

= Schneller Orphanage =

Schneller Orphanage , also called the Syrian Orphanage , was a German Protestant orphanage that operated in Jerusalem from 1860 to 1940 . It was one of the first structures to be built outside the Old City of Jerusalem ( the others are Mishkenot Sha'ananim and the Russian Compound ) and paved the way for the expansion of Jerusalem in the 19th century . As a philanthropic institution offering academic and vocational training to hundreds of orphaned and abandoned Arab children , it also exerted a strong influence on the Arab population of Jerusalem and the Middle East through its graduates , who spread its philosophies of " orderliness , discipline , and German language " throughout the region .

The orphanage provided both academic and vocational training to orphaned boys and girls from Palestine , Syria , Egypt , Ethiopia , Armenia , Turkey , Russia , Iran , and Germany , graduating students skilled in such trades as tailoring , shoemaking , engraving , carpentry , metalworking , pottery , painting , printing , farming , and gardening . In 1903 a school for the blind was opened on the premises , including dormitories , classrooms and vocational workshops . The orphanage also operated its own printing press and bindery ; flour mill and bakery ; laundry and clothing @-@ repair service ; carpentry ; pottery factory ; tree and plant nursery ; and brick and tile factory . Located on high ground and surrounded by a high stone wall , the orphanage 's distinctive onion @-@ dome tower , multistory buildings , and decorative facades exuded the power and influence of European Christians in Jerusalem in the mid @-@ 19th century .

Continuous building and land acquisitions increased the size of the orphanage grounds to nearly 150 acres ( 600 dunam ) by World War I . At the beginning of World War II , the British mandatory government deported the German teachers and turned the compound into a closed military camp with the largest ammunition stockpile in the Middle East . On March 17 , 1948 , the British abandoned the camp and the Etzioni Brigade of the Haganah used it as a base of operations during the 1948 Israeli War of Independence . For the next 60 years the site served as an Israeli army base known as Camp Schneller . The army vacated the premises in 2008 . As of 2011 , the compound is being developed for luxury housing .

In 2015 , remains of a Jewish settlement of the late Second Temple period were discovered at the site . In 2016 , archaeologists unearthed an ancient Roman bathhouse and a large wine production facility .

= = History = =

In the mid @-@ 19th century , English and German Protestant missions were operating in the Old City of Jerusalem . In 1854 Johann Ludwig Schneller ( 1820 ? 1896 ) , a German Lutheran missionary , came to Jerusalem from Württemberg together with his wife Magdalene Böhringer and six other members of the Brudergemeinde of Saint Chrischona , Basel , Switzerland , in order to manage the German Protestant mission . On 11 October 1855 Schneller bought from the people of Lifta , a parcel of land outside Lifta , approximately 3 kilometres ( 1 @.@ 9 mi ) northwest of Jaffa Gate , with the intention of living among and missionizing to the local Arab population , and drew up plans for the construction of a home for his family . The house was constructed from 1855 ? 56 . After Schneller and his family took occupancy , the house was attacked several times by Arab robbers from the village of Beit Sorek , forcing them to retreat to the safety of the Old City . At the end of the decade , after the Turks had erected outposts and dispatched armed guards on horseback to patrol Jaffa Road ( the route between Jerusalem and the port city of Jaffa , which lay near the Schneller compound ) , Schneller and his family were able to return to their home .

In 1860 Lebanese Druze massacred thousands of Maronite Christians in Lebanon and Syria . Schneller traveled to Beirut with the intention of rescuing battle @-@ orphaned children . He was rebuffed by the local community , which did not trust foreign Protestant missionaries , but managed to bring back nine orphaned boys to Jerusalem in October 1860 . He decided to open an orphanage for them in his home , and by the end of 1861 had enrolled 41 boys in what became known as the Syrian Orphanage ( German : Syrisches Waisenhaus ) . Over the next four years Schneller

expanded his property to 13 @. @ 6 acres ( 55 dunam ) and erected a 3 @. @ 5 metres ( 11 ft ) -high stone wall around it . Through 1867 Schneller expanded and added new infrastructure , creating a kitchen , dining room , storage cellar , bedrooms and living areas . In 1867 the orphanage began accepting girls .

Funds for construction and expansion , together with clothing and blankets , were solicited from Protestant communities in Germany and Switzerland . Between 1861 and 1885 Schneller collected a total of 550 @, @ 000 francs in donations .

Schneller was determined to give orphaned and abandoned Arab children a complete education , including teaching them a trade . To that end , he employed both academic and vocational teachers , primarily from Germany . The latter led professional workshops in tailoring , shoemaking , engraving , carpentry , metalworking , pottery , painting , printing , farming , and gardening .

Children stayed at the orphanage for up to 10 years , graduating at the age of 18 . They came from all parts of Palestine as well as Syria , Egypt , Ethiopia , Armenia , Turkey , Russia , Iran , and Germany . They were also of differing religious denominations , including Protestant , Greek Orthodox , Catholic , Coptic , and Maronite . Notwithstanding the ethnic diversity of the student body , the language of instruction was German and Arabic . Most of the teachers employed during the orphanage ? s first 50 years were German , with some Armenians and Arabs .

In 1876 the orphanage had an enrollment of 70 students aged 4 to 17 . By 1898 enrollment stood at 200 students . By the time of Schneller ? s death on 18 October 1896 , 1500 students had passed through the orphanage ? s doors . The actual number of graduates totaled 425 in 1885 and 1169 at the 50th anniversary of the orphanage in 1910 .

In 1901 a German noble bequeathed his entire fortune of 700 @, @ 000 marks toward the establishment of a school for the blind at the orphanage . It opened in 1903 with space for 40 to 50 children , plus workshops to teach the blind weaving and spinning .

Besides classes and vocational workshops , the orphanage operated its own printing press and bindery where it produced its own textbooks , Braille books , and German @- @ language newspapers . It also operated a flour mill and bakery that produced 35 @, @ 000 loaves of bread a year , a laundry and clothing @- @ repair service , a carpentry , a pottery factory that produced all the clay utensils used in the orphanage , and a tree and plant nursery . At the beginning of the 20th century , a large brick and tile factory was erected on the premises , which produced one million bricks and 250 @, @ 000 tiles annually .

In 1889 Schneller acquired 1 @, @ 235 acres ( 5 @, @ 000 dunam ) in Bir Salem ( today Kibbutz Netzer Sereni ) in order to develop an agricultural school and land for settlement for his students and graduates . In 1906 another 890 acres ( 3 @, @ 600 dunam ) was added to the original parcel . Although the agricultural school did not materialize , the grain , fruits and vegetables produced by the farm supplemented the orphanage diet during the food shortages of World War I.

In 1889 Schneller gave over the operation of the orphanage to a consortium based in Stuttgart , while his eldest son , Theodor ( 1856 ? 1935 ) , became manager of the institution . In 1927 Theodor ? s youngest son , Ernst , took over the management of the institution until its confiscation by the British in 1940 .

= = Architecture = =

Like other European Christian institutions built in Jerusalem in the 1800s , the Schneller Orphanage was situated on high ground and was surrounded by a high stone wall , with an iron gate that was locked at night . The property exuded the power and influence of European Christians in Jerusalem with its multistory buildings , a clock tower , and decorative façade , including reliefs in stone and epigrams . Engraved on the façade of the main building is the verse " Jesus the Messiah has compassion upon us " in German and Arabic , as well as the name of the institution , Syrian Orphanage ( German : Syrisches Waisenhaus ) . There is also a stone relief of a lamb carrying a flag with a cross on it . Following the visit of Kaiser Wilhelm to Jerusalem in 1898 , the orphanage received three bells for its tower .

The architectural style of the main building is a combination of Southern German and local Arabic .

The tile roof and onion @-@ dome tower mounted on a square base reflects the former , while wide , rounded arches for doors and windows reflect the latter . A lightning rod extends from the onion dome . The H @-@ shaped main building has two interior courtyards which held a water cistern , garden and play area . The entire building covers an area of 50 @,@ 590 square feet ( 4 @,@ 700 square meters ) . At three stories , the main building housed the central dining room , a kitchen , a study hall , a library , a reading room , a small museum , and a Lutheran church in which students and staff worshipped .

Johann Ludwig Schneller brought in skilled Arab laborers from Bethlehem and Beit Jala to construct a total of eight buildings , which were constructed in stages and completed in the early 20th century . The year of completion and the name of the German city in which the donors for that building lived were engraved on each building façade . One of the buildings , called ? the Red House ? or ? the model house , ? was built entirely from materials produced on the orphanage grounds , including bricks , floor tiles and wrought @-@ iron work .

For most of its existence , the orphanage was in a continual state of expansion and modernization . Ruth Kark et al. notes :

... the locksmith @-@ shop was remodeled and changed location within the complex five times between the period of 1861 and 1930 ( 1861 , 1867 , 1900 , 1908 , 1930 ) . The bakery changed place and was modernized six times and ? in a similar way ? most of the functions and uses of the rooms changed during the seventy years of the institution ? s existence .

Johann Ludwig Schneller also purchased land in the vicinity of the orphanage and constructed houses for workers . Two of these Batei Schneller ( Schneller Houses ) still stand across the street from the main entrance , as well as three of the original five homes built several yards to the west ( near the present corner of Malkhei Yisrael and Sarei Yisrael Streets ) . A plaque on each home bears the name of the German city of its donors . The cities are : Halle , Stuttgart , Kletz , Munich , Hamburg , Petersberg , and Erpfingen , Schneller ? s birthplace .

= = 20th century = =

By 1903 the educational facility had grown to eight buildings and included the orphanage , the school for the blind , and vocational workshops for youth .

In 1910 , the jubilee year of the orphanage ? s founding , a fire destroyed the third floor and wooden roof of the main building , and damaged the second floor where the church was housed . Ludwig Schneller , a son of the founder who was the administrator at the time , managed to collect over 200 @,@ 000 marks in donations from Germany and rebuilt the entire structure . The upper story of the building was rebuilt in stone .

Building and expansion continued up to World War I , by which time the orphanage occupied 150 acres ( 600 dunam ) of land . The Schneller grounds reached all the way to present @-@ day Romema , where Schneller planted forests on land that eventually housed the Jerusalem Biblical Zoo . The orphanage ? s holdings were gradually reduced to 17 @.@ 5 acres with the sale of land to the new neighborhoods of Mekor Baruch and Kerem Avraham .

During World War I , the compound was used by the Turkish army and its allies as a barracks . From 1921 to 1927 , Theodor Schneller resumed management of the orphanage , overseeing the modernization of the property with electrical and sewage installations , as well as new machinery for the various workshops . His son Ernst directed the orphanage from 1927 until its confiscation by the British army in 1940 . The orphanage 's German funding sources were severely curtailed during the 1930s when the Nazi government of Germany banned citizens from sending funds abroad .

= = Military base = =

= = = British military camp = = =

When World War II broke out , the British shut down the orphanage and deported its German

teachers . The British turned the compound into a closed military camp known as the Schneller Barracks , installing about 50 watchtowers and huts . The camp housed the largest ammunition stockpile in the Middle East , as well as grain storehouses . The Royal Army Pay Corps 90th Battalion occupied the barracks in the late 1940s .

The British camp was targeted for attack by the Irgun on two occasions . On 27 June 1939 , the paramilitary group placed a letter bomb in the mailbox attached to the outside wall ; the subsequent explosion collapsed part of the wall and injured five Arabs in the vicinity . On 12 March 1947 , the Irgun penetrated the camp itself in a pre @-@ dawn operation and detonated explosives in one of the buildings to protest the imposition of martial law on Jerusalem . One British soldier was killed and eight injured in the blasts ; martial law was lifted four days later .

= = = Israeli military base = = =

On 17 March 1948 , the British abandoned the camp and the Etzioni Brigade of the Haganah used it as a home base during the 1948 Israeli War of Independence . For the next 60 years , the compound served as a training base for the Israel Defense Forces and an army clinic ; at one point , it also served as headquarters for the Home Front Command .

In 1951 the Israeli army summoned representatives of the World Lutheran Church to remove religious artifacts from the orphanage church ; church representatives removed bells , windows and a pipe organ , but left the heavy marble altar encased in a wooden chest . The church was then converted into a basketball arena for the soldiers . In October 2009 , on a tour of the facility after the army had vacated the grounds , the provost of the Evangelical German Lutheran Church of the Redeemer noticed the chest and asked for it to be opened , exposing the altar . The Lutherans negotiated for it to be moved to the Lutheran church at Augusta Victoria Hospital , where it was inaugurated in November 2010 .

During the 60 years of occupancy by the Israeli army , the base was served by an army synagogue in one of the halls of the main building , including a Torah ark , bookcase , and a balcony door set with 12 stained @-@ glass windows depicting the Twelve Tribes of Israel .

= = Current use = =

In 2008 the army base relocated to the Ofrit base near Mount Scopus . The Jerusalem municipality put together a " preservation and construction plan " for the Schneller compound , calling for the eight historic buildings to be developed for public use by the Orthodox Jewish community nearby . In November 2010 , part of the Schneller grounds were designated as a public parking lot by the municipality to ease the parking problems in the neighboring Geula commercial district . One hundred parking spaces were made available for up to three hours .

In 2011 the Israel Land Administration approved plans for the development of 218 luxury apartments on the property while preserving the eight historic orphanage buildings .

As of 2012 , parts of the complex are being used for a Bais Yaakov girls ' school , a Gerrar Talmud Torah , a training area for urban combat police , and municipal waste storage .

= = Successor schools = =

The philosophy and mission of the Schneller Orphanage continued after World War II in two successor schools in the Middle East .

The Johann Ludwig Schneller School in Khirbat Qanafar , Western Beqaa District , Lebanon , was started in Lebanon in 1948 by Elias al @-@ Haddad and 12 Schneller students , and was established in its present location in 1952 by Hermann Schneller , a grandson of Johann Ludwig Schneller . Like the Schneller Orphanage in Jerusalem , it provides academic and vocational training for impoverished local children . Today the school is owned and operated by the National Evangelical Church of Beirut .

The Theodor Schneller School was founded in Marka , 10 kilometres ( 6 @.@ 2 mi ) northwest of

Amman , Jordan , in 1959 by Hermann Schneller and graduates of the Schneller Orphanage in Jerusalem . Providing academic and vocational training for 265 orphaned and impoverished boys , it is funded by the Schneller Schools Society in Stuttgart and is under the auspices of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem . The Marka refugee camp , established nearby in 1968 , is often called the " Schneller camp " because of its proximity to this school .