

Program for the Symposium on "Kultur und Geschichte Gehörloser" (KuGG)
in Bonn, June 3-5, 2005

**60 years after 1945 –
With Deaf History into the future**

**Friday and Saturday, June 3rd, 4th 2005
Various Exhibitions in the Gustav Heinemann-Haus:**

An art exhibition with paintings from **Rudolf Werner**, the famous deaf painter from Wuppertal, is open for viewing during the entire symposium. His pictures display Deaf people's growth of confidence during the last two decades.

Lothar Scharf will present various original documents and items from the period of Nazi-Germany. He is the author of the recently published book: „Gehörlose in der Hitlerjugend und Taubstummenanstalt Bayreuth“ (Deaf in the Hitler Youth and Institute for Deaf and Dumb in Bayreuth).

A display from **Prof. Renate Fischer**, University of Hamburg, will be set up with pictures and documents from the Israeli Institute for the Deaf and Dumb in Berlin (1873-1942) and of deaf Jews in earlier Germany. These materials are taken from **Nicola Galliner** and her group's research from Berlin.

Friday, June 3rd, 2005:

Helmut Vogel (Hamburg) and **Jochen Muhs** (Berlin)

The End of World War II - 60 years ago

World War II was one of the cruelest wars in human history. During 1939 -1945 German troops, under the German dictator, Hitler, and his supporters, ravaged through most parts of Europe producing a lot of suffering. They left behind massive destruction in Eastern Europe in particular. In 1943 the allied forces stopped the German advance and succeeded in pushing them back.

The German people suffered from the ruin and desolation the Nazis left behind. Bombs had destroyed many cities. Millions of Germans, who lived in former eastern Germany, left their homes for fear of the approaching Red Army. When World War II ended on May 8th, 1945, Germany and Europe were released from Nazi tyranny. More than 50 million people died as a result of the war.

Experiences of deaf people who lived during Nazi-time will be discussed in this seminar. We will talk about the organization of the federations of the Deaf after forced conformance, experiences in the Hitler Youth and the consequences of racism (persecution of Jews, forced sterilisation and euthanasia), and finally we will talk about how the Nazi-past was handled after the war.

Mark Zaurov (Hamburg)

Holocaust and Deaf Jews

The Holocaust, organized and executed by Nazi-Germans, was an industrialized destruction of Europe's Jews. It cost six million lives, six thousand of which were Deaf. This cruelty was eventually stopped by the allies 60 years ago. The Holocaust marks a break in the history of the German-Jewish relationship and likewise marks a low point in the relations between Jewish Deaf Germans and Deaf Germans.

It is important to mention that Deaf Jewish Germans helped to build REGEDE (Federation of the Deaf in earlier Germany) and were excluded from the Nazi-REGEDE later on, which brought about serious consequences for them. Additionally, many Deaf Jewish Germans were "advocate leaders" of the deaf community, who did a lot to pave the way for Deaf Germans in society and education (school, university etc.). Their contribution and encouragement has still not been acknowledged.

This presentation is about the concepts "Holocaust / Shoa", considering the "Holocaust of bombs". We will present signs that were used in earlier times and signs that are used today. Furthermore, we will recognize the German Jewish Deaf community for their contributions to history.

Film: CinéSourds (Reims, France)

Hanna (International Visual Theatre)

David de Keyzer and **Philippe Berthe**, both from CinéSourds (Deaf Movies) in Reims, will present the one-hour movie „Hanna“ with German subtitles.

The Internationale Visuelle Theater (IVT) from Paris acted out this successful play in the 90's. In 2002 CinéSourds released it on DVD.

Storyline: Hanna, a young deaf Woman who lived during Nazi-time, leaves her family and goes into hiding because of the imminent sterilization.

A film of this kind is a good example for us in Germany; it shows us how we could incorporate memories like this into our cultural framework in the future.

Saturday, June 4th:

Dr. Hans-Uwe Feige (Leipzig)

The History of the Federation of the Deaf in the earlier German Democratic Republic (GDR) from its foundation in 1957 until the fall of the wall in 1989

The „General German Association of the Deaf of the GDR“ („Allgemeiner Deutscher Gehörlosenverband der DDR“ - ADGV) was founded on May 31, 1957 in Halle / Saale. Since October 1960 hard of hearing and hearing people were given the right to become members of this association (maximum 10% of all members). The ADGV has been interested in socio-political issues from it's beginning. One of their triumphs was the release of broadcast charges for Deaf

people (1964). In Stockholm, during the World Congress of the Deaf in 1963, the ADGV became a member of the World Association of the Deaf (WFD), even though the representatives from the German and Austrian Associations objected.

In 1973 the ADGV was renamed „Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in GDR“ („Gehörlosen- und Schwerhörigenverband der DDR“ - GSV). In 1981 and 1987 the GSV was decorated with the golden „Vaterländischen Verdienstorden der DDR“ (Order of Merit of the fatherland of GDR). Because GSV was closely integrated with the political ideas of the „Sozialistischen Einheitspartei“ (SED), it dissolved after the wall came down.

Martin Domke (Dresden)

His Life in the GDR and Experiences after the Turning Point as Chairman of the Federation of the Deaf in the Federal State of Sachsen

Martin Domke was born in 1953 in Frankfurt/Oder. He became deaf when he was 5 years old and his parents and grand parents are also deaf. His mother took an active part in the foundation of the General Association of the Deaf of Germany (ADGV). She was a delegate in Halle for the Frankfurt/Oder region in 1957. After, she worked as a secretary for the regional organization. After moving to Dresden, Martin Domke attended the school for hard of hearing children in Leipzig and Dresden. He graduated, completed his Arbitur, in Berlin where the only advanced grammar school for hard of hearing students was located.

After his apprenticeship as an electronic data processing expert in Bad Breka, Domke finished correspondence courses and became a graduate engineer for computer science. He later worked as a programmer and until Germany's reunification, also as an engineer of research. Since 1992 he has been an employee in the state government's Department of Human Resources.

After the reunification in 1990 the Association of the Deaf in Sachsen was re-established. Domke became board chairman of this association and also chairman of the Association of the Deaf in Dresden, which was founded in 1991. From 1991 to 1995 he served as vice president of the German Association of the Deaf.

Helmut Vogel with **Friedrich Waldow** (Essen) at 1.30 p.m.

The Life and Work of Friedrich Waldow - On the Occasion of his 90th Birthday and the German Journal of the Deaf

On January 13th, 2005 Friedrich Waldow turned 90 years old. He is a leader for the German Deaf community and a prominent figure in Deaf History of the 20th century.

It is important to learn about Friedrich Waldow's origin and life in the first half of the 20th century to be able to fully grasp his uniqueness. Friedrich Waldow is native to Stettin in Pommern (today a part of Poland).

He was editor of the German Deaf Journal (DGZ) starting in 1950 and, in doing that, was able to get an overview of the living situation all over Germany for Deaf people. He commented on all the questions sent to him and, in this sense, the DGZ became a political journal in the second half of the century.

For decades Friedrich Waldow had a leading position in the German Sports Association of the Deaf. Deaf sports is a very important part of the deaf culture in Germany; it has a large impact on Deaf identity. The Deaflympics in Cologne in 1981 are an example of the exceptional organization of the German Sport Association of the Deaf.

Gerlinde Gerkens (Kiel)

Her Life in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and Experiences in Becoming the First President of the German Federation of the Deaf

Gerlinde Gerkens was born on July 1st, 1945 in Hamm/ Westfalen. She is the daughter of deaf parents and has one deaf brother.

Gerkens was working as a volunteer in different background jobs for small self-help groups from 1965 to 1979. Later, in 1980, she became vice chairman of the Deaf Association in Kiel and at the same time she was elected board member of the Deaf Association of Schleswig-Holstein. Since 1986 she has acted as first chairman of the latter association. In 1983 she founded a working group for the encouragement of the hearing-impaired in Kiel and surrounding areas, which she lead as first chairman until 2004. She helped establish the Central Office for Interpreter and Social Services for the Deaf in Schleswig-Holstein in 1987 and she has managed, and today continues to manage, these services.

In 1989 Gerkens became a chair member of the Deaf Association of Germany. In 1994 she became vice president and since 1999 has been acting as the first and only female president. Gerlinde Gerkens is typically known for her enormous effort in many facets of community service; she fights for the legal status of German Sign Language, for getting this right put into practice and for Deaf peoples' rights in all levels of social and political life.

Panel discussion with free discussion following

Coming from the Past - Looking into the Future: Awareness and Encouragement

Moderator: Stefan Goldschmidt (Hamburg)

The discussion paper will be distributed in Bonn by the chair of Kultur und Geschichte Gehörloser (KuGG) and should initiate the panel discussion. In this paper, the research of Deaf history in the 20th century is presented and questions about how to continue research into the future are posed. All speakers will give a short statement about the symposium and the paper. Following this, all visitors of the symposium are invited to take part in the discussion.

Quizshow and social evening on Saturday

Quizmaster: Herbert Christ (Berlin)

Herbert Christ will be asking questions about history in general and Deaf history in the 20th century. These questions come from presentations of the symposium in Bonn. Christ was the Quizmaster at the fund-raiser in Hamburg in 2003 and at the 2nd annual meeting in Heidelberg in 2004. The winners will be rewarded with gifts.

Sunday, June 5th, 2005

Guided tour with **Helmut Vogel** und **Jochen Muhs**

Visiting the permanent exhibition in the „German House of History“

See also: www.hdg.de

In our permanent exhibition you can experience the chronicled events of German History – up close and personal. Originals, depicted in scenes, tell the History from World War II until the immediate present. Come and remember your own experiences. Discover the connections. Objects, documents, pictures and films will help you. The museum is a place of discussion – also across generations.

Arranged by Helmut Vogel
Translated by Sarah Koch and Rachael Colvin