

Jewish retirement home Schönhauser Allee

In 1880, Bertha and Moritz Manheimer provided the funds to build a Jewish old age home to mark their silver wedding anniversary. The home on Schönhauser Allee, designed by Carl Schwatlo and the Berlin Jewish community's second institution for the elderly, opened its doors on November 11, 1883, and the first twelve residents moved in soon after. The building was then expanded, and between 1892 and 1942 up to 80 men and women spent their remaining years there. Private donors sponsored the accommodation of poorer people. The home included private rooms, communal spaces, its own synagogue as well as a library. In the wake of government decreed discrimination and persecution after the National Socialists came to power, the number of needy Jews who sought admission or at least provisions in the old age home on Schönhauser Allee rose. Most of the residents were deported on August 17, 1942 as part of the first mass transport of the elderly "großer Alterstransport" to Theresienstadt, where they were murdered. After the forced sale of the property the city of Berlin assumed ownership, after which point Ukrainian forced laborers were housed in the building. In the German Democratic Republic (GDR) the building housed the Prenzlauer Berg People's Police DDR and the Berlin police continued to use the property until 2001. After remaining vacant for years, the building was renovated and is now a owner apartment.

A resident reading in her room, Schönhauser Allee, 1930's

Pisarek/akg-images Image Archive

The dining room in the Jewish Home for the Aged, Schönhauser Allee, 1930's

Pisarek/akg-images Image Archive

Architect's drawing from the construction files

The facade of the brick building, erected on the Souterrain, was enhanced by a three-axis central risalit .

Pankow District Office, Construction Files Archive

Grave

The grave of Bertha (1837-1918) and Moritz Manheimer (1826-1916) at the Jewish Cemetery on Schönhauser Allee was constructed from the same brownish-yellow bricks as the facade of the old age home they sponsored.

Below: Exterior view, 1930's

Pisarek/akg-images Image Archive

Front side: View of the main entrance, construction files (detail)

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