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Theresienstadt concentration camp

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"Theresienstadt" redirects here. For the town, see Terezín.

Theresienstadt concentration camp, also referred to as Theresienstadt Ghetto,^{[1][2][3]} was established by the SS during World War II in the fortress and garrison city of Terezín (German name *Theresienstadt*), located in what is now the Czech Republic. During World War II it served as a Nazi concentration camp staffed by German Nazi guards.

Tens of thousands of people died there, some killed outright and others dying from malnutrition and disease. More than 150,000 other persons (including tens of thousands of children) were held there for months or years, before being sent by rail transports to their deaths at Treblinka and Auschwitz extermination camps in occupied Poland, as well as to smaller camps elsewhere.^[4]



The Small Fortress (2005)



Location of the concentration camp in the Czech Republic

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The fortress of [Terezín](#) in the north-west region of [Bohemia](#) was constructed between the years 1780 and 1790 on the orders of the Austrian emperor [Joseph II](#). It was designed as part of a projected but never fully realized fort system of the monarchy, another piece being the fort of [Josefov](#). Terezín was named for the mother of the emperor, [Maria Theresa of Austria](#), who reigned as archduchess of Austria in her own right from 1740–1780. By the end of the 19th century, the facility was obsolete as a fort; in the 20th century, the fort was used to accommodate military and political prisoners.

From 1914 until 1918, [Gavrilo Princip](#) was imprisoned here, after his conviction for the assassination of [Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria](#) and his wife on June 28, 1914, a catalyst for [World War I](#). Princip died in cell number 1 from [tuberculosis](#) on April 28, 1918.

After Germany invaded and occupied Czechoslovakia, on June 10, 1940, the [Gestapo](#) took control of Terezín and set up a prison in the "Small Fortress" (*kleine Festung*, the town [citadel](#) on the east side of the [Ohře](#) river). The first inmates arrived June 14. By the end of the war, the small fortress had processed more than 32,000 prisoners, of whom 5,000 were female; they were imprisoned for varying sentences. The prisoners were predominantly Czech at first, and later other nationalities were imprisoned there, including citizens of the Soviet Union, Poland, Germany and Yugoslavia. Most were political prisoners.^[5]

By November 24, 1941, the Nazis adapted the "Main Fortress" (*große Festung*, i.e. the walled town of Theresienstadt), located on the west side of the river, as a [ghetto](#).^[5] Jewish survivors have recounted the extensive work they had to do for more than a year in the camp, to try to provide basic facilities for the tens of thousands of people who came to be housed there.

From 1942 the Nazis interned the Jews of Bohemia and Moravia, elderly Jews and persons of "special merit" in the Reich, and several thousand Jews from the Netherlands and Denmark. Theresienstadt became therefore known as the destination for the "Altentransporte"^[6] (Elderly transports) of German Jews, older than 65. Although in practice the ghetto, run by the SS, served as a transit camp for Jews en route to extermination camps, it was also presented as a "model Jewish settlement" for propaganda purposes:^{[7] [8]}

On November 11, 1943 Commandant [Anton Burger](#) ordered the entire camp population (approximately 40,000 people at that time) to stand in freezing weather during a camp census (sometimes referred to as the "Bohušovicer Kessel Census"). About 300 prisoners died of [hypothermia](#) as a result.^[9]

In 1944 during a Red Cross visit and by a propaganda film, the Germans presented Theresienstadt to outsiders as a model Jewish settlement, but it was a [concentration camp](#). More than 33,000 inmates died as a result of malnutrition, disease, or the sadistic treatment by their captors.^[10] Whereas some survivors claimed that the prison population reached 75,000 at one time, according to official records, the highest figure reached (on September 18, 1942) was 58,491. They were crowded into barracks designed to accommodate 7,000 combat troops.^[11]

In the fall of 1944, the Nazis began the liquidation of the ghetto, deporting more prisoners to Auschwitz and Treblinka; in one month, they deported 24,000 victims.^[12]

Main fortress [edit]

In the spring of 1942, the Nazis expelled the 7,000 non-Jewish Czechs living in Terezín, and closed off the town. The Nazis established the ghetto and concentration camp in the main fortress on the east side of the river.

SS-*Hauptsturmführer* [Siegfried Seidl](#)^[13] served as the first camp commandant, beginning in 1941. Seidl oversaw the labor of 342 Jewish artisans and carpenters, known as the *Aufbaukommando*, who converted the fortress into a concentration camp. Although the *Aufbaukommando* were promised that they and their families would be spared transport, in September 1944 during the liquidation of the camp, all were transported to [Auschwitz-Birkenau](#)^[14] for *Sonderbehandlung*, or "special treatment", i.e. immediate gassing of all upon arrival.^[15]

Command and control authority [edit]

The camp was established under the order of the *SS-Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (RSHA) in 1941. The administration of the main camp was under the authority of the *SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt* (WVHA), which oversaw the SS officers and soldiers who were responsible for



Gate with the slogan "Work makes free" in the Small Fortress

camp administration—themselves members of the SS Concentration Camp service, or the *Totenkopfverbände* (SS-TV). Security within the camp was provided by guard battalions of the SS-TV and police battalion troops of the *Ordnungspolizei*. An internal police force, run by the Jewish inmates, was known as the *Ordnungsdienst* and answered directly to the SS. The camp also made use of local Czech *Gendarmerie*, guards who collaborated with the Germans in the enslavement, deportation and murder of Jews.

By 1943, the Concentration Camp service of the SS had been completely folded into the *Waffen-SS*, with most of the camp staff and guards serving as reserve *Waffen-SS* soldiers. The Gestapo also maintained a presence at the camp, in that it was the Gestapo and *Sicherheitsdienst* that oversaw the day-to-day operations in the "Small Fortress" prison. The direct command authority for the camp was the Inspector of Concentration Camps, to which the Commandant reported to directly. The Commandant also received orders from the RSHA (specifically Department IV-B4 under **Adolf Eichmann**), the Office of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (under **Reinhard Heydrich**), and the office of the local **SS and Police Leader**.

SS-Hauptsturmführer Ernst Möhs (1898-1945) was Eichmann's liaison-officer in Theresienstadt. During the camp's operations, three officers served as Camp Commandant: **Siegfried Seidl**, **Anton Burger**, and **Karl Rahm**.



Stone marking the burial of ashes of 15,000 victims of **Terezín** at the New Jewish Cemetery, Prague

Internal organization [\[edit\]](#)

As in other European ghettos, the Nazis required the Jews to select a **Jewish Council**, who nominally governed the ghetto. In Theresienstadt this was known as the "Cultural Council;" later it was called the "Jewish self-government of Theresienstadt".^[16] The first of the Jewish Elders of Theresienstadt was **Jakob Edelstein**, a Polish-born Zionist and former head of the **Prague** Jewish community. He served until 1943, when he was deported to Auschwitz and shot to death after being forced to watch the executions of his wife and son.^[17] The second was **Paul Eppstein**, a sociologist originally from **Mannheim**, Germany. Earlier, Eppstein was the speaker of the *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland*, the central organization of Jews in Nazi Germany. He served until the autumn of 1944, when he was allegedly shot in the Small Fortress on **Yom Kippur**, after telling people in the ghetto what awaited those who were deported to the East.^[citation needed]

Benjamin Murelstein, a **Lviv**-born rabbi from **Vienna**, had been part of the Cultural Council in Vienna after the *Anschluss*. As in other cities, the Jews were charged by the Nazis with organizing actions in the Jewish community, including selection of people for transport when the Germans decided to deport them, beginning in 1942. Murelstein was also deported to Theresienstadt. In the fall of 1944, he succeeded Eppstein. He and other prominent Jews of the Cultural Council were deported to Auschwitz in the liquidation of the ghetto, but he and some others survived the war. He and other Jewish elders have been extremely controversial figures, condemned for years for what was seen as his collaboration with the Nazis.

In the 21st century, there has been some reassessment, given the conditions of the times. **Claude Lanzmann**, the French film director who made *Shoah* (1988), released *Last of the Unjust* (2013), a documentary about Murelstein. He first interviewed the former rabbi in 1975 as part of his work on *Shoah*.^[18]

In the last days of the ghetto, Jifí Vogel of Prague served as the Elder. From 1943-1945, **Leo Baeck** was the Speaker of the Council of Elders of Theresienstadt. Before being deported to the camp from Berlin, he had served as the head of the *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland*. He survived Theresienstadt and emigrated to London after the war.^[19]

Industrial labor [\[edit\]](#)

Theresienstadt was used to supply the German war effort with a source of Jewish slave labor. Their major contribution was the splitting of local ore mined from Czechoslovakian *mica*. Blind prisoners were often spared deportation by assignment to this task. Others manufactured boxes or coffins. Others sprayed military uniforms with a white dye to provide camouflage for German soldiers on the Russian front. According to ex-prisoners, Theresienstadt was also a sorting and re-distribution centre for underwear and clothing confiscated from Jews

"from all parts of Germany, the baggage taken away from the Jews was sent to Theresienstadt, and there it was packaged, sorted-out in order to be sent out all over the country, to various cities, for the people who were bombed-out and suffered a shortage of underwear and clothing."^[16]

Western European Jews arrive at camp [\[edit\]](#)

Among the western European Jews deported to the camp, in 1943, 456 Jews from Denmark were sent to Theresienstadt. They had not been able to **escape to neutral Sweden** before the invasion of the Nazis. Included also in the transports were European Jewish children whom Danish organizations had tried to conceal in foster homes.

The arrival of the Danes was significant, as in 1944 their government gained access of the **International Red Cross** to the ghetto to view conditions. (This took place after the **D-Day Invasion** of Normandy by the Allies.) Most European governments, when occupied by the Nazis, had not tried to protect their fellow Jewish citizens. Historians believe the Germans were trying to keep the Danes satisfied as they had impressed many of their workers in war factories. In addition, the tide of war was changing.

Improvements made by inmates [\[edit\]](#)

Survivor Friedrich Schlaefrig described in 1946 how the early residents of Theresienstadt, with the assistance of the Germans, overcame the lack of water to the town:

"We had no water system in Theresienstadt... a number of wells were contaminated in a short time with **typhoid fever**. That was the reason that we had to close a number of wells, and had to undertake to extend the existing water pipe system. That was really a great piece of public works created under Jewish inventiveness and by Jewish labor. They expanded the water supply system, and have achieved [a condition] that we not only produced for the people good drinking water or, at least, not objectionable drinking water, but that also the toilet installations could be flushed with water, so that these unhygienic conditions were removed... The Germans have permitted it, and we even obtained through them the material, because otherwise it would have been impossible..."^[16]

After this a Fire Department with an acting Fire Chief was established, made up of Jewish prisoners. They relied on the newly constructed water system. Constructing the water system was only part of the major work undertaken by Jews, in what was called the technical service, in the first year of the camp. They had to make many more changes to buildings to adapt the fortress and barracks for the overcrowded conditions that the Germans imposed.^[16]

Unequal treatment of prisoners [edit]

Following the changes and sprucing up to prepare for the Red Cross visit, in the spring of 1945, the Gestapo screened the Jews of Theresienstadt, classifying them according to social prominence. They reassigned some 150–200 prominent individuals, giving them single rooms for just two people, so that a husband and wife could live by themselves. Several members of the Cultural Council were included among the *Prominente*, due to the influence of Benjamin Murelstein, then the "Jewish Elder" of Theresienstadt. Ex-prisoners suggested in statements that those who held positions of authority used **nepotism** and tried to protect individuals close to them, while struggling to avoid deportation and death in the closing days of the war. Murelstein and other members of the Cultural Council were still deported in the final liquidation, but Murelstein and some others survived the war.^[16]

Final months at the camp in 1945 [edit]

On February 5, 1945, SS chief **Heinrich Himmler** allowed a transport of 1,210 Jews, most of them from the Netherlands, from Theresienstadt to freedom in neutral Switzerland. Himmler and **Jean-Marie Musy**, a pro-Nazi former Swiss president, had arranged the transport Jewish organizations working in Switzerland deposited a ransom of \$1.25 million in Swiss banks for the Germans.

As the war turned against Nazi Germany, the Danish king **Christian X** secured the release of the Danish internees from Theresienstadt on April 15, 1945. The **White Buses**, organized in cooperation with the Danish Red Cross, collected the 413 who had survived and took them home.

The ICRC twice visited the camp in April 1945, after the Dutch Jews had been transported to Switzerland. As Soviet troops approached from the East, on May 2, 1945, the International Red Cross took over the camp's administration.^[20] SS Commandant Rahm and the rest of the SS fled on May 5 and 6. On May 8, 1945, Terezín was liberated by **Soviet** troops.

Postwar [edit]

After the victory of the Allies in 1945, Czech partisans and former inmates used Theresienstadt to hold German SS personnel and civilians in retaliation for their atrocities.^[citation needed] It was also used as an internment camp for ethnic Germans, who were expelled from Czechoslovakia in a population transfer authorized by the Allies after the war. The first prisoners arrived on the May 10, 1945. On February 29, 1948 the last German prisoners were released and the camp was officially closed.

The Commandant **Anton Burger** escaped to Germany. Condemned to death in a trial by Czech authorities *in absentia*, he settled in **Essen**. He lived there under a false name until his death in December 1991.^[20]

The mortality rate in the camp was high through July 1945, due to disease and malnutrition the survivors had already suffered and the disruption of the end of the war. The commander of the camp in that period was Stanislav Franc.^[citation needed] In July 1945 the camp was put under the control of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Interior. The new commander was Otakar Kálal.

From 1946 on, ethnic German prisoners were gradually transferred to Germany. Terezín was used as a transition camp for the forced migration of ethnic Germans from the Czech lands into Germany and western nations.^[citation needed] A small exhibition at the site commemorates the history of Terezín as an internment camp for ethnic Germans who were expelled.

Cultural activities and legacy [edit]

Theresienstadt was originally designated as a model community for middle-class Jews from Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Austria. Many educated Jews were inmates of Theresienstadt. In a propaganda effort designed to fool the Western allies, the Nazis publicized the camp for its rich cultural life. But, a Holocaust survivor said: "During the early period there were no (musical) instruments whatsoever, and the cultural life came to develop itself only ... when the whole management of Theresienstadt was steered into an organized course".^[16] At least four concert orchestras were organized in the camp, as well as chamber groups and jazz ensembles. Several stage performances were produced and attended by camp inmates. Many prominent artists from Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Germany were imprisoned there. Others included writers, scientists, jurists, diplomats, musicians, and scholars.

The community in Theresienstadt tried to ensure that all the children who passed through the camp continued with their education. The Nazis required all camp children over a certain age to work, but accepted working on stage as employment. The prisoners achieved the children's education under the guise of work or cultural activity. Daily classes and sports activities were held. The community published a magazine, *Vedem*.

The conductor **Rafael Schächter** was among those held at the camp, and he formed an adult chorus. He directed it in a performance of the massive and complex *Requiem* by **Giuseppe Verdi**. Schächter conducted 15 more performances of the work before he was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau.^[21]

Julius Stwertka, a violinist and a former leading member of the **Boston Symphony Orchestra** and co-leader of the **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra**, died in the camp on December 17, 1942.

The pianist **Alice Herz-Sommer** survived Theresienstadt. In 2012, she was the oldest known **Holocaust survivor**. She performed 100 concerts while imprisoned. In March 2012 a biography was published about her life.^[22] Her friend and colleague, Edith Steiner-Kraus, also survived Theresienstadt. Both women emigrated to Israel after the war. Herz-Sommer became a professor of music at the **Jerusalem Academy of Music**, and Steiner-Kraus became a professor of music at the Tel Aviv Academy of Music.^[23]

Martin Roman and **Coco Schumann** were part of the "Ghetto Swingers" jazz band.

Artist and art teacher **Friedl Dicker-Brandeis** created drawing classes for children in the ghetto, among whom were Hana Brady ("Hana's suitcase"). They produced more than 4,000 drawings, which she hid in two suitcases before she was deported to Auschwitz in the final liquidation. The collection was preserved from destruction and was not discovered until a decade later. Most of these drawings can now be seen at The



[Jewish Museum in Prague](#), whose Archive of the Holocaust section administers the Terezín Archive Collection. Others are on display at [Yad Vashem](#) in Jerusalem.

The children of the camp also wrote stories and poems. Some were preserved and later published in a collection called *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, the title taken from the poem by young Jewish Czech poet [Pavel Friedman](#). He had arrived at Terezín on April 26, 1942 and later died at Auschwitz.

Painter [Malva Schalek](#) (Malvina Schalkova) was deported to Theresienstadt in February 1942. She produced more than 100 drawings and watercolors portraying life in the camp. Because of her refusal to paint the portrait of a collaborationist doctor, she was deported to Auschwitz 18 May 1944, where she was killed.^[24]

The artist and architect [Norbert Troller](#) produced drawings and watercolors of life inside Theresienstadt, to be smuggled to the outside world. When the Gestapo found out, he was arrested and deported to Auschwitz. His memoirs and two dozen of his artworks were published in 1991.^[25]

The composer [Viktor Ullmann](#) was interned in September 1942 and died at Auschwitz in October 1944. He composed some twenty works at Theresienstadt, including the one-act opera, *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* (*The Emperor of Atlantis* or *The Refusal of Death*). It was planned for performance at the camp, but the Nazis withdrew permission when it was in rehearsal, probably because the authorities perceived its allegorical intent. The opera was first performed in 1975, shown in full on [BBC](#) television in Britain. It continues to be performed.

Some of the music composed by inmates at the concentration camp is reatured in *Terezín: The Music 1941–44*, a 2-CD set released in 1991.^{[26][27]} It contains chamber music by [Gideon Klein](#), Viktor Ullmann, and [Hans Krása](#), the children's opera *Brundibár* by Krása, and songs by Ullmann and [Pavel Haas](#). All the composers died in the Auschwitz concentration camp in 1944, except for Klein, who died the following year in *Fürstengrube*. Many of the works were written at the end of their lives, in 1943 and 1944.^[28]

In 2007, the Swedish singer [Anne Sofie von Otter](#) released a CD of music composed in Theresienstadt, assisted by baritone [Christian Gerhaher](#), pianists and chamber musicians. In 2008, Austrian baritone [Wolfgang Holzmair](#), and American pianist Russell Ryan, presented a recital that drew on a different selection of songs.

Used as propaganda tool [\[edit\]](#)



Main article: [Theresienstadt \(film\)](#)

Late in the war (following D-Day and the Invasion of Normandy), on June 23, 1944, the Nazis permitted a visit by representatives from the Danish Red Cross and the International Red Cross in order to dispel rumors about the extermination camps. The commission included E. Juel-Henningsen, the head physician at the Danish Ministry of Health, and Franz Hvass, the top civil servant at the Danish Foreign Ministry. Dr. Paul Eppstein was instructed by the SS to appear in the role of the mayor of Theresienstadt.^[29]

They had prepared for weeks for the visit. The area was cleaned up and, to minimize the appearance of overcrowding in Theresienstadt, the Nazis deported many Jews to Auschwitz. Also deported in these actions were most of the Czechoslovakian workers assigned to 'Operation Embellishment.' The Nazis directed the building of fake shops and cafés to imply that the Jews lived in relative comfort.

The Danes whom the Red Cross visited lived in freshly painted rooms, not more than three in a room. Rooms viewed could possibly have included the homes of the "prominent" Jews of Theresienstadt, who were afforded special privileges whereby as little as two people shared a single room.^[16] The guests attended a performance of a children's opera, *Brundibar*, which was written by inmate [Hans Krása](#).

The Red Cross representatives were conducted on a tour following a pre-determined path designated by a "red line" on a map. The Red Cross apparently did not try to divert from the "official" tour route as led by the Germans, who also posed questions to the Jewish residents along the way. If the Red Cross asked residents questions directly, they were ignored and not answered (as instructed by the Germans previously). Despite this, the Red Cross apparently formed a positive impression of the town.^[16]

Following the successful usage of Theresienstadt as a model for the Red Cross visit, the Nazis decided to make a propaganda film there. Production of the film began on February 26, 1944^[citation needed]. It was directed by Jewish prisoner [Kurt Gerron](#), an experienced director and actor. (He appeared with [Marlene Dietrich](#) in *The Blue Angel*.) The film was intended to show how well the Jews were living under the "benevolent" protection of the [Third Reich](#). Shooting took 11 days, starting September 1, 1944.^[30]

If taken at face value, the film documents the Jews of Theresienstadt living a relatively comfortable existence within a thriving cultural centre, and functioning successfully during the hardships of World War II. They had to comply and perform according to Nazi orders. After the film was completed, most of the cast and the director were deported to Auschwitz. Gerron was murdered by [gas chamber](#) on October 18, 1944.^[31] The film was not released at the time, but was edited into pieces; only segments have remained.

Often called *The Führer Gives a Village to the Jews*, the correct name of the film is: *Theresienstadt. Ein Dokumentarfilm aus dem jüdischen Siedlungsgebiet* (*Terezin: A Documentary Film of the Jewish Resettlement*). (Cf. Hans Sode-Madsen: *The Perfect Deception. The Danish Jews and Theresienstadt 1940–1945*, Leo Baeck Yearbook, 1993)

Statistics [\[edit\]](#)

Approximately 144,000 Jews were sent to Theresienstadt. Most inmates were [Czech](#) Jews. But, 40,000 were deported from Germany, 15,000 from Austria, 5,000 from the Netherlands and 300 from [Luxembourg](#). In addition to the group of approximately 500 Jews from Denmark, [Slovak](#) and Hungarian Jews were deported to the ghetto. Of the 1,600 Jewish children from [Białystok](#), [Poland](#) deported to Auschwitz from Theresienstadt; none survived. About a quarter of the inmates (33,000) died in Theresienstadt, mostly because of the deadly conditions (hunger, [stress](#), and disease, especially the [typhus epidemic](#) at the very end of war).

About 88,000 prisoners were deported to [Auschwitz](#) and other extermination camps including [Treblinka](#). At the end of the war, 17,247 had survived. An



10 Kronen—money shown to the [Red Cross](#) committee. Ex-inmates of Theresienstadt have described how they each received 50 crowns

estimated 15,000 children, lived in the ghetto. Willy Groag, one of the youth care workers, mistakenly claimed after the war that only 93 survived.^[33] However, 242 children younger than 15 survived deportation to camps in the East, and 1566 children survived in the ghetto proper.^[citation needed]

every month with which to buy things.^[32] Residents working at the camp were also paid in this currency,^[16] a form of [truck system](#).

Small Fortress [edit]

Small Fortress (*Malá pevnost* in Czech, *Kleine Festung* in German) was part of the fortification on the left side of river [Ohře](#). Beginning in 1940, the Gestapo used it as a prison (the largest one in the [Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia](#)). The first inmates arrived on June 14, 1940. By the end of the war, 32,000 prisoners, of whom 5,000 were female, passed through the small fortress. It was separate and unrelated to the Jewish ghetto in the main fortress on the river's right side. An estimated 32,000 people were taken in to the prison; most were usually deported later to a concentration camp. Some 2,600 people were executed, starved, or succumbed to disease at the Small Fortress.^[citation needed]

"There was also a group of Jews from the Rhineland, who "erroneously" - arrived on October 4, 1944 - in the small fortress and not in the "ghetto", in a transport from Cologne. They were among the victims. This error was "corrected" by the Gestapo; almost all were killed."^[citation needed]



The Crematorium

Allied POWs [edit]

During the war, the prison was used to hold Allied [POWs](#) as punishment for persisting in escape attempts from regular POW camps. A total of 21 New Zealanders, 17 Australians and 21 British POWs were held there.^[34] Keeping POWs from signatory countries of the [Geneva Convention](#) in such camp conditions was a war crime. Many of the survivors suffered chronic physical and mental health problems for most of their lives.^[34]

"In 1964, the British Government received a reparation payment of One Million Pounds Sterling from the German Government for the forced transfer of those British POW who, "as punishment", had been transferred from Geneva-supervised German Prison Camps to Concentration Camps controlled by the Nazi Gestapo. Such illegal transfer was a war crime."^[34] Britain made no provision for colonial troops and, for many years the Australian and New Zealand governments denied that any of their servicemen had been held at Terezin. In 1987, the Australian Prime Minister [Bob Hawke](#) established a committee of investigation. Based on its findings that confirmed POWs held at Terezin, the government authorized payments of \$10,000 each to the surviving Australian veterans of the camp. The New Zealand government also arranged for compensation of these concentration camp survivors.^[34]

Notable prisoners who died at the camp [edit]

- The wife and daughter of the astronomer [Friedrich Simon Archenhold](#)
- [Esther Adolphine](#) (a sister of [Sigmund Freud](#)), who died on September 29, 1942; and [*Friedrich Münzer](#) (a German classicist), who died on October 20, 1942.
- [Zikmund Schul](#), composer.

Notable survivors [edit]

- Austrian-German playwright [Elsa Bernstein](#)
- Czech Olympic water polo competitor [Kurt Epstein](#)
- Czech conductor [Karel Ančerl](#)

Postwar trials [edit]

- The first commandant of the camp, Captain [Siegfried Seidl](#), was convicted of war crimes and hanged by Austria after the war. After leaving Theresienstadt, he was assigned to the [Bergen Belsen](#) death camp, and later as a staff officer with [Adolph Eichmann](#) during the slaughter of Hungary's 600,000 Jews.^[12]
- The Czech Gendarmerie commander, [Theodor Janecek](#), died in prison in 1946 awaiting trial.^[20]
- A Czech court in [Litomerice](#) found [Miroslaus Hasenkopf](#) guilty of treason and sentenced him to 15 years imprisonment. Hasenkopf died in prison in 1951.^[20]
- [Anton Malloth](#), a prison guard at Small Fortress, was captured 55 years later and convicted in 2001 of beating at least 100 prisoners to death. He was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Works about Theresienstadt [edit]

Documentary films:

- *Where Death Wears a Smile* (1985), produced by Australian journalist [Paul Rea](#), alleged that dozens of Allied POWs had been murdered at Terezin, where they had been illegally held.^[35]
- *The Answer - Justice* is a book by Alexander McClelland, an Australian veteran and prisoner at Small Fortress, who refuted Rea's claims.^[35]
- *Paradise Camp* (1986)
- *Voices of the Children* (1997), American made-for-TV documentary
- *A Story about a Bad Dream* (2000)
- *Prisoner of Paradise* (2002)
- *Defiant Requiem: Voices of Resistance* (2013)^[36] (Film of multi-media concert-drama performance in New York City), broadcast on [PBS](#), April 2013^[37]

Drama films/TV movies: (featured in particular episodes of the series)

- *Transport from Paradise* (*Transport z Raje*) (1962), Czech
- *Holocaust* (1978 TV miniseries)
- *War and Remembrance* (1988 TV miniseries, part of *Winds of War* adaptation)
- *The Last Butterfly* (*Poslední motýl*) (1991), in Czech and English, dubbed, with British actor [Tom Courtenay](#) and others

Plays:

- *Way To Heaven (Himmelweg)* (2005), by **Juan Mayorga**, an award-winning Spanish playwright, inspired by the visit of the Red Cross to Theresienstadt. The play has been produced world-wide, including London, Paris, Madrid, Buenos Aires and, in 2009, 2010-2011, New York City and Sydney.
- *Dreams of Beating Time* 1994 by **Roy Kift**. A play about the classical musicians in Terezin, most especially the conductor Kurt Singer, and the parallel career of Wilhelm Fürtwängler in Germany.
- *Camp Comedy* 1998 by **Roy Kift**. The play deals with the dilemma of the German cabaret star Kurt Gerron when he was "requested" by the Nazis to make a documentary film about the "sweet lives" of the Jewish inmates in the camp. It contains original songs and texts from the Karussell cabaret. The play is published by the University of Wisconsin Press in "The Theatre of the Holocaust. Vol 2". It was premiered in Legnica (Liegnitz) Poland in September 2012 under the title "Komedia Obozowa" and subsequently invited to the annual Warsaw Theatre Meeting in April 2013. It won the "Broken Barrier" award as the best play at the 24th "Without Borders" Theatre Festival in Cieszyn (Poland) and Cieszyn (Czech Republic) in June 2013.

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