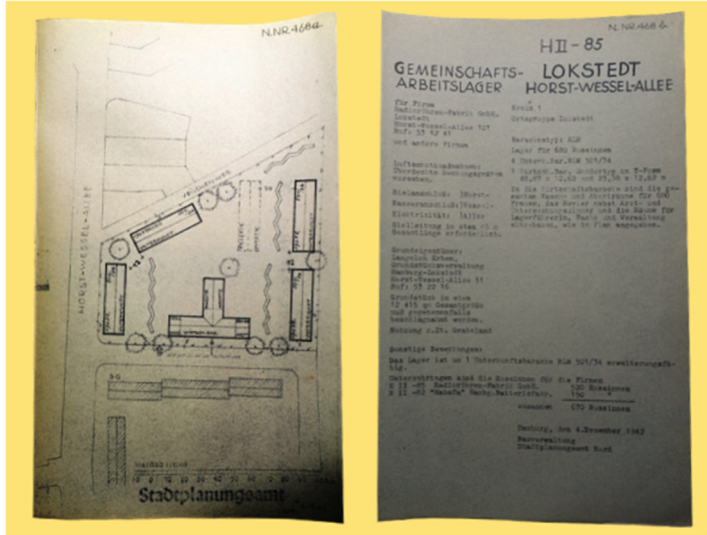


COMMEMORATION OF 140 WOMEN KILLED IN HAMBURG-LOKSTEDT

Women from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus (so-called "Ostarbeiterinnen" – workers from Eastern Europe) were housed in the forced labour camp on today's *Stresemannallee* (then Horst-Wessel-Allee) in Lokstedt. They were forced to live under inhumane conditions and worked in the arms industry for *Philips Valvo Werke GmbH Zweigniederlassung Hamburg* and the battery factory *Hamburger Batterie-Fabrik Otto Gross Habafa*.



There, on Sunday, June 18, 1944, 140 girls and women between the ages of 14 and 50 were killed in a bombing raid. Because they were considered racially inferior in Nazi ideology, they were forbidden to go to an air raid shelter. Their deaths were knowingly accepted. They were at the mercy of the bombs.

Site plan of the community work camp at the Horst-Wessel-Allee Lokstedt from December 4, 1942. (Staatsarchiv Hamburg)

Forced labourers from the Valvo factories pose for a photo after the liberation in 1945. Clearly visible on the right is the mandatory "Ostarbeiterinnen" badge. (KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme)



Memories of the bombing

The deaths of the 140 women led to unimaginable suffering for their relatives. As everywhere in Nazi Germany, forced labour and here in particular the brutal deaths of the women also left deep scars in the neighborhood in Lokstedt.

As late as 2021, a contemporary witness born in 1938 wrote: "On the other side of the street of *Clematisweg* there was a fenced-in field where young Russian women lived in earth bunkers. ... During an air raid alarm, 5 Russian girls knocked on our locked front door. My father let them in so that they could seek shelter in our cellar. A bomb (or several bombs?) hit the earth bunkers [...]. There were many dead. The inhabitants of the house had to recover and bury the remains of the bodies."

Another neighbor reported: "My sister (then 9 years old) and I (then 8 years old) still remember the camp and the barracks. Many a time women waved at us over the high fence. In the hot summer of 1944, after the bombing raid, our curiosity was so great that, despite the threat of punishment, we secretly sneaked through the garden to take a look at the camp. And what we saw there was horrible - - boots with legs, dead bodies hanging in trees, here a foot, there a hand and rubble everywhere. Then, fear and panic struck.... the bomb could have hit us, not 40 meters away from the chaos. We never confessed it, but it haunted us for a long time."

Commemoration in Lokstedt

In November 2022, the women who were killed were given a place to be publicly remembered. Confirmands read out their names and lit candles for them during the dedication of the memorial plaques. This finally gave the women a place in the collective memory of the district.



Inauguration of the commemorative plaques 2022
(Joerg Kilian/Forum Kollau e.V.)

