The largest archive on victims of Nazi persecution

Search historical documents online

For respect, diversity, and democracy

Search the archive online

The Arolsen Archives document the crimes committed by the National Socialists and the fates of their victims. The collection provides information on 17.5 million people: Holocaust victims, concentration camp prisoners, and forced laborers – those who were murdered and those who survived.

17.5 million names

Sometimes a name on a list is the only clue we have. Sometimes we have a large number of documents that paint a more detailed picture of the fate of a persecutee.

The online archive already contains over 30 million documents, so people all over the world can access the original documents to search for information.

30 million documents

Use the documents about victims of Nazi persecution to find out about what happened to them. You can also search for documents related to specific locations or events.

The home page of the online archive has useful tips for your research – clearly explained in a short video. It also includes a link to the e-Guide, a digital tool that offers a wealth of explanatory information to help you understand the documents better.

We are expanding our user-friendly online archive all the time and improving the search options by adding topics and keywords to give you better results.

You can ask us to search too

If you send us an inquiry, we will happily search our database for you. It contains even more information than the online archive, and if our search is successful, we will send you digital copies of any documents that will help you.

Please use the inquiry form on our website. The information you provide will enable us to research for you quickly without requesting further clarification.

aroa.to/inquiry

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- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- Arolsen Archives, Inscribed on the International Register in 2013 Memory of the World

Arolsen Archives
International Center on Nazi Persecution
T +49 5691 629-0
E info@arolsen-archives.org
arolsen-archives.org/en

Follow us on

@ArolsenArchives

collections.arolsen-archives.org/en
We launched the #everynamecounts crowdsourcing initiative because we want our online archive to continue to grow. Anyone can join in and help us digitize the documents from the archive. Tens of thousands of volunteers are already contributing to the project, and they have already digitized millions of documents. Thanks to their efforts, future generations will be able to remember the victims’ names and identities.

But #everynamecounts always links the past to the present – because the documents show what antisemitism, racism, and discrimination can lead to. Everyone who takes part in #everynamecounts is standing up for the memory of the victims of Nazi persecution and for a pluralistic, open society today.

The documents bear witness to the past, but they also have an important message for us today. They remind us that democracies need to be protected – by each and every one of us.

The Arolsen Archives are the world’s most comprehensive archive on the victims and survivors of National Socialism. The archive is listed on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. It contains information on all the victim groups targeted by the Nazi dictatorship and is an important source of knowledge for younger generations.

Over 75 years after the organization was first founded by the Allies, the Arolsen Archives are a place of truth and remembrance where evidence of Nazi atrocities is safely preserved. A paper monument that is also a digital memorial as the collection can be accessed online.

Young people in Europe today are growing up in societies where discrimination and radicalization are on the rise. Anyone who takes a closer look at the persecution people suffered in the period between 1933 and 1945 will realize that the reasons for persecution are not a thing of the past. Respect, diversity, and democracy are under threat. Only by acting together can we defend these values.

This is what makes us so committed to providing educational offerings that appeal to teenagers and young adults – our programs engage participants in dialog and treat them as equals; our focus is on digital offerings and on issues that affect young people today.

Many volunteers are helping us to search for the relatives of victims of Nazi persecution all over the world. Because the Arolsen Archives still have around 2,500 envelopes containing the last possessions of former concentration camp prisoners – things that rightly belong to their families. They include watches, wedding rings, wallets containing photos, and even everyday items.

A traveling exhibition in converted shipping containers that tour Europe and an award-winning website featuring animated videos and web stories draw attention to this unusual project that brings remembrance into the present day.

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