

Zur Verlegung der Stolpersteine sagte der Enkel James W. Young, Ehemann der Nichte von Shulamit Rosenberg, in Berlin:

„Erich and Jenny Leiser were Berliners, whose love survived the horrors of a changing world, the heartache of family separations and the trauma of relocation to build a new life in a distant land.

Erich, born in 1896, grew up in an established and wealthy home, studying at a commercial school before he volunteered for service in the German Army of World War I. He was captured in Algiers after a gas attack and later received a medal for his army service---a medal he later believed would be proof enough of his loyalty to save him from persecution.

In 1919 he married the petite and amiable Jenny Selinger, five years his junior, and they settled into a comfortable home as he went into partnership in a retail shoe network called Leiser-Klausner that was a prominent part of the Berlin business scene until it was eventually confiscated by the Nazis.

The 1920's were happy and prosperous years for Erich and Jenny. The births of two daughters, Lilo in 1920 and Uschi in 1925, brought much joy. Although Erich worked long hours, he devoted a great deal of attention to his family, often playing the piano accompanied by the singing of his wife and daughters.

The family was fully assimilated in German culture and enjoyed a rich social life, with banquets, cabarets, opera and theater. They visited a synagogue on the Jewish observances for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It was a happy home. Jenny, a caring and loving mother, gave her daughters independence and allowed them an active social life at school and in the youth movement.

But the 1920's came to an end, and with the Nazi rise to power, the Leisers' family life began to change radically. The business was confiscated by the Nazi regime and Erich started to work with his father-in-law in a business trading in eggs. Jenny began studying cosmetics, assuming she could help support the family if the time came that they would have to emigrate from Germany.

That time did come. Lilo went first, emigrating to Palestine in 1935, followed by Uschi in 1939. Erich began looking for ways he and Jenny could also leave, but in 1940, he was sent to a forced labor camp. Petite, amiable Jenny moved in with friends and began a determined effort to win Erich's release. With the help of an American journalist, she succeeded, and in 1941, they managed to leave Germany—arriving first in Amsterdam. Incredibly as they struggled to find food and shelter there, Jenny re-entered Germany and was able to rescue her ailing mother, Ana Selinger. The three of them boarded a ship leaving Trieste for Palestine, but Ana's heart stopped one hour after they sailed. They left the ship in Split, where Ana was buried, then Erich and Jenny had to change their plans.

They arrived at a refugee camp in Lisbon in September of 1941, where they sheltered for about six months before they obtained visas to the

United States. In 1942, they arrived in New York with only 20 dollars in their pockets. Erich worked at a variety of jobs, cleaning fish, a warehouseman at a department store. Eventually, he became production manager in a factory producing asbestos insulation panels. Jenny began working in a firm making hand-embroidered symbols for the United States Army. Slowly they recovered and their life together stabilized after receiving some small financial compensation from Germany.

Fifteen years after saying goodbye to Lilo and eleven years after their painful separation from Uschi, the family was reunited when Erich and Jenny visited them and their families in the new nation of Israel. In 1958, they sponsored Lilo and her family's emigration to the United States.

Erich died and was buried in New York in 1959 after suffering a heart attack and then a stroke. Jenny again visited Israel in 1965, then gave Lilo shelter for a time after her marriage ended in 1969. In 1979, Uschi and Peretz visited Jenny in New York. The following year, petite, amiable Jenny suffered from ill health and died. She was also buried in New York."

Eine weitere Ansprache hielt Dan Rubin, ebenfalls Enkelsohn von Erich und Jenny Leiser, Neffe von Shulamit Rosenberg:

„Jewish people are masters of irony. They tell good jokes and are some of the best writers of comedy and tragedy in the world. A simple word like 'mazel tov' (congratulations) can be said either congratulatory or sarcastically depending on the inflection of how it is said, either with gusto or with a shrug.

What took place in this city, this country and the countries that were annexed was a devastating tragedy, resulting in not only the biggest act of genocide in history but, a story less often told of a diaspora, of families divided across oceans, continents and, frustratingly even languages. This is the story of our family and it began here in Berlin.

Whenever anyone asks me where I'm from, my story always starts here, ironically before I was even born. It starts with Erich and Jenny Leiser, my grandparents. They are also, ironically, responsible for me being an American citizen.

So it is both fitting and proper that in this city, once the home of the 1000 year Reich that lasted a mere 12 years, that you can look around and see no monuments to it and Adolf Hitler. Instead, you can see these stones dedicated to their victims among whom are our beloved Erich and Jenny.

For this, and speaking for our whole family, I would like to thank, without irony and with heartfelt gratitude, the artist Gunter Demnig and the Charlottenburg Stolpersteine association."