

## How to place a STOLPERSTEIN

July 2014

Some 48,000 Stolpersteine have already been installed in over 1,000 places in Germany and in 17 other European countries (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Italy, Hungary, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine).

There are many requests and the waiting lists are getting longer.

Please read and follow these steps if you would like to place a Stolperstein in Germany or elsewhere.

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## **1. Permission**

Before a Stolperstein can be laid, permission must be obtained from the local authorities. Unless an initiative for Stolpersteine already exists in a village, town or city (please see our CONTACTS page for a list of initiatives in Germany), it is advisable to contact the mayor or council to obtain permission.

Furthermore, we insist that everything be done to find and inform any living descendants or relatives before laying Stolpersteine.

It is also advisable to inform the current inhabitants of buildings in front of which Stolpersteine will be laid. This is not compulsory, however, because the sidewalk is usually public property. Nonetheless, it can prevent problems or controversy.

## **2. Inscriptions**

ONE PERSON - ONE STONE - ONE FATE

Gunter Demnig's motto is: ONE VICTIM - ONE STONE. There are no collective Stolpersteine (please see STOLPERSCHWELLE below). This project commemorates all victims of National Socialism - Jews, Sinti, Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, mentally and physically disabled people, people persecuted for their political views, their religion or their sexuality, forced laborers, men considered deserters - anyone who was persecuted or murdered under the National Socialists between 1933 - 1945.

NB: Stolpersteine are not only placed for people who died, but also for "survivors". For example, in front of a house in Amsterdam, a Stolperstein might be placed for a woman who survived Auschwitz alongside two Stolpersteine for her parents who did not. This "reunites" families. Stolpersteine can also be placed for people who were able to escape to Palestine or South America or survivors of concentration camps. The project also commemorates those who were forced by the circumstances to commit suicide.

Therefore, please try to find out as much as you can about the families of victims before requesting a Stolperstein.

## How to place a STOLPERSTEIN

Sources of information for further research about inscriptions or addresses:

- the International Tracing Service (<https://www.its-arolsen.org/english/>)
- the Federal Archives of Germany (<http://www.bundesarchiv.de/index.html.en>)
- the Memorial Book (<http://www.bundesarchiv.de/gedenkbuch/directory.html>)
- Yad Vashem (<http://www.yadvashem.org>)
- local archives and historical societies
- the Union of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime (VPN)
- trade unions
- churches
- groups and associations for Sinti & Roma
- groups and associations for homosexuals
- groups and associations for Jehovah's Witnesses
- hospitals can provide information on the Nazis' euthanasia programs

We advise you to do everything possible to find out as much information about a victim before sending us your proposed inscriptions. Please do not rely solely on information from family members but also carry out further research.

If possible, we encourage involving school children in the process of laying Stolpersteine and carrying out research. Experience shows that there is great interest among young people.

If possible, STOLPERSTEINE are always placed in front of the last residence of choice - never in front of places people were forced to move to. Therefore, they should never be placed in front of what the Nazis called "Judenhaeuser" ("Houses for Jews").

Exceptions might be made if a street no longer exists or if there is a reason for placing them in front of a place of employment for example. In such cases the Stolpersteine might bear the heading HIER LERNTE (HERE STUDIED), HIER LEHRTE (HERE TAUGHT), HIER ARBEITETE (HERE WORKED) or HIER PRAKTIZIERTE (HERE PRACTISED) instead of HIER WOHNTE (HERE LIVED).

Sometimes, there might be a case for not having a heading at all.

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The following information is required for the inscription of a Stolperstein, insofar it is known or applicable:

- First name, family name and maiden name
- Year of birth (not full date of birth)
- Full date of arrest if applicable
- Information about internment in a camp (e.g. Westerbork / Drancy)
- Year of deportation to concentration camp (e.g. Auschwitz / Dachau)
- Full date of murder

For Gunter Demnig, everyone who died in a concentration camp was murdered, and therefore the most common “fate” is ERMORDERT (MURDERED). However, in certain cases it is possible to use the word TOT (DEAD) but not TOD (DEATH), as this implies a natural death. FLUCHT IN DEN TOD (FLIGHT INTO DEATH) is used in cases of suicide. The word EMIGRATED is not used, instead ESCAPE YEAR and DESTINATION are preferred.

Once you have been given a date for the laying of Stolpersteine, please send inscriptions in a WORD document per e-mail to Karin Richert (for Germany) or contact Anne Thomas who will provide you with a template if they are to be placed outside of Germany. Anne and Karin need to receive inscriptions at least three months before the given date.

You will receive the inscriptions for proofreading before they are made. If you have any questions Karin and Anne will gladly advise you.

Gunter Demnig has the final say on inscriptions.

## **Appointments**

As mentioned above, there is already a huge interest in Stolpersteine, which is growing by the minute, and we do our best to accommodate all requests. However, we cannot meet every demand and certainly cannot grant all requests for Stolpersteine to be laid on a particular day.

Gunter Demnig is on the road over 300 days a year.

At the moment, there is a waiting period of at least six months - sometimes more. In countries such as Poland or France, it is not always easy to obtain permission and therefore the wait can be much longer.

Please do not ask for an appointment for Stolpersteine to be placed in Germany unless you have permission from the local authorities and until you have carried out all the necessary research for the inscriptions.

We try to announce Gunter Demnig's timetable six months in advance but this is subject to change. This might be because of last-minute cancellations or for reasons pertaining to weather or illness. Sometimes, Gunter's tours have to be re-arranged entirely.

Please be aware that Gunter places Stolpersteine on all days of the week regardless of public or religious holidays - he suggests that people organize unveiling ceremonies on later dates if the laying of a Stolpersteine clashes with a religious holiday.

If you want to place Stolpersteine without Gunter Demnig's help (NB This is only possible if Stolpersteine have already been placed in a given village, town or city), please expect to wait as Michael Friedrichs-Friedlaender who makes all the Stolpersteine cannot make more than 450 per month and has limited capacity.

Please contact Anna Warda (for Germany) or Anne Thomas (for outside of Germany) if you want to place Stolpersteine alone.

## **Placing STOLPERSTEINE**

A Stolperstein is a cube that is 96 x 96 mm in size and 100 mm high. A hole should not be more than 12 cm deep.

Gunter Demnig tries to place as many Stolpersteine as possible - he always places the first Stolpersteine in a new place.

Stolpersteine are never placed in a wall but always on a sidewalk - usually directly in front of the entrance or underneath the house number. Gunter usually decides where exactly they should be placed at a given address on the day itself.

Gunter always tries to keep families together by placing Stolpersteine for them as a unit - stones for parents will be placed above those for children in this case.

Where possible, please request help from the local building authorities (with preparing the holes or removing rubble for example) well in advance of the given date.

In Germany, help is compulsory. In other countries, it depends on individual situations.

If there is no help on hand, please ensure that Gunter has access to electricity as well as a pair of extra hands to help remove rubble etc. It makes sense to provide information about the surface where a Stolperstein might be placed in advance if possible. Gunter can then prepare his work more thoroughly.

As a rule, Gunter needs 20 minutes per address if he has the assistance of the local building authorities (Bauamt in Germany).

When planning his itinerary, please ensure you leave enough time for Gunter to travel from one address to the next.

Please ensure that you have obtained permission for Gunter to park his Peugeot van (BM-GD 2710). In Germany, this can be obtained from the Ordnungsamt.

If a Stolperstein is removed or damaged, please contact Karin Richert (for Germany) or Anne Thomas (for outside of Germany). Everything will be done to replace the Stolperstein as soon as possible.

## **Costs**

It costs 120 euros to install a Stolperstein. This includes the making of the stone and its placement or delivery if applicable. All the Stolpersteine are made by hand by Michael Friedrichs-Friedlaender in Berlin.

Stolpersteine are financed by private donations. Private individuals, institutions, educational establishments, companies, associations or political parties might choose to “sponsor” a Stolperstein.

We work on a principle of trust. You will only receive an invoice once the Stolpersteine have been laid. Please do not transfer any money before receiving an invoice. Please indicate the invoice number when transferring money.

Accommodation costs might be incurred, as well as in certain cases travel costs (especially outside of Germany).

Karin Richert is responsible for issuing invoices.

## **Lecture by Gunter Demnig**

Upon request and for a fee of 200 euros & 19% VAT, Gunter Demnig can give a lecture about his Stolperstein project and its history.

This might be organized for the general public and/or for students or schoolchildren or to raise funds to lay Stolpersteine.

Sometimes, accommodation and travel costs might also be incurred.

If you arrange for Gunter Demnig to give a lecture, please provide a laptop and projector for a PowerPoint presentation stored on a USB stick or DVD.

## **Requests for Stolpersteine outside of Germany**

Anne Thomas is responsible for coordinating Gunter Demnig's timetable outside of Germany and for inscriptions in languages other than German. Please contact her for any questions regarding Stolpersteine abroad. She is a native speaker of English and French, but you can also correspond with her in German and Russian if necessary.

Anne Thomas

e-mail: [international@stolpersteine.eu](mailto:international@stolpersteine.eu)

## **STOLPERSCHWELLEN**

There are certain cases when hundreds or thousands of Stolpersteine would have to be laid in one place. This being almost impossible, Gunter Demnig has come up with an alternative to Stolpersteine, the STOLPERSCHWELLE (which can be roughly translated as "Stumbling Threshold" . In a few lines, a Stolperschwelle can record the fate of a group of victims.

An example inscription:

On 3rd August 1939, 542 patients were transported from here to Bernburg-Hau. On 8th August, they were transported to Galkhausen and on August 11th they were taken to Andernach where they were murdered as part of the Nazis' T4 program.

A Stolperschwelle is also 96 mm wide but can be up to 1 meter in length. It can hold up to 5 lines of text.

Like the Stolpersteine, each Stolperschwelle is made by hand.



## Contact us

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