

LITERATURE

Kraus, Wolfgang / Eberhardt, Barbara: Mehr als Steine. Synagogen-Gedenkband Bayern: Oberfranken, Oberpfalz, Niederbayern, Oberbayern, Schwaben (vol. 3,1). Lindenberg 2007.

Panzer, Rudolf: Jüdische Familien in der fränkischen Gemeinde Hirschaid. Hirschaid 2005.

Family Tree Lina Glück:
www.rsw.hd.bw.schule.de/shal/orte/waibstadt/glueck/lina/StammbLinaGlueck.doc (last access: June 24th 2018)

CREDITS

Photo (from left to right): Alfred Schmitt, Alma Bernet, Heinrich Bernet, Adele Schmitt, Ludwig Hellmann, Ludwig Schmitt and Hans Grasser, around 1927. The picture is part of a collection of historical photographs by Rudolf Panzer, Hirschaid. It was also printed in: Kraus, Wolfgang / Hamm, Berndt / Schwarz, Meier (Hrsg.): Mehr als Steine ... Synagogen-Gedenkband Bayern (vol. 1), Lindenberg 2008, p. 164. As well as in: Panzer, Rudolf: Jüdische Familien in der fränkischen Gemeinde Hirschaid, Hirschaid 2005, p. 100.

ALMA BERNET

* 1903 – ZEILITZHEIM, HIRSCHAID



My name is Alma Bernet. I was born on March 17th, 1903 in Zeilitzheim and I was named Alma Gutmann. Zeilitzheim is located south of Bamberg. I am the sixth and therefore the youngest child of my parents Lazarus und Frieda Gutmann.

I am living together with my husband Heinrich, his mother Sophie and my two kids Julius and Elfriede Edith in our house in Schlageterstraße 5 in Hirschaid. The town is located between Bamberg and Forchheim. Our house is big enough for all of us and has protruding window shutters.

We belong to the Jewish community in Hirschaid, which has been existing for a long time. We have our own synagogue, in which the service is taking place. David Kahn is leading the service as our cantor and he is also the religious education teacher. Our family enjoys attending the service. We are liberal Jews, not orthodox ones like you sometimes see them in the cities. Our acquaintances are Catholics and also our housekeeper is not Jewish.

Unfortunately, Heinrich's beloved father Emil Bernet died only two months after Julius' birth (January 3rd, 1929) on March 14th, 1929. His funeral was taking place on the Jewish cemetery in Buttenheim— two kilometers East of Hirschaid. There, on the Graitzau¹, is where all Jews from the community in Hirschaid are buried. Emil has a huge gravestone. My mother-in-law is taking care of the grave and whenever I can, I help her with it. Unfortunately, the graveyard in Buttenheim was disgraced in one night in December 1931. More than 60 gravestones were knocked over and some of them were severely damaged. They caught the criminal vandal later on, but the nightmarish feeling stayed.

Emil, my father-in-law, used to be a cattle-dealer and had a merchant business for skin and fur in his former estate. He and my mother-in-law have lived in Hirschaid since 1898. After Emil had moved with his family to our current house he started trading with hops. This was around 1906.

My husband Heinrich was born on March 8th, 1897 in Frensdorf, which is where his family used to live before moving to Hirschaid. His older brother is called Julius and Meta is his younger sister. Heinrich and his brother Julius both served as soldiers in the World War. There is a picture of both of them in navy and military uniform in 1918. We are very glad that they returned home safely. By now, Heinrich is the owner of the company his father founded for trading hops and malt. He delivers to the breweries in Hirschaid and the surrounding areas. Thanks to trading with the farmers and breweries life here is good.

At the moment, we are all very busy. I have my hands full with two kids, one year and three years old, and handling the household. Elfriede really needs me because she is still very little. Our Hansi, this is what I call Julius as a nickname, is getting more and more lively. Since he is able to walk, he wants to explore everything. But he can also already keep himself busy on his own.

¹ The Jewish cemetery is located on the so called Graitzau between Seigendorf and Buttenheim. It is a meadow countryside and received its name in the vernacular. Graitzau is no town but an area, in which the cemetery is located.

Luckily, I am blessed with Gretel Mohnkorn. Gretel lives in Hirschaid as well. She is helping me a lot with the household. She is more a friend than a housekeeper to me, our relationship is very good. There's a recent picture from last year with Gretel, Elfriede, Julius and my mother-in-law Sophie in front of our house. Next to the gateway leading to our house, we have a garden with a huge and beautiful walnut tree. The kids love to romp around in the garden and around this tree.

In our free time we are members of a music group. My husband and I, we really enjoy ourselves there. But since I have two kids, I have not been able to attend all the rehearsals. I have a picture of our group from 1927, this must be taken during Fasnacht². Hans Grasser, who is playing accordion, is Catholic. We are indeed a totally mixed group. In general, a lot of the Jews in Hirschaid are engaged in societies and associations, for example in the voluntary fire brigade, in the local gymnastics club, in the fruits and gardening association, in the choral society and also in the veterans' association. I would probably call the living together of the different religions very positive in Hirschaid.

I am very much looking forward to see my children growing up here. I really hope that they do not have to experience another war. Time flies. Soon, Hansi will be attending school and take religious lessons with David Kahn.

² Fasnacht, also called Fastnacht or Fasching are the last days before the religious fasting begins. During this time a lot of jolly festivities according to certain customs take place. It used to be a Christian tradition.