



TIFTUF תיפתוף תיפתוף

**Förderverein für jüdisches Leben in Bingen
heute**

TIFTUF Association for the Promotion of Jewish life in Bingen Today

Annual Report 2010

(5769/5770 according to the Hebrew calendar)

“TIFTUF” is a Hebrew word which means “trickle” –
drop by drop, bit by bit a Jewish community will grow,
like plants in the desert that are made
to blossom by means of trickle irrigation.

Developments and events in 2010

- January 12, 2010: The main issue under discussion at the board meeting of TIFTUF was the structural changes in the apartment on no. 10, Rochusstraße. Another core theme was the idea to establish a "micro-museum" which will feature, among other things, a model of the synagogue. The Erich Kästner Museum in Dresden could serve as an example.
- January 21, 2010: attendance of a lecture by Rabbi Elisa Klappheck from Frankfurt at the school center in Oberwesel. Subject: "The Future of the Jewish Faith." The event was organized by the Rabbi Hillel Society.
- January 30, 2010: Tu Bishvat (New Year of the Trees) celebration. Since it was especially cold this year and the ground was still frozen, a little peach tree was planted in a tub in front of the synagogue. Afterwards the large group of TIFTUF members held a Tu Bishvat seder in the hall of the Binger Bühne. Blessings were recited over wine and fruits. The atmosphere was cozy, and there was dancing.
- April 9, 2010: Georgiy Striletzkiy, TIFTUF member and professional musician, played the piano at the opening of the exhibition "Experiencing History – The Jewish cemeteries in Ingelheim am Rhein."
- April 30, 2010: Great Israeli Folkdance event at the new cultural center in Koblenz, organized by Jutta Simon. Dance instructor Iris Lazimi led the dances of the approximately 70 participants.
- May 19, 2012: Shavuot, the Festival of Weeks, was celebrated in the dance hall of the Caritas House. It is a cheerful holiday, for according to tradition, it is the day on which God gave the Torah to the people of Israel. "Milchik" dishes were served, for example cheese cake. Israeli dance instructor Iris Lazimi visited, accompanied by a group of female dancers from the Jewish community in Frankfurt. After Iris recited the blessing, some very nice dance performances were given. Then she invited all those present to join in the dancing and offered instruction. Two professors from the Catholic College in Mainz, Dr. Eva Schuster and Dr. Margarete Dörr, brought a group of students with them. The goal was for TIFTUF members and students to get to know each other at the event. The students intend to document Jewish biographies, employing the method of "remembrance work." One of the participants expressed his gratitude the next day with the words, "A very beautiful, cheerful evening."



Dance instructor Iris Lazimi, college students from Mainz with Prof. Margarete Dörr



Israeli folkdance group from Frankfurt

June 2, 2010:

Excursion to the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt for the exhibition: "Germany of all places! Russian Immigration to the Federal Republic." Our introduction was in Russian.

"It was in Germany of all places that since 1989, less than 50 years after the Holocaust, roughly a quarter of a million of post-Soviet Jews decided to build a new life for themselves. Often estranged from Judaism, these people expected better prospects for their future here – at least for their children. Roughly 95,000 of these immigrants belong to Jewish communities today – out of a total of about 110,000 members. For the communities therefore the wave of immigration signifies a major turning point: a minority was suddenly confronted with the necessity to integrate a majority. In the course of this, extremely different perceptions and mentalities tend to clash.

The political decision-making process on the side of the German government, as well as the transformation of the Jewish community, went mostly unnoticed by the German public. Thus, twenty years after the beginning of Jewish migration, the time has come to take stock for the first time in a way that is broadly accessible and understandable: what effects does this substantial immigration have on the present and future situation of Jews in Germany? Have the migrants found ways into the Jewish communities and into German society, and if so, which ones? What are the basic political and societal conditions? What is the everyday life of the immigrants like? What problems arise between long-time residents and immigrants? What is Judaism in Germany today? The exhibition "Germany of all places! Russian Immigration to the Federal Republic" addresses these and many other, partly controversial, questions.

In so doing, curator Dmitrij Belkin and his team invite visitors for an interesting exploration covering the entire period until the present, for the process of integration and the new positioning of the Jewish communities, in which today the dominant language is Russian, are far from completed. Apart from the historical-political documentation of events and many very personal experiential reports of the protagonists themselves, the exhibition includes artwork dealing with the issue which was created especially for this show."

Source: Jewish Museum, Frankfurt.

- June 10, 2010: Guest lecture by D. Dürsch on "Jews from Russia" at the Catholic College in Mainz.
- June 13, 2010: Exhibition in Bingerbrück: "Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Japanese Woodblock Prints – Artistic Recognition from a Distant Country." Aniko Havas guided us through the gallery and treated us to coffee and pastries. The interest level was so high that the rooms were "bursting at the seams."
- June 28, 2010: Death of Kami Kadish of the Mainz Jewish community. Kami showed great interest in the development of TIFTUF from the first moment on, and we will greatly miss her probing questioning and her detailed advice. Baruch dayan ha'emet.
- August 29, 2010: Limmud Festival at the Philanthropin in Frankfurt: "Are you still learning? The Discovery of the Jewish Universe" – A day full of encounters and workshops on Jewish subjects.
- August 30, 2010: Death of Semjon Gendelman – Baruch dayan ha'emet.
- September 30, 2010: Grand opening of the new synagogue in Mainz.
- September 9, 2010: Rosh Hashanah, New Year 5771.
- September 23, 2010: Building of the Sukkah in the shade of Klopp Castle.



September 24, 2010: Sukkot celebration in commemoration of the wandering of the people of Israel in the wilderness. Unfortunately it began to rain. Next to the decorated sukkah we had mounted a sign explaining the meaning of a sukkah, protected by a plastic sheet. Three days later we found the paper sign totally crumpled up in the shrubbery. The sukkah had noticeably been dragged sideways, so that it had turned into a safety risk. The perpetrators remain anonymous. We had to dismantle the sukkah three days before the official end of the holiday.

November 8, 2010: Presentation of the renovated rooms by senior mayor Collin-Langen to the "Study Group Jewish Bingen" and "TIFTUF - Association for the Promotion of Jewish Life in Bingen Today" at a press conference. "We learned something new," emphasized the senior mayor. Afterwards both groups signed the use and occupation contract which was put forward by the City.

Speech of the chairwoman, Tamara Schmedro:

Dear Madam Mayor,

on behalf of our Association for the Promotion of Jewish Life in Bingen Today, TIFTUF, I would like to thank you and your colleagues most cordially. We saw these rooms two years ago, and what we see today is quite different. Therefore we cordially thank all those who have contributed to this, who have done their work with heart and soul, so that we feel comfortable here today. We very much appreciate it. Madam Mayor, we thank you for making the right decision two years ago, without much hesitation. You split up the rooms between all those in need, and no one is dissatisfied today. We are happy that these rooms will be used not just by us but also for other good causes. We are especially pleased that there will be a memorial in these rooms.

Ladies and gentlemen, "In the beginning was the word," that is, in the beginning there was an idea, and it was Mrs. Dorothea Dürsch who had it. She is "the heart and the soul" of our association. When the apartment in the building of the former synagogue became vacant, Mrs Dürsch immediately had the idea that this apartment should be used for the Jewish association, and many supported the idea. Mr. Martin Rector, Mr Vadym Reprin and Professor Dr. Eva Schuster were especially active.

Dear Dorothea, Martin, Dyma and Eva, on behalf of all members of our association, I would like to thank you all! And on behalf of our association, TIFTUF, I would like to thank the City of Bingen am Rhein for these rooms. They will be put to meaningful use.

Tamara Schmedro, (Chairwoman of TIFTUF, Association for the Promotion of Jewish Life in Bingen Today)
Bingen, November 7, 2010

“Allgemeine Zeitung”

A place to meet and remember

November 9, 2010 – Bingen

by Helena Sender-Petry

FORMER SYNAGOGUE A small apartment on first floor for “TIFTUF” and the “Jewish Bingen” Study Group.

The rooms are bright, friendly and functional. Fragments of columns and capitals still testify to the former splendor of the synagogue, which in 1905 was much more to the Jewish community of Bingen than just a place of worship. This magnificent building signified connectedness with the city and confidence in a citizenry of which until 1933, men, women and children of Jewish faith were a natural part. Not only for senior mayor Mrs. Birgit Collin-Langen it was therefore a moving moment, when what had previously served as an apartment was handed over to the “Jewish Bingen” Study Group and to the “TIFTUF” Association.

The background: “TIFTUF – Association for the Promotion of Jewish Life in Bingen Today” first started its initiative two years ago. The goal was formulated clearly: rooms in the former synagogue should be put at the disposal of the Jewish community as a place for Jews in Bingen. Already then “TIFTUF” suggested to also use the small apartment for exhibitions, parties or worship services. But there was a catch: the same 50 square meters had already been promised to the volunteer fire department. The senior mayor recalled how difficult it was to combine the various interests. Yet, “I had to rethink the matter, and today I am very glad to be in the position to inaugurate this place.” She called it “an authentic place which is in dialogue with history” and a worthy place for the “Jewish Bingen” Study Group to display the model of the synagogue.

Yet not only the imposing building *en miniature* testifies to the rich Jewish history of the city – an electronic stele informs about people in Bingen who were humiliated, robbed, tortured and murdered – because they were Jews. “It actually happened, there was no resistance,” admonished the senior mayor. And further: “The destruction of the synagogue, which began in the night between November 9 and 10, 1938, continued until the 1960s. There were no protests. This, too, is reality.”

Dr. Joseph Götten, chairman of the Study Group, and Tamara Schmedro, chairwoman of “TIFTUF,” thanked the municipal administration for the new “home.” From the large circle of supporters, Schmedro especially distinguished Dorothea Dürsch, whom she called “the heart and the soul of the Association.”

All in all, EUR 65,000 was invested in the renovation of the rooms in the first floor of the historical building on no. 10 Rochusstraße, which, it is assumed, used to be part of the rabbi’s apartment. It is also likely that there was a corridor leading to the sanctuary in this place. After World War II, the slender columns were connected by walls. It has not been finalized how and at what time each association will use the apartment. There is, however, a draft, which will come to the vote within the next few weeks.



Rejoicing about the new home in the remaining wing of the synagogue, which was inaugurated yesterday: Dorothea Dürsch, Tamara Schmedro, Prof. Dr. Eva Schuster, Birgit Collin-Langen, Beate Goetz and Dr. Joseph Götten (from left to right). Photo: hbz/Judith Wallerius.

Mrs. Helena Sender-Petry wrote the following commentary about the former synagogue:

There is Jewish life again in Bingen. This is the best news of all. Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists – every religious community looks for a place where its faith can be lived, discussed and passed on. The small apartment in the former synagogue contributes to raising new awareness for a lost, once so lively world. Judaism must not be relegated to the niche of commemoration, important and beneficial though “stumbling stones” and events commemorating November 9 may be – the night in the year 1938, when the synagogue in Bingen (among many others) went up in flames and the massive terror began. This is another reason why it appears almost cynical to have the picture of St. Florian [the patron saint of firefighters] in the plaster of the former synagogue. Where were the disciples of St. Florian in the Pogrom Night 72 years ago, which until today is euphemistically called “Kristallnacht” [lit. “crystal night”]? It would be a gesture of respect, also in view of today’s Jewish community, to set a visible example here.

November 20, 2010: Visiting the WIZO Bazaar at the Ignatz Bubis Community Center in Frankfurt (WIZO= Women’s International Zionist Organization, the world’s largest Zionist women’s organization).

November 29, 2010: Election of the new TIFTUF board at the new community center.



Vadym Repnin, Dr. Matusevych, Dr. David Berimble, Tamara Schmedro, Oleksandr and Ludmilla Ljubarski, Bella Mitrofanova



Galyna Berger, Dr. S. Matusevych, T. Schmedro, V. Repnin, Georgiy Striletzkiy, Dorothea Dürsch

The new board: Tamara Schmedro, chairwoman; Dorothea Dürsch, secretary; Dr. Sascha Matusevych, treasurer; committee members: Galyna Berger, Martin Rector, Vadym Repnin, Georgiy Striletskiy; elected members: Dr. David Berimble, Prof. Dr. Eva Schuster.

December 2, 2010: joint meeting of the "Jewish Bingen" Study Group and "TIFTUF". (the tone is still in need of improvement).

December 5/Kislev 28, 2010: Hanukkah – first TIFTUF celebration in the new rooms.



The nicest thing about the work with TIFTUF is the good atmosphere that prevails in the relationships among the members as well as the ease, joy and gratitude!



TIFTUF – Association for the Promotion of Jewish Life in Bingen Today

Artikel in the „Neue Binger Zeitung“

Binger Juden feierten Chanukka



BINGEN. Zahlreich waren die Mitglieder von „Tifuf – Förderverein für jüdisches Leben in Bingen heute“ zum Chanukkafest gekommen. Es wurde richtig eng beim Anzünden der fünften Kerze, dem Erzählen der Geschichte der mutigen Maccabäer und beim anschließenden ausgelassenen Feiern mit Musik und Gesang.

„Seit ich gewesen in Synagoge ich fühle wieder wie ein Jude“, äußerte sich einer der Biteren russisch-jüdischen Migranten. „Ich weiß nicht wie ich soll danken“, ein anderer. Dies zeigt, wie sehr sich die heute in Bingen lebenden Juden mit dem Gebäude identifizieren und es keines-

wegs gleichgültig ist, wo sich die Juden treffen können. Die Architektur und die Geschichte hat einen entscheidenden Einfluss auf die Menschen, was besonders für das Gebäude der Synagoge gilt. Das Chanukkafest war das erste Fest, das in den frisch renovierten Räumen gefeiert werden konnte.

Eine Woche zuvor hatten die Mitglieder von Tifuf zum zweiten Mal einen neuen Vorstand gewählt.

Die erneut erste Vorsitzende Tamara Schmedro betonte: „Es geht um unsere jüdische Tradition und Kultur und um ein soziales Netzwerk mit gegenseitiger Hilfe.“

red/Foto: privat

December 8, 2010: Hanukkah-market in the synagogue in Mainz.



December 12, 2010: TIFTUF organized a joint visit with the "Jewish Bingen" Study Group on occasion of the open house at the synagogue in Mainz which included a tour by chairwoman Stella Schindler-Siegreich and architect Manuel Herz. Their explanations were also translated into Russian.



Mrs Schindler-Siegreich showing the Torah shrine with the Torah scrolls.

Many thanks to all members of TIFTUF for being partners in our thinking, planning and action, and again and again, thanks for the wonderful music at all the meetings and activities this year.

Special thanks to Helene Hein who in spite of her two small children and her professional work translated all the letters for TIFTUF members into Russian!