

Michael Levy kehrte zur Einweihung der Stolpersteine für seine Großeltern und seine Mutter im Juni 2018 in Begleitung seiner großen Familie ein weiteres Mal nach Berlin zurück und hielt die folgende Ansprache:

Dear family and neighbors

Thank you all for being here for this event – and a special thanks to Karin and the “Stolpersteine team” for arranging for the stones to be made and installed!

If my Mother and her Parents were alive, they would be astounded to see us all gathered here where my Mother lived until she was 17 before they left for Guatemala. My grandmother Margarete and my grandfather Richard moved to this house the day after their wedding, on June 30, 1919 – almost 99 years ago this week!...and my mother Ruth Rose was born in 1921.

My grandfather – whom I never met – was a travelling salesman, and was gone during the week carrying his little suitcase with samples of wares to show for prospective buyers.

He was a soldier during WWI, and received a ‘cross of honor’ designation – which he firmly believed would prevent the Nazis from harming him. We know that history proved him wrong...

My grandmother had to convince my grandfather that it was not safe to stay in Germany – and she asked her sister in Guatemala – whose husband knew the President – to help them get a visa to emigrate.

(The interesting side story here is that Cousin Gunter’s Uncle Ulrich Hagelberg and wife Sarita – who worked at the Guatemalan Consulate – kept it open, even after it was “officially closed due to war declaration” – and thus they got their visas. Many years later when my own parents married, the two families were so to speak ‘joined’.)

According to my grandmother’s story, my family left Berlin in 1938 on the “Caribia” and arrived in Guatemala only after a small scare: a few days after the ship left port, all passengers were advised that the ship had to return, as there was a possibility that war would break out – the ship was of German registry. Only after the threat of war passed was the ship given permission to proceed on its route.

In 1973 my mother and grandmother were invited by the city of Berlin to return for a visit. I joined them from Israel, and we had a very emotional and wonderful visit here. I wanted to see the house where they lived, and my grandmother said she thought it had been bombed and no longer existed. As you can see, it is still here!

I wanted to see inside – my grandmother said that at almost 85 years old she could not go up the stairs—my mother and I managed to get into the house – we of course found out there is an elevator inside...my grandmother later told me she did not want to get upset by going inside.

Now here we are, all gathered to memorialize their lives in this place, with hopes that our families will remember their roots, and the neighbors learn that real people – who were persecuted for their religion – also lived here – and were uprooted to move to another far away place.

The Jewish People have always managed to survive! AM ISRAEL CHAI!

Let us say ונייחהש –:

BARUCH ATAH ADONAY:

SHEHECHEYANU VEKIYEMANU VEHIGIANU LAZEMAN HAZEH – and let me add:
LA MAKOM HAZE – THIS PLACE

“Blessed are you Adonai Our God, who gave us life, and kept us strong, and brought us to this time – and place”.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַזְּמַן הַזֶּה.