

STORY OF THE LANDSBERG COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

The European Holocaust Memorial at Landsberg

After the war, memories of the camp receded. In 1983, eight Landsberg residents founded the Landsberg in the 20th Century association (Landsberg im 20. Jahrhundert) to preserve the memory of the genocide of the Jews that had been committed on their doorstep. The association purchased some of the land where the former subcamp known as “Kaufering VII” stood and built the European Holocaust Memorial there—not only as a place of remembrance, but also as an ongoing statement against racism and totalitarianism to deter similar crimes.

Amid the ruins of concentration camp bunkers and last traces of concentration camp earth huts, the memorial site “at the site of the crime” includes ten stones donated by European heads of state commemorating the deported and murdered Jews from their home country. The stones were installed at a central spot on the camp grounds, the former *Appellplatz*, where prisoners lined up for roll call. When the German government balked at donating a stone in remembrance of the German Jewish victims, the Landsberg association placed a memorial in their memory.

One of the association’s original eight members, Anton Posset was, in his own words, “a victim as a child of Nazism.” As a young child in Munich, he saw firsthand the air-raid horrors brought upon the German civilian population by the war that Hitler had started.

I also have memories of American soldiers who gave us chocolate and candy. And had not these American soldiers liberated us, my family would not have survived, because word went round our neighborhood, “The Posset family will end up in the Dachau concentration camp!” So, I am still very grateful to my American liberators.

Anton Posset was instrumental in installing a memorial stone donated by American liberators and their French supporters in the eastern corner of the Holocaust Memorial at Kaufering VII. The affixed metal plaque reads “NEVER AGAIN” in English, Hebrew, French, and German and recognizes the 103d Division in name and image in relief of the cactus insignia.

103d Division Commemorative Plaque Unveiling Ceremony

The 103d Division plaque was unveiled at a ceremony held on May 7, 2000. Among the 200 attendees were three Cactus Division veterans. William Schneck had served in Company F/411. A scout in Company C/409, George Davis spent almost six months as a German POW. A Frenchman who had fled Nazi occupation to the United States, Simon Dargols returned with the 103d Division Calvary Recon Troop to liberate his homeland.

At the plaque unveiling ceremony, the three 103d veterans laid a wreath with the words “Lest We Forget,” amid the wreaths from four survivors’ associations. George Davis wore his old uniform and brought a banner with the 103d Division’s cactus insignia, displayed in front of the podium. Anton Posset wrote, “He left me this banner and every year during the

commemoration of the liberation of the camp Kaufering VII, it is set on the stone of the 103d Infantry Division.”

At the plaque unveiling ceremony, Anton Posset was named an honorary member of the 103d Infantry Division. Addressed to Anton Posset:

This historic site was slated to be destroyed after the war. We owe its preservation to Mr. Anton Posset. We know it was not an easy task for him. He had to ward off those who tried to look away from the murky side of the Nazi past. The men of the 103d Division discovered here what they were fighting against.

A boy when 103d troops lifted the yoke of Nazi occupation from his hometown of Saint-Diés-des-Vosges, Maurice Lipka also received honorary member certificate from the 103d association, with this tribute:

Our friend in Saint-Dié crafted and donated the commemorative plaque for which we are very thankful. As a skilled professional, his works of art have been highly appreciated at previous 103d reunions. Ever since 1944, in Saint-Dié, he warmly welcomed the first elements of the 103d Division and, at every pilgrimage, has shown a sincere sense of hospitality toward the visiting veterans.

Like the memorials erected in France to remember the men of the 103d Division who helped free Nazi-occupied France, the memorial in Landsberg came about through the joint efforts of 103d veterans and the people they liberated.

Sources: Simon Dargols’ account of the plaque unveiling ceremony appears in William Moody’s book *Hell’s Folly (1941-1945)* (Victoria, BC: Trafford, 2006). In writing this article, Robert French and Francine Veilleux benefited from conversations with Maurice Lipka (August 2012) and e-mail messages from Anton Posset (December 7, 2012 and January 8, 2013). In addition to preserving the remains of the former concentration camp “Kaufering VII,” the association that Anton Posset cofounded has compiled and published documents, eye-witness accounts, and other sources and materials about the camps and the history of Landsberg. The association maintains a website that can be accessed in English at <http://www.buergervereinigung-landsberg.org/english/index.shtml>.



Unveiling of 103d commemorative plaque



European Holocaust Memorial and Kaufering VII concentration camp remnants



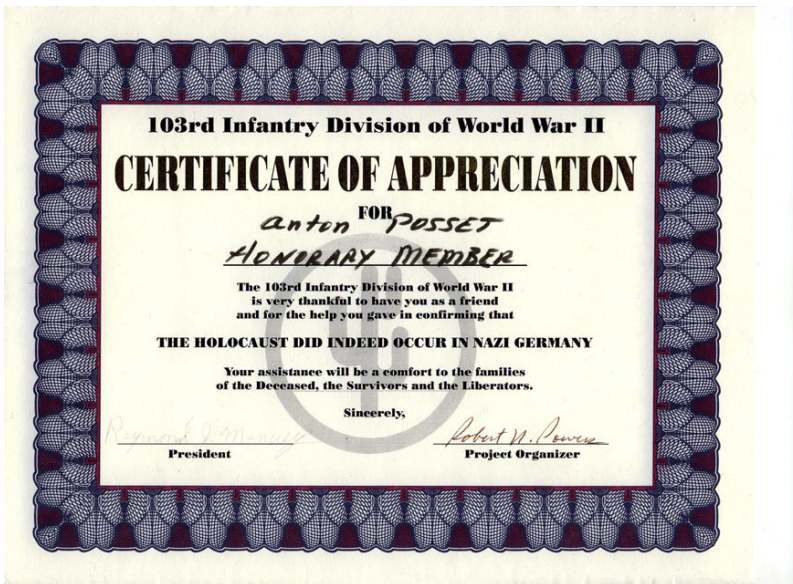
Plaque unveiling ceremony, where an orchestra (left) played the American and French national anthems



George Davis (Co C/409) speaking at the plaque unveiling ceremony



103d veterans Simon Dargols, William Schneck, and George Davis at the 103d plaque unveiling ceremony



“This certificate has a place of honor in my office at work.”—Anton Posset. It was signed by 103d association president (1994-2002) Raymond J. Menuey and Robert N. Powers (Antitank Co/411), who prepared *Holocaust: The Story of 103d Infantry Division* (1994; variant title: *The 103rd Infantry Division of World War II's Unquestionable Confirmation that a Holocaust Did Indeed Occur in Nazi Germany*).



Anton Posset, historian and cofounder of the Landsberg in the 20th Century association



European Holocaust Memorial in wintertime