sup>24</sup> Accounts by Matyllda Pikoń-Linert from October 1987. File of Matyllda Pikoń, married name Linert, No. 269, WSK, p. 33. Collections of the General Elżbieta Zawadzka Foundation. Archive of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Digital Library.

<sup>25</sup> After the war, Władysława Kamińska lived in Bielsko and her married name was Kózka.

<sup>26</sup> Helena Kraus "Wspomnienie poświęcone Matyldzie..." ("Recollections dedicated to Matyllda..."), op. cit., p. 2.

In Kalczyński's accounts, we find a particularly dramatic recollection about the stay of several members of the fishermen commando in another concentration camp in Germany. "While in Oranienburg in the final phase of the war, I met Stanisław Banachowski from our fishermen commando, who was extremely weary from hunger. He recalled our shared experiences in Oświęcim in the fishermen commando and said: Olek, do you remember Mrs. Moroń, what good bread she had. Why didn't we use her help and escape from the camp?"<sup>27</sup>

When KL Auschwitz was evacuated in January 1945, several prisoners managed to escape and hid in the Moroń family's barn. According to Honorata Wawro's accounts, there were probably eight of them. Years later, she only remembered the names Burak, Klisiński, Kaczmarek, Kobusiński, Kobuszewski from Sosnowiec<sup>28</sup>. Prisoners called Anna Moroń "Auntie Moroń". She was born on May 3, 1900 (May 24, 1900), died on September 17, 1978. Many former prisoners came to her funeral.

Helena Kraus, in turn, lived in Warsaw at Inlandska Street until her retirement. She didn't start a family. Until 1995, she worked as a clerk in the Ministry of Light Industry, and then she returned to Komorowice. Here in her family home at 10 Czereśniowa Street, she died on February 28, 2008. She was buried at the local parish cemetery. On October 16, 1943 Matylda Pikoń married Antoni Linert and after liberation, she worked as a teacher at Primary School No. 1 in Komorowice Krakowskie. She enthusiastically joined in its reactivation, collecting library collections scattered among the residents, running a school theatre, and taking an active part in the work of the Polish Teachers' Union. At the same time, improving her skills and qualifications, in 1960 she completed a two-year Teacher Training School in Racibórz in the field of Polish philology. From 1965, she served as a probation officer and social inspector at the District Court in Department IV for Juveniles in Bielsko-Biała. She cared for difficult youth



In the middle, Matilda Pikoń, née Linert, on her wedding day on 16 October 1943, and her closest friends. Third from right, Helena Kraus.

<sup>27</sup> Accounts by Aleksander Kalczyński attached to the documents of M. Pikoń-Linert, pp. 45-51. File of Matylda Pikoń, married name Linert, No. 269, Collections of the General Elżbieta Zawadzka Foundation. Archive of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Digital Library and APMA-B. Collection of Testimonies, vol. 50, pp. 9-14.

<sup>28</sup> Accounts submitted on October 27, 2003 by Honorata Wawro, née Moroń, born January 2, 1928 in Brzeszcze-Nazieleńce, 6 Młyńska Street. APMA-B. Zespół Oświadczenia, vol. 158, pp. 91-106.



The Pikoń family at the dawn of the 1930s. Seated are Tekla and Konstanty Pikoń with the youngest Eugenia between them. Standing from left are Stanisław, Kazimierz and Matylda.

\* Andrzej Linert born on 25 August 1944 in Bielsko-Biała in a family of teachers. He graduated from the University of Silesia in Katowice in 1969. University in Katowice. He obtained his PhD in 1977 at the University of Łódź under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Jerzy Starnawski, and his habilitation at the Faculty of Humanities of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. From 1999 to 2018, he worked at the Institute of Information Science and Library Science at the Faculty of Management and Social Communication of the Jagiellonian University, where he was head of the Department of the Book and its Function in Social Communication from 2002. Researcher of the history of theatre life of Upper Silesia and Zagłębie Dąbrowskie. Author of 18 books and over 150 monographic scientific and popular texts on drama theatres, puppet theatres and non-professional companies, as well as biographies of actors, directors and theatre life animators important for the region. The President of the Republic of Poland Bronisław Komorowski awarded him the title of Professor of Humanities on 9 September 2013. Among other things, he is the author of the book: Jerzy Adam Brandhuber and his paintings of Auschwitz, published by the Auschwitz Museum Publishing House in 2021.

=====

The author would like to express his sincere thanks to Mr Szymon Kowalski from the Archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum for his help during the stage of collecting the materials as well as their verification

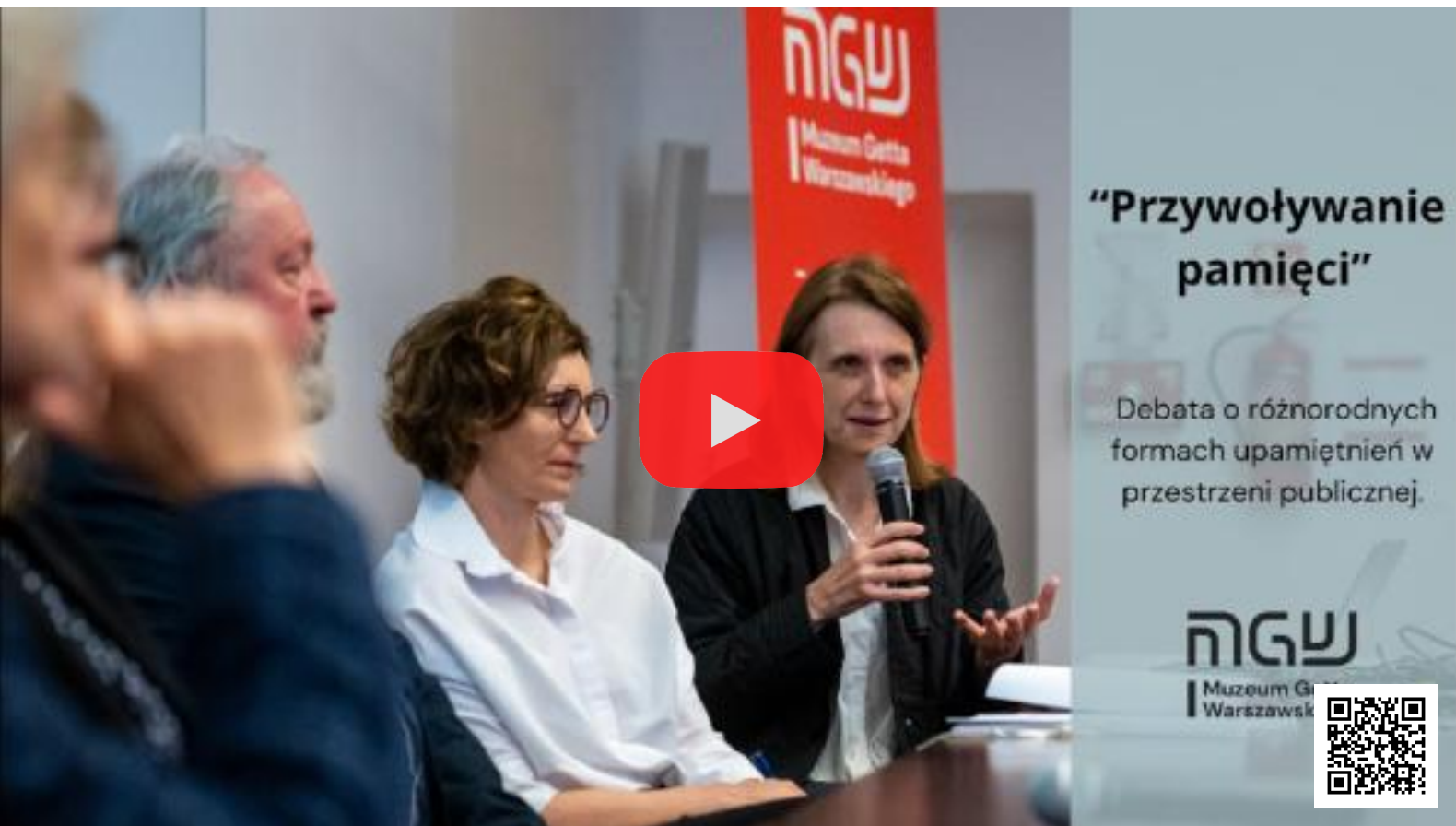
# "EVOKING MEMORY: A DEBATE ON VARIOUS FORMS OF COMMEMORATION IN PUBLIC SPACE" | REPORT

The debate "Evoking memory: a debate on various forms of commemoration in public space" is behind us, an event accompanying the exhibition "Things from the Underground City. Architectural visions around the commemoration of Miła 18" at the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology.

In the summer of 2022, archaeological research began at the intersection of Miła and Dubois streets, which is a joint project of the Warsaw Ghetto Museum, the Christopher Newport University and the Aleksander Gieysztor Academy in Pułtusk - a branch of Vistula University. The basements of two 19th-century tenement houses located at the pre-war addresses Muranowska 39 and Muranowska 41 were uncovered.

In the surviving basements, various items related to everyday and religious life of the inhabitants were discovered, such as tefillin, fragments of Jewish prayer books, and vessels for ritual hand washing. Over five thousand artifacts were excavated, these objects remain in the care of the Museum and will be included in the permanent exhibition.

The exposed parts of the basements constitute an extraordinary place for two reasons. Firstly, due to the close proximity of the so-called Anielewicz's Bunker, of which they could have been



C:\Users\hznok\Desktop\kopiec-05 prezentacja\018 MZW\_wystawa\_PM\_social\_1200x625px-1920x1080.jpg [24/24]

## Rzeczy z podziemnego miasta

Architektoniczne wizje wokół upamiętnienia Miłej 18

## Objects from the Underground City

Architectural Modes of Commemoration of 18 Miła Street

Odwiedź wystawę  
18.04-16.05.2024

MGW  
Muzeum Getta  
Warszawskiego

Politechnika  
Warszawska

Ministerstwo Kultury  
i Dziedzictwa Narodowego

ASB  
Architektura & Biznes



understandable interpretation for visitors, while integrating them into the urban fabric. Discussing various approaches used around the world, from leaving the ruins outdoors to securing them with a permanent structure, Professor Kobyliński drew attention to numerous European solutions that not only turn out to be ineffective, but may also accelerate the degradation of monuments. The solution suggested by Professor Kobyliński, which allows controlling environmental conditions and making Miła 18 available to visitors, is a full protective structure.

Later in the debate, the issue of understanding and interpreting the ruins and the resulting need for a thoughtful approach to planning the commemorative space in order to properly integrate it into the fabric of Warsaw, highlight the importance of the discovered basements as a fragment, a section of the underground city (and not a museum object) and place as great emphasis as possible on their educational potential, were raised.

Dr Eleonora Bergman, PhD, particularly emphasized the value of archaeological finds as a source of knowledge about the history of the Warsaw Ghetto, knowledge that is not common knowledge even among the inhabitants of Warsaw.

Dr Maria Ferenc, PhD, from the Jewish Historical Institute spoke about the tension between typicality and uniqueness of Miła 18, and the need to take this tension into account in the process of designing a memorial site, emphasizing the importance of context - both the historical context and the context provided by the space in which it is located.

Archaeological discoveries in Muranów, although unusual to observers, are not unique to the area. Almost everywhere in Muranów, wherever excavations would be carried out, perhaps similar relics would be found.

Professor Małgorzata Rozbicka from the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Technology agreed with the importance of preserving the discovered basements at Miła 18 as a memorial site, emphasizing the need to properly present it with an architectural enclosure. She suggested that it should encourage passers-by to visit the space, without overwhelming it with its monumentality.

### **What's next with Miła 18?**

The archaeological research carried out in 2022 was a breakthrough moment: for the Museum, of course, but also - we deeply believe - for the whole of Warsaw. A fragment of the underground city, the basements of two tenement houses were discovered, and several thousand artifacts were excavated. Realizing the uniqueness of the place, the Museum decided not to bury the exposed basements temporarily and to take steps to preserve them and turn them into a memorial site, a material

testimony to the history and heritage of Warsaw Jews. Archaeological research at the former Miła 18 was carried out on the eve of the 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and at the same time when it was emphasized that the last witnesses of those events were passing away. The decision not to bury the



# ARTISTIC WORKS AND DOCUMENTS OF AUSCHWITZ SURVIVOR WALDEMAR NOWAKOWSKI ADDED TO THE COLLECTIONS OF THE MUSEUM

---

**A valuable collection of artistic works by the Auschwitz Survivor Waldemar Nowakowski, along with camp documents related to him and his wife, has been added to the Collections of the Museum.**

Twenty-six small watercolors and ink drawings came from the artist's grandson, Paweł Huczowski. These works are part of a larger series, dozens of which have been in the Museum's Collections since the 1980s and 1990s. They depict various camp events and situations, creating a unique record of a prisoner's experiences in the camp. This collection fills a significant gap in the iconography related to the lives and fates of prisoners in the German Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz, providing a glimpse into scenes behind the barbed wire.

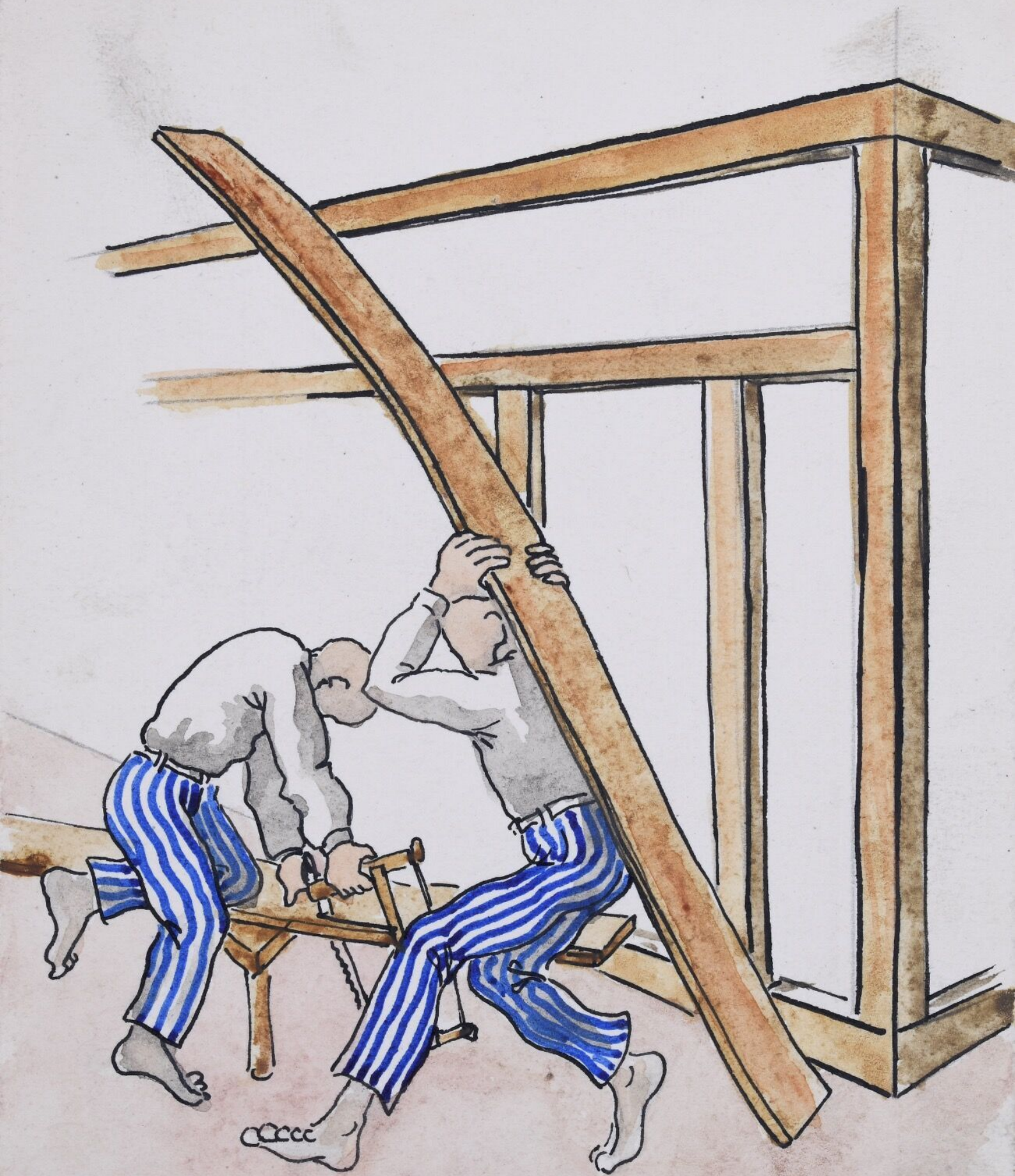
All the watercolors were given by the artist's immediate family (earlier by his wife Maria, also a Survivor, and later by their daughter Ewa) as works made in the camp. Some of these watercolors may indeed have been created in the camp, as the artist worked as a writer and later a block leader in the camp hospital, where access to paper and writing materials, possibly even paints, was possible.

"The vividness of some scenes, the meticulous execution, and the allegorical nature of many of them suggest that most were created after the artist regained his freedom. However, this does not diminish the value of these works or their significance as evidence of crimes and educational material, as they were created by an eyewitness to those events," said Agnieszka Sieradzka, an art historian at the Museum's Collections.

The drawings include scenes from the camp hospital, torture, executions, slave labor beyond one's strength, hunger, as well as everyday camp life: prisoners on bunks, reading letters from home, and searching for food scraps in emptied containers.

"The ink and watercolor drawings on postcard-sized cardboard are kept in a similar style. The prisoners, all similar in appearance without individual features, are shown against a sparse background composed of distinctive elements of the camp landscape. This gives the artworks a universal and symbolic message. Some scenes are framed in symmetrical arches and circles. One can clearly see the hand of a graphic artist with a tendency for summarization and decorativeness, despite the cruelty of the subject," added Agnieszka Sieradzka.

Along with the artworks, camp documents were also given to the Museum. These include







---

# PERSONAL STORIES ABOUT THE LOOTING AND RESTITUTION OF JEWISH CULTURAL PROPERTY

---

**What is it like when everything is taken from you? Not just your rights and freedom, but also your possessions? The dual exhibition *Looted* is about the loss of Jewish cultural property in the Netherlands. Eight personal stories make palpable what the theft of cultural assets means under inhumane conditions. Because objects are more than just material. They reflect your identity and have emotional significance.**

For survivors and heirs of those Jews who were killed, the end of the Holocaust marked the start of the long search for their possessions. And the bitter struggle to recover both their property and their dignity.

*Looted* brings the audience into a world of children's drawings, photos, ceremonial objects and books. First-hand documents and interviews convey the underlying narrative: the pain that victims continue to feel to this day.

The exhibition also tells the story of Dési Goudstikker-Halban (1912-1996). Her husband, art dealer Jacques Goudstikker, died in 1940 on their escape to England.

After the war, she struggled for many years to recover his art collection from the Dutch state. Goudstikker's flourishing art business had been stripped bare by the Nazis during the war.

Dési Goudstikker found herself face-to-face with an uncompromising Dutch government and the stubborn bureaucratic officialdom of the organisations that lay in her path. Having pursued her case for many years, the exhausted heiress eventually agreed to settle.

In the Jewish Museum, the story of publisher Leo Isaac Lessmann is on display. Lessmann was a passionate collector of Jewish ritual objects. He owned about 1000 ritual objects, which were very dear to him because they represented and passed on Jewish spiritual values and traditions for him.

Before the war, he managed to send his collection to Amsterdam and flee to Palestine himself. In Amsterdam, most of his collection was stolen by the Nazis.

After the war, Lessmann had to move heaven and earth to receive financial compensation from the German state for the loss of his collection. He ultimately received half of its total value. The objects themselves have still not been found.

In the exhibition, we extensively reflect on these and other stories. In the Jewish Museum, the exhibition focuses on the loss of books and ritual objects. In the



< What's on

Language Login Giftshop

# LOOTED

Personal stories about the looting and restitution of Jewish cultural property

# SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE VARIA MAGAZINE ON THE 80TH JUBILEE OF THE STATE MUSEUM AT MAJDANEK

**In October 1944, just three months after the liquidation of the Majdanek German Nazi concentration camp, a Museum was established on its former grounds. It was the world's first Memorial dedicated to the victims of World War II.**

Ever since then the State Museum at Majdanek has been ceaselessly cultivating the memory of the prisoners that were detained at the camp. It is done through a diverse activity in the fields of exhibitions, education, research, and through our everyday care exerted over the tangible remnants of the camp. Today it is Europe's only institution that encompasses three memorials located on the former German death camp sites.

On our 80th jubilee, we want to look into the past, analyse our previous endeavours, to recall the Museum's difficult beginnings affected by the wartime and post-wartime tides. We also wish to share our plans for the future. That is why the latest issue of our Varia magazine includes topics that tackle the Museum's heritage, its history, internal changes held throughout its functioning, challenges we have faced, as well as the projects that we are planning for the forthcoming years.

## Table of contents:

Anna Wójcik

"Embarking on the Endeavour of Utmost Political Importance for the Reviving Polish State and the World Entire" – Creation of the State Museum at Majdanek

State Museum at Majdanek – Then and Now: Interview with Tomasz Kranz, the Director of the State Museum at Majdanek by Aleksandra Skrabek

Wojciech Lenarczyk

Historical Research in the State Museum at Majdanek,

On the Educational Activities of the State Museum at Majdanek Interview with Wiesław Wysok, the Museum Deputy Director by Nadia Sola-Sałamacha

Aleksandra Skrabek

From Forgotten Extermination Sites to Restoring the Memory of the Holocaust. Museums in Bełżec and Sobibór

On Preserving and Securing the Camp Remnants Interview with Grzegorz Plewik, the Museum Deputy Director by Agnieszka Kowalczyk-Nowak

Marta Grudzińska

# varia



Wydawca / Publisher: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku / State Museum at Majdanek

# "WHAT VOICE DO WE HAVE?"

## INVITATION TO AN INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE FOR DESCENDANTS OF FORMER CONCENTRATION CAMP PRISONERS

**As part of the project "What voice do we have?", the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum invites descendants of former Sachsenhausen concentration camp prisoners to a networking meeting.**

One focus will be on the question of how the voices and perspectives of subsequent generations can be made visible in memorial and educational work and what opportunities there are for descendants to become active and get involved. There will also be the opportunity to get to know the site, to engage with their own family histories and to discuss them with other descendants.

We cordially invite any descendants of former prisoners of Sachsenhausen concentration camp and its satellite camps to take part in the exchange. It is not a prerequisite for participation that they have already dealt in depth with their own family history.

The meeting will take place from 13 to 16 September 2024 at the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum.

Accommodation in double rooms and meals will be provided at the Sachsenhausen International Youth Meeting Centre "Haus Szczypiorski" in Oranienburg. A fee of €30 per person is charged for participation. Travel expenses can be partially reimbursed.

The language of the meeting will be English.

Translation will be possible to a limited extent.

We look forward to receiving registrations for the networking meeting **by 1 July 2024** at [kuehne\[at\]gedenkstaette-sachsenhausen.de](mailto:kuehne[at]gedenkstaette-sachsenhausen.de).

Places are limited.

Further coordination, information, and the program will follow registration.





# EMORIA

MEMORY • HISTORY • EDUCATION

**memoria.auschwitz.org**

**PUBLISHER**

Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Paweł Sawicki

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**

Agnieszka Juskowiak-Sawicka

**EDITED BY**

Bartosz Bartyzel  
Marek Lach  
Łukasz Lipiński

**CONTACT**

memoria@auschwitz.org

