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## **Holocaust Museum Houston Opens *Neighbors 1938 "We were all Ladenburgers"***

--Contingent from Germany shares story of development of very personal exhibition--

**HOUSTON (March 3, 2023)** – More than 150 people joined Holocaust Museum Houston at the February 23 opening reception for *Neighbors 1938 "We were all Ladenburgers"* exhibition. Special guests included The Honorable Kai Hennig, Consul General of Germany to Houston, and a contingent from Germany including Burgermeister Stefan Schmutz, Svenja Graf-Wieler and Christoph Beckmann, and Dr. Andreas Hensen and Dr. Amélie Sagasser of German Historical Institute Paris.

The exhibition was generously sponsored by the Sunni and Gary Markowitz and Judy and Mark Mucasey Families, in loving memory of Lea Krell Weems. Holocaust survivor Ruth Krell Steinfeld, Lea's sister, was also on hand to share her memories of the fateful day she, Lea and their parents were taken from their home in Ladenburg and sent to a camp in Gurs.

"This exhibition has great personal meaning to our extended Museum family," said Dr. Kelly J. Zúñiga, CEO of Holocaust Museum Houston. "It discusses the fate of several Ladenburg families, including the family of Houston Holocaust survivors Ruth Krell Steinfeld and Lea Krell Weems, of blessed memory. Understanding the impact of the Holocaust on families was made even more clear by special guests from Germany that shared their journey to bring this important exhibition to fruition."

November 9, 1938, marked the start of the November Pogroms, when violent antisemitic demonstrations broke out across Germany, Austria, and the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia. The *Neighbors 1938* exhibition sheds light on the events as exemplified within several Jewish families in Ladenburg, Germany. It gives a picture of the city's residents and their relations to one another.

The exhibition was conceived by teachers and students at the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien (Center for Jewish Studies, Heidelberg) and the University of Heidelberg in cooperation with the Lobdengau Museum. The project was based on the information compiled by the working group "Jüdische Geschichte" ('Jewish History') established in 1983 in Ladenburg. This exhibit discusses the fate of several Ladenburg families within the broader historical context. The research for this exhibit helped to situate the fate of several Ladenburg families in the greater context of history, including the family of Houston survivors Lea Krell Weems and Ruth Krell Steinfeld. Ladenburg was the childhood home of survivors Lea and Ruth who survived by being

smuggled out of Gurs by the French resistance group Œuvre de Secours aux Enfants (Children's Aid Society) at the age of 8 and 7, respectively.

*Neighbors 1938 "We were all Ladenburgers"* is on view in the Museum's Spira Central Gallery, in memory of Brenda Spira, through June 18, 2023. For more information, visit [hmh.org/exhibitions](http://hmh.org/exhibitions).

Holocaust Museum Houston, Lester and Sue Smith Campus, is fully bilingual in English and Spanish. Located at 5401 Caroline Street, HMH is closed Mondays except Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day and Labor Day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. The Museum's Legacy Café is open during Museum hours. Admission is \$22 for adults; \$16 for seniors (ages 65+) and AARP members and active-duty military; always free for children and students through age 18; and free to all visitors with new extended hours Thursdays from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. (March 16 through August 31). Parking is available at the Museum's adjacent lot for \$8 for a four-hour period. Tickets are available exclusively online. For more information, visit [hmh.org/visit](http://hmh.org/visit).

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