

Participation, digitization, remembrance – the Arolsen Archives launch a new challenge

Thirty thousand names in one week – that is the goal of the #everynamecounts challenge for International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27. Every January, the Arolsen Archives call for volunteers to help digitize documents about survivors of Nazi persecution to mark this day of remembrance. The documents for the 2024 challenge come from the “emigration card file” in the State Archives of Bremen.

The challenge at a glance:

- Thirty thousand documents from the Bremen “emigration card file” will go online at 8 am on Monday, January 22. Volunteers can take part in the challenge until 8 pm on Sunday, January 28.
- The data is entered using an easy-to-understand, intuitive tool at <https://everynamecounts.arolsen-archives.org/en>.
- More than 115,000 volunteers in total have taken part in the #everynamecounts initiative and have processed over 7 million documents.

On January 27, 1945, the Soviet Red Army liberated Auschwitz concentration camp. Following their liberation, many forced laborers and other survivors of Nazi persecution who had experienced atrocities in Auschwitz and other camps wanted to leave Germany, the country of the perpetrators. But how could they manage it? Where did they find refuge? And who were these emigrants?

The documents from the “emigration card file” in the State Archives of Bremen were created between 1946 and 1952 and provide answers to these questions. They are the focus of this year’s #everynamecounts challenge, launched by the Arolsen Archives to commemorate the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The players of SC Freiburg football club are supporting this digitization campaign.

Giving visibility to names and stories

Anyone who wants to help give more visibility to these names and stories just needs a computer, access to the internet, and a few minutes of spare time. Starting today until January 28 at 8 pm, volunteers are invited to digitize the most important pieces of information on the index cards by entering them into a specially designed online form. One of the names contained in the card file is Erich Mosbach. He was a doctor from Stettin who survived a number of camps, including Buchenwald concentration camp.

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In May 1946, he and his family boarded the "MarineFlasher" in Bremerhaven, a ship for emigrants that carried more than 850 survivors of Nazi persecution to New York on its first voyage.

The digital monument is growing

Floriane Azoulay, Director of the Arolsen Archives, describes the thinking behind the 2024 challenge as follows: "The Arolsen Archives want to draw attention to the difficulties faced by the people who decided to make a new start in a foreign country. They needed help, support, and understanding for their difficult situation. Just like migrants in any other era – including today."

The #everynamecounts challenge will help the largest digital memorial to the victims and survivors of the Nazi era continue to grow. The crowdsourcing initiative makes it easy for people to stand up for respect, diversity, and democracy themselves. That is as important today as it ever was – because the reasons for persecution are not a thing of the past.

About the Arolsen Archives

The Arolsen Archives are the world's largest archive on the victims and survivors of Nazi persecution. The collection has information on about 17.5 million people and belongs to UNESCO's Memory of the World. It contains documents on the various victim groups targeted by the Nazi regime and is an important source of knowledge for society today.

Press photos:

<https://arolsen-archives.org/en/press/press-photos/>

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