

**Die Deutsch-Britische Gesellschaft
lädt Sie herzlich ein zu einer Buchpräsentation in englischer Sprache von**

**Ainslie Hepburn
„In the Footsteps of the Holocaust:
The Story and Letters of a German Jewish Family“**

Dienstag, den 14. April 2026 um 19 Uhr

Gerhart-Hauptmann-Haus, Bismarckstr. 90 (Nähe Düsseldorf Hauptbahnhof)

This is the story of ‚ordinary‘ people who were caught up in the cataclysm of events in Europe during the 1930s and 1940s. A discovery of letters that had been carefully kept for decades since that time led to the uncovering of a family story that took the author on a journey in the footsteps of her husband’s grandparents through Germany, Belgium and France.

Hermann Hartog (1887-1942) was a Jewish teacher in the north-west of Germany at a time of increasing anti-Semitism. He and his wife Henny (1897 - 1942) recognised that Germany was becoming an unsafe place for Jews and sent their daughters to England for safety. As a leader of his community, Hermann stayed for as long as he could.

After ‚Kristallnacht‘ in November 1938 Hermann was arrested with other Jewish men and sent to the concentration camp Sachsenhausen. He was later released on condition that he would leave the country. Hermann and Henny fled to Brussels, but when Belgium was invaded in 1940 they were sent to Paris, and then found refuge in a village in the south-west of France. Here ‚ordinary‘ people gave them shelter, work and friendship during the dark days of 1941 and 1942. When French police - acting on the orders of the Vichy government and the Nazi occupiers of France – arrested them, it was part of a round-up of Jews to deport them for extermination. After a long journey, they were murdered in Auschwitz in September 1942.

Ainslie Hepburn is a writer, tutor and historian who is particularly interested in discovering the lives of people from all walks of life during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She has a first-class honours degree from the Open University and was a tutor in social history at the *Workers‘ Educational Association*. She is a gifted and thorough researcher in official and rare sources, including oral history. Her previous book „*A Jew who defeated Nazism: Herbert Sulzbach’s Peace, Reconciliation and a New Germany*“ explores the life of an extraordinary man whose experiences led him to a life’s mission to promote Anglo-German reconciliation. Ainslie writes from her home in the vibrant city of Brighton or from a peaceful round room in a coast house in the countryside of Sussex.

After the talk you are invited to a drink

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Schirmherrin: Roseanna Watson HM Consul General Düsseldorf

Geschäftsführung: Dr. Christel Jenkner, Birkenweg 4, 40627 Düsseldorf, Tel.: 0211 / 201 560,
, cjenkner@t-online.de; www.debrige.de

Vorstand: Peter Brock (1. Vorsitzender), Dr. Christel Jenkner (2. Vorsitzende),
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,Steuernummer 106/ 5742/ 2462 Finanzamt Düsseldorf-Süd; VR 10203 Amtsgericht Düsseldorf