

## Testimonials from students

Ernst Meissinger had a very positive influence on his students, as their memories suggest. Former Goldschmidt student **Gerd Ehrlich** later called him a „role model“ and said he was instrumental in his decision to become a teacher himself. The Stolpersteine Berlin initiative has reported on Gerd Ehrlich's persecution.

During our research, we were able to contact **Brigitte Brandeis**, who was living in Israel at an advanced age. She wrote to us about Meissinger:

*„Ernst Meissinger was our beloved teacher (geography and history) at the Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt School. At the time, we were students in the sixth and seventh grades. In addition to being a teacher at the school, Dr. Meissinger also became the head of the boarding school, where he was just as beloved. This boarding school was founded by Dr. Goldschmidt because many parents from smaller towns in Germany, where anti-Semitism was often even stronger, sent their children to Berlin while they still had things to take care of before leaving Germany. My father had been deported to Sachsenhausen concentration camp since the Reichspogromnacht, our family had to leave our apartment, and my mother, brother, and I lived with my grandmother across from the school at Königsmarkstr. 4. So I was allowed to ride my bike with the boarding school students early in the morning with Dr. M. to Grunewaldsee, swim across and then back, and an hour later school started. It was wonderful to ride through the forest in the morning. As Jews, we wouldn't have been able to swim anywhere else.“*

Brigitte Brandeis and her family were finally able to flee to Israel via Argentina in October 1939. However, she lost her grandmother, who was deported to Riga by the Nazis and murdered. Brandeis reports on her later life in Israel, saying, among other things:

*„We have good friends in Germany who come here and with whom we correspond. My late husband was involved in youth tourism, and we traveled a lot, but never to Germany. My husband worked a lot with the German Youth Hostel Association and set up the youth exchange department at the local youth hostel association. Back in the 1970s, that was something completely new.“*

A very close school friend of Brigitte Brandeis from her days in Berlin is **Margit Reichner**, née Rosenthal, who now emigrated with her family in California. We were able to contact her through Brandeis. The two women told us that they still talk to each other every Sunday via the Internet service Skype.

Margit Reichner also shared her memories of Ernst Meissinger with us:

*„Mr. Meissinger was our geography teacher. He was definitely my favorite teacher and the one I remember most. He always made the lessons interesting, bringing postcards from other places, which he pinned to the classroom wall. We drew maps of rivers and countries, and his lessons were always fascinating. To this day, I know more about foreign countries than any child today will ever know.“*

Former Frankfurt student **Ruth Esser Frank**, who later lived in the US, recalls:

*„Mr. Meissinger was one of our non-Jewish teachers who made a special impression on me. He gave us hope and was a particularly decent, Christian person. In 1936, he led a group of about 20 to 30 students on a summer trip to the Dolomites. We built a small dam, collected chanterelles, and became brave mountaineers. Most importantly, we learned that we were normal, good children and that we could fight to survive.“*