



▼ אנגלית



גרמנית



Blessing hands of the Kohanim on a tombstone in Baisingen

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Ottensoos (district of Nürnberger Land) Jewish history / synagogue

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On the history of the Jewish community ([German version](#))

A Jewish community existed in Ottensoos until 1938/39. Its origin dates back to the **16th century** . In an essay by the Ansbach historian Professor JM Fuchs, published in the magazine "Der Israelit" (first published in the "9th Annual Report of the Historical Association for Middle Franconia" from 1839), he put forward the thesis that the first Jews from Ottensoos came from Nuremberg and from had been expelled there. This theory was based on the observation that the synagogue customs in Ottensoo (like those of the Jews in [Schnaittach](#) and [Hüttenbach](#)) corresponded to the synagogue customs in Nuremberg. **According to this entry, Jewish houses in Ottensoos are mentioned for the first time in a Schnaittach interest book from 1560** , but Jews may have settled in Ottensoos a few decades earlier:



Article with quote from the contribution by JM Fuchs in the "Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums" of September 3, 1842: "In the Jewish communities of [Schnaittach](#) , [Ottensoos](#) and [Hüttenbach](#) shows the greatest correspondence between the synagogue customs and those observed by the Jews there before their expulsion from Nuremberg; the other Jews in Middle Franconia deviate from the same. It is very likely that the Jews expelled from Nuremberg settled in the vicinity and reinforced the communities that existed there from earlier times; This view is supported by information in the Schnaittach interest book from the year 1560, which indicates a burial place and several houses of the Jews in Schnaittach and Ottensoos that were already there in the 15th century. The persecutions which the Jews endured in Nuremberg in the 13th and 14th centuries may have caused

Left

them to seek residences which, near their former connections, afforded the protection of a foreign sovereign.

In the course of the **17th century** the number of Jewish families in Ottensoos was between ten and 15 (1630 11 families, 1671 10, 1698 14). From the **18th/19th** The following figures are available from the **19th century** : 1703, 118 Jewish residents, 1747, 23 families, 1761, 120 Jewish residents, **1809/10, 101 (24.5% of the total population of 412), 1836, 133 (23.3% of a total of 570), 1867, 112 (15.9% of 705), 1890 80 (10.9% of 735), 1900 75 (9.7% of 771).**

The Jewish families lived mainly from the livestock and hop trade. **In the middle of the 19th century** there was a first strong **wave of emigration**. A report written in 1853 shows the spirit of optimism at the time, which had dramatic effects on many Jewish communities:



Article in the "Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums" of August 29, 1853: "From **Upper Bavaria** . August 4 (1853). We have news of mass emigration to the other Atlantic countries from Central Franconia, Swabia and Lower Franconia, especially from the Jewish side Population increases. Several towns, such as **Bruck** , **Ottensoos** , **Dormitz** , **Diespeck** , then **Cronheim** , **Altenmuhrand** many others, which only a few years ago were inhabited by a thousand and more Jewish families, now number only a few old people, while the younger generation is already settled in American free states. Usually the eldest son of a family, having

completed his apprenticeship, travels to the New World with letters of introduction to relatives and friends, where the double gain of free sphere and unlimited rights awaits him. Some time later his brothers and sisters follow him, and finally often his parents too. The news from the churches that are forming there every day is generally very favourable."

Despite the dramatic developments around 1850, the number of Jewish families in Ottensoos remained so high until around 1930 that Jewish community life was still possible and the number of Jewish men regularly reached ten at the service.

In terms of **facilities** , the Jewish community had a school and a ritual bath in addition to the synagogue (see below for facilities housed in a Jewish community center since 1872). The community was assigned to the rabbinate district in **Schnaittach** , after its dissolution to the district rabbinate in **Schwabach** (until 1932, then **Ansbach**). A religion teacher was employed to take care of the religious tasks of the congregation, who also acted as cantor and slaughterer. In the case of pending new appointments, the position was repeatedly advertised (see advertisements below). The following teachers are mentioned: around 1880 M. Morgenthau (moves to Erlangen in 1881), around 1881/1885 Abraham Oppenheimer (then in Mainz), around 1889/1898 Adolf Grünspecht (opens a restaurant in Nuremberg in 1898), around 1899/1902 M .Heinemann, around 1911/1929 Alex Gutmann.

The following are named as **community leaders** : around 1891 S. Späth, around 1909 Louis Rebizer.

The following associations are mentioned: an *Israelite women's association* (around 1891).

In **World War I** Eugen Heßdörfer (born March 7, 1890 in Ottensoos, lived in Nuremberg before 1914, died September 12, 1916) and senior physician Dr. Ferdinand Löwenheim (born December 7, 1886 in Ottensoos, lived in Nuremberg before 1914, born March 1, 1917).

Around 1925, when the Jewish community still had 40 people in about ten households (4.4% of the total population of about 900 people), the **leaders** of the community were Philipp Sommerich and Max Hessdörfer. Alex(ander) Gutmann worked as a religion teacher, cantor and schochet. He also taught four school-age Jewish children at the religious school. Existed at **associations** : 1. The charitable institution of the *Zedokoh treasury* , 2. the one founded in 1862 *Israelite women's association* (1924 under the direction of Pauline Lamm) and 3. as a social and funeral association, the *Chevre Kadischa* (under Martin Prager). **The Jewish residents living in Hersbruck** also belonged to the Jewish community (1924: 12). Around 1930, the few Jewish residents living in Offenhausen, **Lauf** , **Neunkirchen am Sand** and **Röthenbach ad Pegnitz** were also allocated. At the beginning of the 1930s, the community could no longer employ its own religion teacher. Now the Schnaittach Jewish teacher in Ottensoos taught the only few Jewish children left.

After 1933, when 25 Jewish residents were still counted, more and more of them left the place due

to increasing disenfranchisement and reprisals as well as the consequences of the economic boycott. Most moved to other cities, a few emigrated (one person each to Palestine, Holland and France). On the night of April 19, 1934, the windows of most Jewish houses were smashed. From the end of December 1935, almost all Jewish residents had to be supported by the "Winter Relief Organization" of the Jewish community in Nuremberg. For the events of the **November 1938 pogrom** against the synagogue, see below.

The Jewish people who were born in Ottensoos and/or who lived there for a longer period of time died during the Nazi period (information according to the lists of [Yad Vashem](#), [Jerusalem](#) and the information in the "[Memorial Book - Victims of the Persecution of the Jews under National Socialist Tyranny in Germany 1933-1945](#)") : Bertha Adler née Reuss (1873), Flora Ehrmann née Späth (1878), Hertha Fleischmann née Hessdörfer (1900), Max Hessdörfer (1864), Paula Kolb née Hessdörfer (1896), Pauline Lamm née Springer (1864), Klara Mannheimer (1865), Cilli Prager (1861), Cornelia (Nelly) Prager née Rebitzer (1881), Julius Arnold Prager (1875), Moritz Prager (1865), Paula Prager née Rebitzer (1879), Samuel Prager (1865), Gustav Rebitzer (1870), Moritz Rebitzer (1861), Siegfried Rebitzer (1877), Ida Reuss (1876), Julie Riss née Gundelfinger (1858), Gertraud (Gertrud) Sämman née Welsch (1881) , Adolfine Schneider née Schitz (1898), Arnold Sommerich (1900), Jakob Sommerich (1878), Julius Sommerich (1878), Lina (Karoline) Sommerich (1879), Sophie Sommerich (1890), Jakob Späth (1873), Jenny Späth (1876), Siegmund Späth (1871), Selma Weissmann née Sommerich (1912), Bertha Wiesenfelder née Späth (1892).

From the history of the Jewish community From the history of the Jewish teachers
Advertisements for the position of teacher/leader 1871 / 1877 / 1908 *Note: The advertisement texts also name the respective heads of the community : around 1871 Hermann Prager and Wolf Hessdörfer (Heßdörfer); around 1877 Theodor Rebitzer and Simon Löwenstein; c.1908 Louis Rebitzer and Max Hessdörfer .*

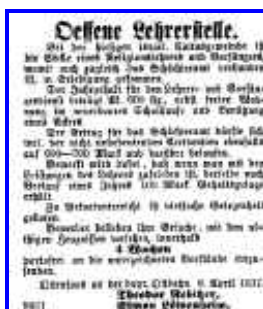


Article in the magazine "Der Israelit" from December 20, 1871 : "**Vacant position.** The position of a religion teacher and cantor in the local Israelite religious community, which also involves the slaughterhouse office, has come to an end.

The annual salary for the teacher - and pre-singer service is fixed at 300 guilders. The income for the slaughterer's office should amount to 300 guilders and more, including the not insignificant accidents.

Reflectors are free to view their applications with the necessary certificates within four weeks postage-free to the undersigned board members. Ottensoos on the Bavarian Ostbahn.

November 26, 1871. **Herman Prager. Wolf Hessdörfer.**"



Advertisement in the magazine "Der Israelit" of April 11, 1877 :

"**Vacant teaching position.** The position of a religion teacher and cantor in the local Israelite religious community, which also involves the slaughterhouse office, has come to an end.

The annual salary for the teacher - and pre-singer service is 600 M. fixed, in addition to free accommodation in the newly built school building and use of a field. The income for the butcher's office should also amount to 600-700 marks and more, including the not insignificant accidents. It is noted

that if you are satisfied with the teacher's performance, he will receive a salary bonus of 100 marks after the end of the year

Applicants are free to send their applications, provided with the necessary certificates, postage paid to the undersigned board members within

4 weeks . Ottensoos on the Bavarian Eastern Railway, April 6, 1866. **Theodor Rebitzer, Simon Löwenheim** .

Offene Lehrerstelle!

In der hier. israel. Religions-
gemeinde ist die Stelle eines Reli-
gionslehrers u. Vorlesers, wo-
mit auch die Schächterfunktion
verbunden ist, im Gesehung
gekommen. (11/179)

Das fixe Jahresgehalt beträgt
M. 600.-- mit einer jährlichen
Steigerung von je M. 50.-- aus
drei Jahre; das Nebeneinkommen
aus dem Mo. Singer u. Schächter-
amt etc. beläuft sich auf ca. M. 700
bei freier Wohnung im neu-
bauten Schulhaus.

Gewissenhaft gebildet, gut
qualifizierte u. mit guten Stim-
mleuten begabte Bewerber wollen
sich unter Einreichung der nöthi-
gen Zeugnisse bis längstens 15. Nov.
an die unterzeichneten Vorstände
wenden. Ausländer finden keine
Berücksichtigung.

Ottensoos, d. 19. Okt. 1908.

Die isr. Kultverwaltung:
Louis Rebitzer,
Max Hessdörfer.

Advertisement in the magazine "Der Israelit" from October 22, 1908 : "

Open teaching position!

In the local Israelite religious community, the position of a religion teacher and cantor, which also involves the function of a slaughterer, has come to an end.

The fixed annual salary is 600 marks . with an annual increase of 50 marks per year for three years, the additional income from the pre-singer and butcher's office, etc. amounts to about 700 marks with a free apartment in the newly built school building contact the undersigned board members by submitting the necessary certificates no later than November 15. Foreigners will not be considered.

Ottensoos, October 19, 1908.

The Israelite Religious Administration:

Louis Rebitzer, Max Hessdörfer."

40th anniversary in Mainz of cantor and teacher Abraham Oppenheimer (1926, was a teacher in Ottensoos before 1886)

Am 19. Juli, die 40. Jahrestag der Geburt
des Herrn Abraham Oppenheimer, der in Mainz
geboren ist, wurde in der Synagoge ein
Gedächtnis-Gottesdienst abgehalten, bei dem
der Herr Cantor Dr. Bondi die Predigt hielt.
Der Herr Cantor Dr. Bondi sprach über die
Lebensgeschichte des Herrn Oppenheimer,
der in Mainz geboren ist, und der in
Ottensoos gewirkt hat. Der Herr Cantor
Dr. Bondi sprach über die Lebensgeschichte
des Herrn Oppenheimer, der in Mainz
geboren ist, und der in Ottensoos gewirkt
hat. Der Herr Cantor Dr. Bondi sprach
über die Lebensgeschichte des Herrn
Oppenheimer, der in Mainz geboren ist,
und der in Ottensoos gewirkt hat.

Article in the journal "Der Israelit" from July 29, 1926: " Mainz ,
July 19. On Schabbos, the cantor and teacher Abraham
Oppenheimer celebrated his 40th anniversary in the service of
the local Jewish religious community, after having previously
spent a short time in [Lohrhaupten](#) and [Ottensoos](#) had worked.

The appreciation of his work was shown in the celebration that
took place in his apartment after the morning service. After a serenade performed by
the synagogue choir, Rabbi Dr. Bondi the floor, to larger explanations, in order to
appreciate the great merits of the jubilee in school and church, whereupon the
celebrated briefly replied that he was very grateful for all the honors given - the
community had a larger gift presented - but only really his have fulfilled an obvious
duty. But we call to Mr. Oppenheimer: ' *Get up, go along until 100 years* ' (according to
Psalm 45:5)"

Notes: - Schabbos Yiddish for Shabbat, <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shabbat>

- Rabbi Dr. Bondi: [see article on Rabbi Dr. Bondi from 1890](#)

70th birthday of retired teacher and cantor Alexander Gutmann (1934 in Würzburg)

Note: Teacher Alexander Gutmann was born on April 21, 1864 in [Kleinsteinaich](#) . He graduated from
the Israelite teacher training college in Würzburg (exam 1882). Until 1933 he was a teacher in
Ottensoos (also responsible for [Schnaittach](#)), then he moved with his family to Würzburg, where he
lived in Zwinger 32 1/2. In June 1936 he emigrated to Palestine. Source: Strätz, Biographical
Handbook I p. 219.

Würzburg, 20. April. Am heutigen Tag feierte
Herr Alexander Gutmann, 70. Geburtstag.
Der Herr Cantor Dr. Bondi sprach über die
Lebensgeschichte des Herrn Gutmann,
der in Würzburg geboren ist, und der in
Ottensoos gewirkt hat. Der Herr Cantor
Dr. Bondi sprach über die Lebensgeschichte
des Herrn Gutmann, der in Würzburg
geboren ist, und der in Ottensoos gewirkt
hat. Der Herr Cantor Dr. Bondi sprach
über die Lebensgeschichte des Herrn
Gutmann, der in Würzburg geboren ist,
und der in Ottensoos gewirkt hat.

Article in the magazine "Der Israelit" from April 26, 1934:

"Würzburg, April 23 (1934). On the second day of Passover,
retired teacher and cantor Alexander Gutmann celebrated his
70th birthday. The jubilee worked quietly and selflessly for almost half a century in the
service of Judaism - a multiplier and guardian of peace and unadulterated Jewishness.
(All the best) up to 120 years ."

From Jewish Community and Club Life 25th Anniversary of the Women's Club (1887)

Ottensoos, Samstag, 21. Tevet, 5647
Am Samstag, 21. Tevet (11. Dezember)
feierte der israelitische Frauenclub sein 25jähr.
Gedächtnis, bei welcher Gelegenheit der Cantor
Dr. Bondi die Predigt hielt. Der Herr Cantor
Dr. Bondi sprach über die Lebensgeschichte
des Herrn Oppenheimer, der in Mainz
geboren ist, und der in Ottensoos gewirkt
hat. Der Herr Cantor Dr. Bondi sprach
über die Lebensgeschichte des Herrn
Oppenheimer, der in Mainz geboren ist,
und der in Ottensoos gewirkt hat.

Article in the magazine "Der Israelit" from December 28, 1887: "
Ottensoos, (Bavaria), December 21. Last Saturday evening on Tebeth
2nd (December 17th) the Israelite women's association celebrated its
25th anniversary, on which occasion the founder and since then
secretary, Mr. Hermann Prager, gave the accountability report, which
is briefly reproduced here: The association, founded on 1 Tevet 5623
(December 23, 1862) and to which all women living here belonged

[illegible]

since then, pursues purely religious purposes: visiting the sick, guarding etc. of the dead and supporting poor, sick women; in addition, for a certain fee, Kaddish, Shiur, etc. are provided for in the years of women who died without male issue. The sums that the association spent in the 25 years are not inconsiderable, and also in the donation lists for Erez Yisroel, The association has often been named for those in need in East Prussia and Russia, as it always did its bit in local affairs. We only mention here the renovation of the Jewish, age-old [burial ground in Schnaittach](#) . A few years ago, the women's association also donated a very beautiful shawl cover to the local synagogue.

The association was founded by 19 women, of which unfortunately only 5 are still alive, and today, after 5 women died last year, it has only 17 members, a small number after 42 women had already belonged to it. Mr. Prager linked this report with praise from the women for their willingness to make sacrifices and concluded with the wish that they continue to fulfill their duties so willingly and faithfully, and that the association may prosper and continue to exist. The head of the women's association, Ms. Betty Rebitzer, presented Mr. Prager with golden glasses as a sign of grateful recognition for the services rendered. The rest of the evening passed in a serious but pleasant mood. Oh, we close with the wish that the Israelite women's association may prosper and flourish."

Reports on individuals from the community

On the death of war veteran David Klein from Ottenssoos and his burial on May 19, 1885 in Schnaittach

Schneidmühl. In. Mühl. Eine Schneidmühl ist eine Mühle, in welcher die Schneidmühlsteine zum Zerkleinern des Getreides dienen. Sie besteht aus einem horizontalen Stein, der in einem hölzernen Gehäuse montiert ist. Der Stein ist so geformt, dass er das Getreide in kleine Körner zerhackt. Die Schneidmühlsteine sind aus einem harten Material, wie zum Beispiel Granit oder Basalt, gefertigt. Sie sind so angeordnet, dass sie das Getreide in einem bestimmten Winkel zerkleinern. Die Schneidmühlsteine sind so geformt, dass sie das Getreide in kleine Körner zerhacken. Die Schneidmühlsteine sind aus einem harten Material, wie zum Beispiel Granit oder Basalt, gefertigt. Sie sind so angeordnet, dass sie das Getreide in einem bestimmten Winkel zerkleinern.

Article in the magazine "Der Israelit" from June 4th, 1885: "

Schnaittach , May 18th (1885). A burial, such as one that has hardly ever been seen on our 500 to 600 year old burial ground, took place today. It was namely the Veteran from the wars 1866 and 1870 David Klein from **Ottensoos** is buried. The Ottensoos veterans and warriors association accompanied the body and here (sc. Schnaittach) the conduct was received by the local association of the same name outside the market. Both associations now marched with lowered Flags preceded the funeral procession and the music played a mourning chorale as far as the cemetery, where the chairman of the Ottensoos association, Mr. Baker master Lämmer, gave a moving speech and the coffin was lowered into the ground with the usual three volleys.

The deceased was the only son of his elderly parents Lippmann and Roschle Klein and the misfortune of these good old people aroused the undivided sympathy of all denominations.

On this occasion, the gap made itself felt again, that our rabbinate seat is still deserted since Rabbi Dr. Salzer left us, because a eulogy would certainly have been appropriate here and this could not be demanded from the current administrator, Rabbi Wißmann in Schwabach, who has almost a day's journey here, although we are also convinced that he would certainly have appeared if he would have known about the funeral. Now one wonders how long the rabbinate position will remain vacant and whether there will be no more men in four congregations belonging to the rabbinate who will advocate a final reoccupation! - Truly, it would be high time for that, otherwise the school and many institutions could suffer from it, because even if the dutiful Herr Verweser comes twice a year, he cannot overlook everything".

On the death of Marianne Prager (1907)

Ottensb. 10. Okt. Der Bürger Meier von Nien Meiburg, dessen Frau die Witwe Gertrude Meier, im Alter von 61 Jahren und ihre Tochter Joh. Elisabeth zur gegenwärtigen Zeit aus Nienburg und verheirateten Nachbarn. Ich war damals bekannt mit dem Verstorbenen. Die Leichenfeier fand unter ausserordentlich großer Beteiligung und einer feierlichen Beerdigung bei der die Kirche von Nienburg aus bis nach Nienburg, wo die Beerdigung stattfand, stattfand.

Article in the magazine "Der Israelit" from May 30th, 1907: "**Ottensoo**
s, May 26th (1907). Recently Mrs. Marianne Prager, the wife of Herr
Hermann Prager, passed away here at the age of 67. Her character was
distinguished by deep piety and unshakable trust in God. She continued
d of the poor. Her funeral took place with an extraordinarily large
s from all walks of life. At the grave, Mr. Heinemann described the noble

work of the deceased. Her soul was bound *in the covenant of life*."

Miscellaneous

Memories of emigration in the 19th century:

gravestone in New York for Moritz Simonsfelds from Ottensoos (died 1889) and Mrs. Rosalie *Note: the grave is in a Jewish cemetery in NY-Brooklyn; Rosalie Simonsfelds' real name is not disclosed. .*



Gravestone for " **Rosalie** ,
beloved Wife of **Moritz Simonsfelds** .
A native of
Ottensoos , Bavaria,
Born August 23, 1826 (?),
Died December 3, 1889 (?)" and
" **Moritz Simonsfelds**
A Native of **Ottensoos** Bavaria
Died December 31. 1889
aged 72 years".

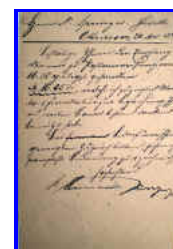
Other documents (from the collection of Peter Karl Müller, Kirchheim/Ries)

Letter to H. Prager in Ottensoos (1863)



The letter was sent from Nuremberg to Ottensoos on November 7, 1863. The addressee could have been Hermann Prager, around 1871 head of the Jewish community and 1862 founder of the Israelitische Frauenverein (at the same time its secretary until at least the 25th anniversary in December 1887)

Postcard from Hermann Prager in Ottensoos to Nathan Springer in Fürth (1894)



The card to Nathan Springer was sent by Hermann Prager from Ottensoos on April 20, 1894. Hermann Prager confirms the receipt of a sum of money via a postal order (see above for more information about himself).

The history of the synagogue At first there was probably a **prayer room** . In **1686** (according to the article from 1871 below) a first synagogue was built (the synagogue is documented in 1698). It

was to be the center of Jewish community life in Ottensoos for 185 years. After extensive **repairs in 1844**, it was inaugurated again on **August 31, 1844** (Shabbat with the reading Ki tabo!). A "great stone gable" was added to the synagogue building in 1865. In **1869** a **schoolhouse** was added to the synagogue building. The school and synagogue were destroyed in a major fire late in the evening of **September 1, 1871**

a robbery of the flames. This was reported in the magazine "Der Israelit" :

[illegible]

Article in the magazine "Der Israelit" from September 20, 1871: "**Ottensoo**s , in September (1871). The local community had a great misfortune *on the day of Holy Shabbat with the Torah reading Ki tabo* (= Friday/Saturday, 1st/2nd . September 1871) and if, trusting in God, we submit to his severe visitation without a murmur, the dismay is immense, for we are transported to an age which we cannot describe sufficiently, just as we cannot describe our feelings can give expression that move our hearts.

On the aforementioned night around 1/2 to 11 o'clock the shrill fire call suddenly sounded, which was also not unfounded, because from the barn of the butcher Hirsch Rebitzer the columns of fire were already towering skyward, while everything nearby still lay in sweet slumber. Rebitzer's children, who lay scarcely a few paces from the fire, could only with difficulty be snatched from the dreadful element; because even before timely help rushed in, 9 buildings, including the venerable 185-year-old synagogue and the school building that was built on it only 2 years ago, were already in rubble and ashes.

Oh, how painful it is to have to write this down! Our sanctuary lies desolate like the ruined temple. The place where we so often prayed to God is turned into a ruin; Burned empty, the bare, half-collapsed wall rising to the sky, there it lies, once the pride and adornment of the community! Barely four hours earlier we were still receiving the Holy Shabbat in their halls, not suspecting such misfortune, but already for the morning prayers we didn't know where to gather for

the minyan. Anyone who attended this service will never forget it. No eye remained dry, no heart remained unshaken. We can only welcome the holy "good days" that are already waiting at the threshold with trembling and fear, because we have to do our service in an inn because we have no other place. We have days of mourning instead of days of feasting, and may God forgive us if we profane those days with tears. May the Almighty protect us from further misfortune and help us to build a new temple to him soon.

The synagogue was inaugurated after a major and costly repair on the Shabbat that was so fateful for us 27 years ago. 6 years ago we had erected a great stone pediment, and scarcely 2 years ago we had built the teacher's dwelling; and as small as the community is, all costs are covered from our own resources, which is why we still have debts.

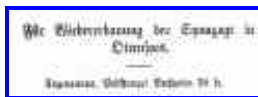
The more affluent members are willing to do whatever they can to help rebuild the synagogue, but we have many members, widows, old people and the poor, on whom we cannot burden them with new burdens; the burden is too great for us, and if our charitable fellow believers do not support us, we will not be able to rebuild our synagogue with the small amount of insurance. H. Prager, Head of Education.

(Editor's note: We agree with the above request; the small community of Ottensoos has always contributed strongly to all collections. May they not now appeal in vain to the compassion of our always helpful fellow believers).

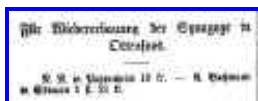
The call for donations did not go unheeded. In the following weeks, the magazine "Der Israelit" published several advertisements with the names of donors for the reconstruction of the synagogue in Ottensoos:

[illegible]

Magazine "Der Israelit" from November 8, 1871: " **For the rebuilding of the synagogue in Ottensoos** . Jonas Igersheimer in Mergentheim 5 fl. - Jakob L. in L. 10 fl. - Anonymous in Frankfurt aM 20 fl. - From Mannheim 1 fl. - Gottschalk Jakoby in Belgard 3 thalers - JL Lehmann in Constance 2 florins 20 kr. - Unnamed 18 Sgr. - NN in Mainstockheim 2 florins - From Hanau 2 thalers - Löb Adler in Korbach 2 florins."



Advertisement in the magazine "Der Israelit" of March 6, 1872: "For the rebuilding of the synagogue in Ottensoos. Unnamed, postmark Bechhofen 30 Kreuzer".



Advertisement in the magazine "Der Israelit" from April 3, 1872: "For the rebuilding of the synagogue in Ottensoos. NN in Pappenheim 18 kr. - A. Bachmann in Eltmann 1 fl. 21 kr."



Advertisement in the magazine "Der Israelit" of March 13, 1872: "For the rebuilding of the synagogue in Ottensoos. Unnamed person in Mainz 1 fl. 30 kr."

In 1872 the synagogue was rebuilt and probably inaugurated in the same year. The new L-shaped building complex also housed the school, the teacher's apartment and the ritual bath.

For a good 60 years, numerous services and other events of the Jewish community were held in the new synagogue until the Nazi seizure of power destroyed Jewish community life in Ottensoos as well.

The synagogue was already being attacked before the pogrom night in November 1938: in **March 1936**, unknown persons smashed a synagogue window. Even then, it was no longer possible to celebrate a regular service because the required number of ten Jewish men was no longer reached. At **the November pogrom of 1938**, the interior of the synagogue was completely destroyed and the building partially destroyed by the National Socialists. The chandeliers of the synagogue were torn down, the window panes smashed, the prayer chairs demolished, the rituals disappeared without a trace.

The building of the former synagogue came into the possession of the civil community and was preserved. After 1945 it was converted for residential purposes (in the prayer room a false ceiling was put in place and walls installed), up to five tenants lived in the house. The building has been empty since **2003**. A demolition was discussed again and again. A **plaque** was installed in 1988. **2008**

the possibility of repairing the former synagogue arose via the then economic stimulus package II, a state program for economic development. For the restoration and future use of the former synagogue in **2010/15** see press reports below.

On **June 7, 2015** the building was reopened as a place of remembrance, education and culture. Only a few traces in the house remind of the former use as a Jewish house of worship. The Torah niche is visible, but white and empty. The location of the bimah (Torah lectern) is marked on the floor. Four iron brackets can still be seen in the attic, on which the synagogue's candlesticks used to hang. The building is used by the VHS Unterer Pegnitztal for events, among others. A cultural program is being created by a "Friends of the Former Synagogue" founded in November 2013. In the former prayer room there is space for 60 to 70 people.

Address/location of the synagogue : Dorfplatz 5

photos

Photos 2007
(Photos: Hahn,
date of photo: April 12, 2007)



View of the L-shaped building complex of the Jewish community center
with synagogue (right), school and teacher's apartment

(left)



Text on the plaque (photo on the right): "Former synagogue of the Jewish community that has been there since 1531. Documented mention in 1698. Built in 1867 after a fire. Desecrated on November 9th, 1938. The community of Ottensoo commemorates its Jewish fellow citizens in 1988."

Photos 2004
(Photos: Jürgen Hanke, Kronach)



Photos of the status of the renovation work in September 2013
(photos: Hahn, photo taken on September 11, 2013)



[The photo above in high resolution](#)



[The photo above in high resolution](#)



[The photo above in high resolution](#)



[The photo above in high resolution](#)



[The photo above in high resolution](#)



[The photo above in high resolution](#)

Photos from the inauguration ceremony on June 7, 2015
(Photos: Municipality of Ottensoos)



Mayor Falk addressing invited guests



Music by the group "Scheynhofen"



Mayor Falk during his speech during the "Open Day"



After the concert: from left:
Mayor Falk,
Alexandra Völkl (vocals),
Budde Thiem (piano)



model of the building

Press reports on the restoration and future use of the former synagogue

February 2008 : "What's next for the synagogue?" Event of the Ottensooser CSU

Article from the CSU-Ottensoos website of February 20, 2008 ([Article](#)): " What's next for the synagogue?"

Tanja Riedel, leader of the CSU parliamentary group, was able to welcome Ottensoos historian Martin Schieber as a profound expert on Jewish history in Ottensoos, as well as Mayor Klaus Falk .

Schieber initially briefly outlined the development of Jewish history. For centuries, Ottensoos was home to a sizeable Jewish community. The synagogue, which is located in the center of the village, was their central reference point in town. The L-shaped building is still striking today. Coming from the village square, the first thing that catches the eye is the yellow facade of the actual synagogue building, which runs in an east-west direction. The visitors got an idea of the structural condition of the synagogue. The large bed room with 68 arranged places was on the ground floor. On the upper floor there was a gallery with a further 28 seats, which was intended for women.

The extension to the west consists of sandstone. There was the religious school and above it the teacher's attic apartment. At that time, the Jewish children attended two schools, the village school for elementary instruction and the Jewish school for religious instruction. The Jewish school was attached to the synagogue. Classes continued until 1924, but were discontinued due to insufficient student numbers. In the basement, a vaulted cellar, was the mikveh, the ritual bath for women. The synagogue was bought by the community after the pogrom night and was then used as a kindergarten and living space. In the meantime, however, the building has become very dilapidated. Mayor Falk pointed out that it was time to start thinking seriously about his future.

What are the options? Martin Schieber and the participants agreed that the importance of the building as the spiritual center of the Jewish community should definitely be emphasized. The national association of Israelite religious communities should be involved in this. Similar projects have already been supported. The establishment of a Jewish museum does not make much sense since one already exists in Schnaittach. In Martin Schieber's opinion, however, a cultural-museum use, for example by depicting the history of the land area of the imperial city of Nuremberg, could have particular relevance. In addition, part of the building could also be used for social purposes, for example to enable senior citizens to live. The building is in need of renovation and action is therefore required.

September 2008 : A trip to the restored former synagogue Memmelsdorf is organized



Left: Article in the publication "Akzente" of the CSU Ottensoos - issue 14 from August 2008 p. 7:

" Synagogue Ottensoos - what are the possibilities?"

By Martin Schieber. The Ottensoos municipal council has to solve an important question in the coming period: What will become of the former synagogue on the village square? The Ottensoos CSU had already provided information on this issue in the run-up to the local elections in March 2008: During guided tours through the building, the participants

learned a lot about the history of the building and its use since 1945 from Martin Schieber and Mayor Klaus Falk. we want to take a trip to Memmelsdorf (Hassberge district). The former synagogue there has been put to new use in recent years: a memorial was created after the dilapidated building had been renovated. This possibility should be the impetus for Ottensoos to think about the synagogue:

February/March 2010 : Announcement of the ideas competition to find a future use of the building.

Handout with information about the building and description of the general conditions: [pdf file from the Ottensoos municipality website](#) .

Explanatory text from the municipality of Ottensoos ([from the municipality's website](#)): " Ideas competition "Future use of the synagogue".

Renovation of the former synagogue, Dorfplatz 5, Ottensoos.

Standing empty for over a decade, inconspicuously behind the citizens' meeting room on the village square, is the former synagogue, which currently makes a rather neglected impression on the observer. The municipal council believes that a renovation to repair and stabilize the building structure can no longer be postponed. This also raises the question of a future use of the building. This should also be given an appropriate appraisal of the Jewish fellow citizens who have helped shape the fate of Ottensoos for almost 5 centuries.

There had been a Jewish community in Ottensoos since the beginning of the 16th century (see local chronicle by Martin Schieber, "Ottensoos" - A Stroll through eleven centuries of history", p. 78 ff.) Its existence ended with the expulsion by the National Socialists in 1939. After that the synagogue was first used as a kindergarten and then, after the installation of intermediate ceilings and walls, as community housing. During these conversion measures, the original sacred furnishings were completely lost and most of the valuable building fabric was lost. The community council has a stake in finding ideas for future use of the citizens for helpful.

However, in order to get realizable proposals, it is necessary to provide information and details about the object that enable the interested citizen to get an overview of the general conditions and circumstances that influence the possible uses and the construction costs. We have therefore compiled the relevant data and information as well as building floor plans and building views as output documents.

If you would like to take part, you can pick up these documents from **February 15, 2010** at City Hall or download them here (see link below). We offer a tour of the former synagogue on Tuesday, March 2, 2010 at 5 p.m., meeting point in front of the building. You can submit your suggestions until Friday, **March 12, 2010** and it over to the municipal administration in the town hall.

February 2011 : Lecture on Jewish history in Ottensoos



Left: Joint invitation from the civil parish and the Evangelical Lutheran parish to a lecture:

"More than stones... Jewish history in Franconia using the example of Ottensoo".

Lecture on Wednesday, February 23, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. in the parish hall.

Speaker: Pastor Barbara Eberhardt.

March 2011 : The restoration of the former synagogue is the financially most costly project in the community of Ottensoos in 2011

Article in the "Pegnitz-Zeitung" of March 20, 2011 ([article](#) from n-land.de, quoted only in part):

" Solid household in Ottensoos meets with broad approval.

OTTENSOOS (bu) – One of all factions as 'very solid' The Ottensoo municipal council has launched the promised budget for 2011. There is still enough financial leeway for the most important investments, and one can even get by without taking out loans.... The most expensive project is the **renovation of the old synagogue behind the town hall**: 250,000 euros are planned for 2011. The first phase of construction to secure the building substance is already underway, and discussions are currently underway about possible later use. The project is funded with funds from the second economic stimulus package: in 2011, the federal government will transfer 180,000 euros to Ottensoos..."

June 2015: For the completion and future use of the former synagogue

Article by Andreas Kirchmayer in n-land.de from May 27, 2015: "[Ottensoos wants to fill the synagogue with life....](#)"



Left: Article by Andreas Kirchmayer in the "Hersbrucker Zeitung" of June 11, 2015:
 "A celebratory new beginning. The refurbished Ottensoos synagogue is now being used as a cultural center "
 and " 'Use is brilliant'. Pastor Barbara Eberhardt on the synagogue" .

links and literature

Left:

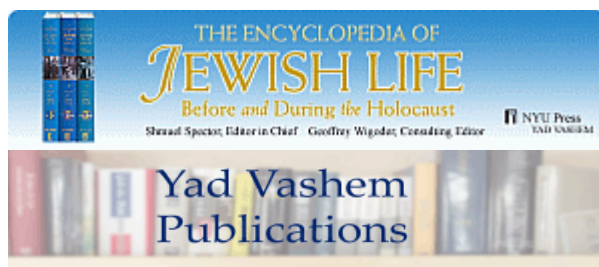
- [Website of the municipality of Ottensoos](#)
- Pages on Jewish history in Ottensoos at www.juden-im-nuernberger-land.de

Literature:

- Magnus **Weinberg** : History of the Jews in the Upper Palatinate. Vol. III The District of Rothenberg (Schnaittach, **Ottensoos** , Hüttenbach, Forth). Self-published Sulzbürg 1909. **Online edition Frankfurt am Main University Library** ([as pdf file: Download 11.83 mb](#))
- Baruch Z. **Ophir** /Falk **Wiesemann** : The Jewish communities in Bavaria 1918-1945. history and destruction. 1979 pp. 217-218.
- Israel **Schwierz** : Stone testimonies of Jewish life in Bavaria. A documentation of the Bavarian State Center for Political Education. A 85. 1988 p. 173.
- **Pinkas Hakehillot**: Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities from their foundation till after the Holocaust. Germany - Bavaria. Ed. by Yad Vashem 1972 (Hebrew) pp. 259-261.



" **More than stones...." Synagogue memorial volume Bavaria . Volume II: Middle Franconia** . Prepared by Barbara Eberhardt, Cornelia Berger-Dittscheid, Hans-Christof Haas and Angela Hager , with the collaboration of Frank Purrmann and Axel Töllner . Edited by Wolfgang Kraus , Berndt Hamm and Meier Schwarz . Series: Commemorative Book of the Synagogues in German. Established and edited by Meier Schwarz. Synagogue Memorial Jerusalem. Volume 3: Bavaria, Volume 2: Middle Franconia. Lindenberg im Allgäu 2010.
[Art publisher Josef Fink Lindenberg im Allgäu](#) .
 ISBN 978-3-89870-448-9. Section on Ottensoos pp. 506-521.



Article from "The Encyclopedia of Jewish life Before and During the Holocaust".

First published in 2001 by [NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS](#) ; Copyright © 2001 by [Yad Vashem Jerusalem, Israel](#).

Ottensoos Middle Franconia. The Jewish community dates from the 15th century. Heavy taxation and looting during the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) undermined its economic position. In 1698 the town was annexed to Bavaria and despite local opposition the community continued to grow. With the abrogation of the state rabbinate in 1808, it became independent. In 1837 the Jewish population reached 133 (total 570). a new synagogue was erected in 1872. In 1933, 25 Jews remained. The synagogue was wrecked on *Kristallnacht* (9-10 November 1938). By 1939 all the Jews had left.



vorherige Synagoge zur ersten Synagoge nächste Synagoge

Send e-mail with questions or comments about this website to Alemannia Judaica (e-mail address on the [start page](#))

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