

Dr. Joachim Hahn - Alemannia Judaica
Anne-Frank-Weg 21 73207 Plochingen – Germany
JoachimSHahn@web.de

"Alemannia Judaica" – details about the history and internet presentation of an outstanding research group

The History of Alemannia Judaica

"Alemannia Judaica – Arbeitsgemeinschaft zur Erforschung der juedischen Geschichte im sueddeutschen und angrenzenden Raum" (Association for the Study of Jewish history in Southern Germany and adjoining areas) was founded in 1992. The preservation and presentation of local and regional Jewish history is the focus of this association of institutions and individuals. Members of the "Alemannia Judaica" communicate on a regular basis and meet yearly for their annual conference.

During the 1980s, while Joachim Hahn was writing a number of books on Jewish history, he was often contacted by individuals or small groups, who were themselves researching local or regional Jewish history. Seldom were they networked with one another. Hence, the idea of the "Alemannia Judaica" arose as a point of contact for the exchange of information.

The initial group began as a network, meeting for the first time in Freiburg in May 1988. From this first group the "Alemannia Judaica - Association for the Study of Jewish history in Southern Germany" was founded four years later in Hohenems in Austria. The members of the founding meeting wanted to expand their network to include researchers of Jewish history in Baden-Wuerttemberg, Bavarian Swabia (Bayrisch Schwaben), Alsace, Switzerland and Vorarlberg (Austria). The official founding date was the 24th of May, 1992. The name "Alemannia Judaica" comes from the German dialects spoken in this region, which can be summarized with "Alemannisch".



Region of "Alemannia Judaica"

The members of the founding meeting in Hohenems decided that the association should meet annually. The **annual meetings** were to be held in a place where there are many things to see in Jewish history and where people could learn from the work site. In one place, for example, a restored synagogue was of particular interest, in another a Jewish museum.

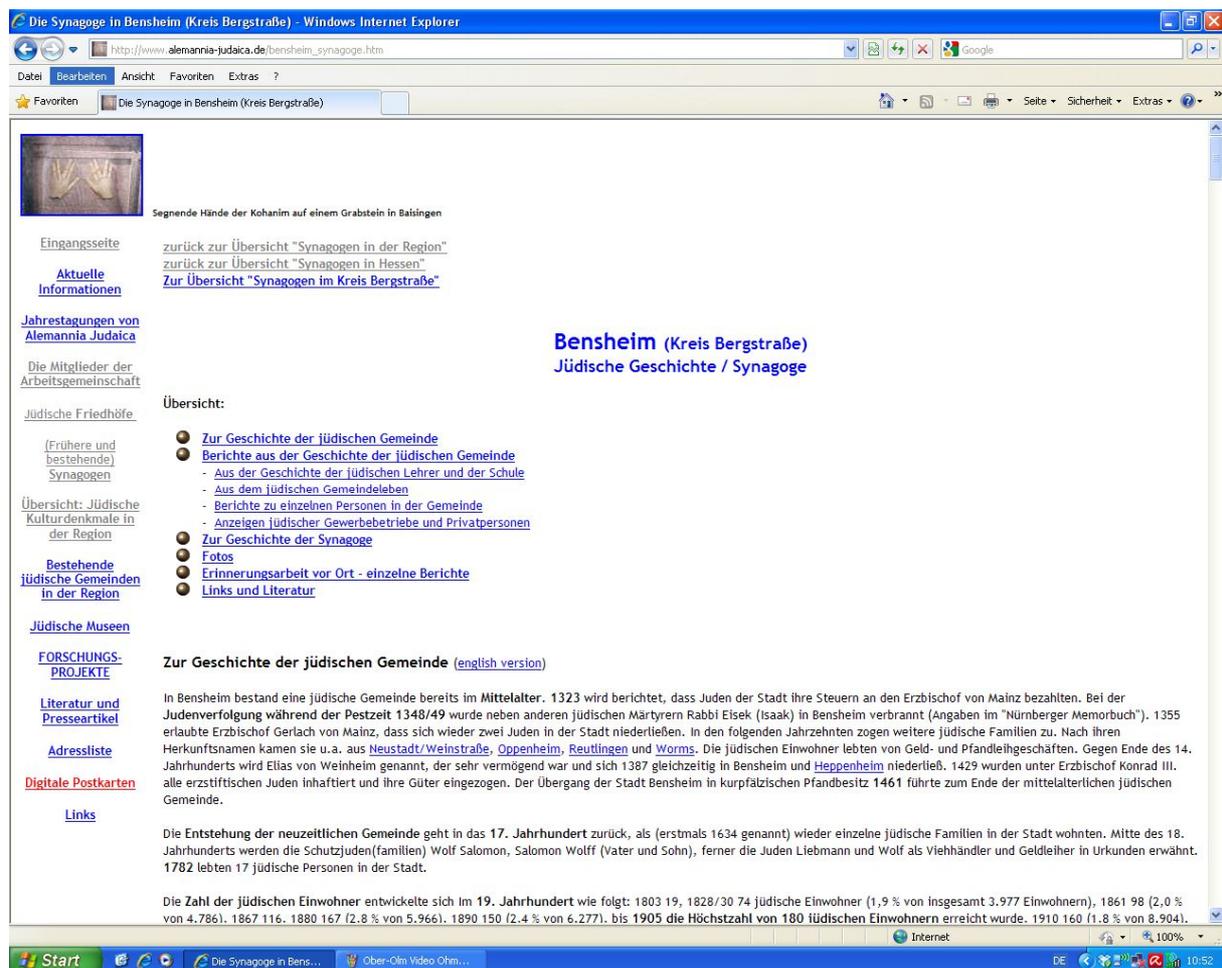
In 1999, the “**European day of Jewish Culture**” was instituted. From the beginning, the “Alemannia Judaica” has integrally participated in the preparation and implementation of programmes centered around this annual happening.

The Website www.alemannia-judaica.de

The "Alemannia Judaica" internet site was established in 2003 under its address www.alemannia-judaica.de and has since come to be a most comprehensive website of German speaking countries. This website offers information on the history of all former and present Jewish communities in the region. During his presentation, Joachim Hahn, webmaster of "Alemannia Judaica", will give details on the aim and content of this website, as well as information on the many personal contacts resulting from his activities.

Initially, Hahn intended, that the website provide easily accessible information on local and regional Jewish history for students and school teachers. For example, each student should be able to make use of the information, photos and documents from the website of “Alemannia Judaica” for use in presentations on the Jewish history of his or her place of residence.

According to this intention of creating basic information on the history of every Jewish community in southern Germany and adjoining areas, Hahn worked in the following years on the website of “Alemannia Judaica”. Over time, several thousand subpages presenting the history of Jewish communities with synagogues and other institutions, Jewish cemeteries and other historical documents were created within the website.



Pages about local Jewish History and synagogues. Within “Alemannia Judaica” there are about 1,800 pages with information on local Jewish history and synagogues. The pages are similarly structured depending on how much information and how many documents are to be shown. The rough layout of each page contains: “History of the Jewish community”, “Reports on the history of the Jewish community”, “History of the synagogue”, “Photos”, “Memory work – reports on site”; “Links and literature”.

The “Reports on the history of the Jewish community” are divided into: “History of the Jewish teachers and the school”, “Reports from the Jewish community life”; “Reports

to individuals in the community”, “Ads of Jewish businesses and individuals”. Almost all of these documents are advertising and press reports to the respective Jewish community in Jewish newspapers in the 19th and 20th century.



Pages about cemeteries: Within “Alemannia Judaica” over 1,000 Jewish cemeteries namely in the areas of Baden-Wuerttemberg, Bavaria, Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, Thuringia, Saarland, Alsace, Switzerland and in Austria’s Vorarlberg and Tyrol are presented with their pages. There are cemeteries, to which “Alemannia Judaica” received complete documentation. Some cemetery pages include videos, in which every grave stone is presented. One of the largest Jewish cemeteries in Southern Germany in Mannheim is presented with 45 videos containing about 8,000 photos of more than 4,700 grave stones.

Visitors of “Alemannia Judaica”: The site is frequently visited with a daily average of 4,500 visitors from all over the world. Pro year the site receives approximately 1,5 million visitors. Many e-mails relating to the content of the site are received daily by the webmaster. Most people are seeking more information: Local historians often request translations of gravestones, students ask often for assistance in the preparation of a presentation, etc. Often, help is given by establishing contacts between interested individuals and people who are familiar with the local or regional Jewish history or the history of particular families.