

## Tales of Three Hospitals during World War Two.

### Susi Williams Medical Historical Society May 2016.

World War 2 in Europe ended on May 8<sup>th</sup> 1945, Auschwitz had been liberated on May 4<sup>th</sup> 1945 so it is appropriate to mark this talk by discussing some aspects of the War.

We usually tell the stories of people when we talk about the war, but I would like to highlight the role of three hospitals, similar but so very different.

It will be no surprise to some of you that I start with Silverstream Hospital. I worked there from 1977 until it closed in 1989, and was the Medical Superintendent from 1982. During the time I worked there it was a Geriatric and long stay hospital and was always under threat of closure. Some of you will have worked there too.

The hospital was situated between Silverstream and Stokes Valley, about 15 miles North of Wellington and was one of the hospitals of the Wellington Hospital Board. Hutt Hospital had been planned since 1939 but did not open until 1944. Nor of course was there a hospital called Kenepuru.

The hospital was accessible by road from the Eastern Hutt Road, and by train.

**Silverstream Bridge Railway Station** was a station on the [Hutt Valley Line](#) section of the [Wairarapa Line](#) in [New Zealand](#) from 1908 until 28 February 1954, when the Melling-Belmont section of the line and the first rail bridge at Silverstream was closed. It was replaced by the [Silverstream Railway Station](#).

The station was just across the old rail bridge, in the corner of the Silverstream Hospital grounds. The building was built on a slight curve. It was unusual, being extra long and open on three sides. The back wall had three double doors from the platform.<sup>[1]</sup>

The station was closed in 1917, but was reopened on 17 August 1942 in World War II to serve the Silverstream Hospital built for American casualties from the Pacific. Some of this section of the line is now preserved by the [Silver Stream Railway](#), opened in 1978. Started to be restored 1967 by a group of volunteers.

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We used to see the soldiers when we children on the train. No security. They gave us sweets.

**As told by William Bayly** who was asked to write the history of the Hospital as it was closing in 1989. Limited edition private printing 300 copies in 1991. Authorised by the Wellington Area Health Board.

**History.** Silverstream Hospital was built by the Government in the early years of World War II. Construction began in September 1941, with the original intention being for it to serve the large concentration of New Zealand troops at nearby Trentham Military Camp. In May 1942, however, as construction was nearing completion, the decision was made to increase its size and hand it over to the recently arrived US Navy instead.

To quote from WB .“The coming of the war to the Pacific with the December 7 1941 Japanese Navy’s attack at Hawaii did not cause an immediate change in plans for completion but the Japanese military successes through the early months of 1942 (most notably the immense psychological blow from the fall of Singapore Naval Base on 15 February) led to a re-evaluation of preparedness in NZ.

Rather than withdraw the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Zealand division from North Africa, the British War Office instead proposed the use of American Defence forces in New Zealand. This would provide defence against the possibility of invasion, and a base of operations against Japanese-occupied Islands in the South Pacific.

In May of 1942 when the facilities at Silverstream were almost complete, instructions were given to hand over the institution to the US Navy for use as a convalescent hospital. The US Navy Mobile Hospital No 6 occupied the site from August 1942 and used it to treat malaria victims and wounded from the War in the Pacific. It was also used to treat staff and patients with other medical problems if they arose.

Extra work including the building of water reservoirs and steam boilers was done. At the peak of its extensions it was able to accommodate 1,600 patients and during the period it was used by the US Navy (ending in April 1944) approximately 20,000 patients were treated here.

To help ease the pressure on Silverstream hospital, part of the grandstand at Trentham Racecourse was occupied by the Marine Corps in March 1943.

An additional 16 two-man huts and four stores buildings were also erected onsite. Most of the 340 patients treated here were suffering from malaria contracted in the Pacific.

It is also worth remembering that the Trentham Military Camp was nearby, less than a mile from Trentham Racecourse.

After the hospital was no longer needed and the Americans went to New Caledonia, later Okinawa, Wellington Hospital Board again took over bringing down patients, and some staff, from Otaki

Text below is from Vict University Written by Stout, T.Duncan M. In 1958 and is part of Official History of NZ in World War 2 1939-1945.

He was Thomas Duncan MacGregor STOUT 1885-1979 Educated at Guys Hospital London, back to NZ 1914, then he enlisted in Army. Consultant Surgeon Trentham Military Camp 1919-20, Visiting Surgeon WPH 1920 -45. CONSULTING SURGEON World War 2, 2 NZEF. (Expeditionary Force) Victoria University Chairman then Chancellor I have edited out the details not relevant for us today

**BASICALLY** CHURCHILL AND ROOSEVELT agreed that NZ needed better security and the Americans could do with a base nearer the Pacific so the solution would be to bring Americans here, and the NZ Forces could stay in Europe and The Middle East.

## **MEDICAL SERVICES IN NEW ZEALAND AND THE PACIFIC**

### **XIII: MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR UNITED STATES FORCES IN NEW ZEALAND XIII: MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR UNITED STATES FORCES IN**

#### **NEW ZEALAND**

### **XIII: Medical Arrangements for United States Forces in New Zealand**

In June 1942 there came to New Zealand United States troops of 37 Division, United States Army, and 1 Marine Division, United States Marine Corps. In the anxious days of 1942 the Dominion became a base for operations in the South-west Pacific. Thousands of green-uniformed Marines were in camps in the North Island and with them came huge quantities of American war equipment.

(The units of 37 Division disembarked at Auckland and went to camps in the area south of Auckland at Manurewa, Papakura, Karaka, Opaheke and Pukekohe.)

First Marine Division disembarked at Wellington and occupied camps north of Wellington at Kaiwharawhara, Porirua, Titahi Bay, Judgeford, Pauatahanui, Paekakariki and Paraparaumu.

Complete co-ordination was established between the United States Forces and the New Zealand Army from the time of disembarkation onwards. Considerable liaison was carried out by the medical staff of Army Headquarters with the administrative medical officers of the American division, with a view to assisting them in the organisation of their medical arrangements.

The United States medical units agreed to assist in the supply of much-needed drugs and other medical requirements.

Jurisdiction over camp areas with regard to the allotment of accommodation and camp organisation belonged exclusively to the American divisions.

The American units were fairly independent. For instance, they had their own medical units within their camps to service them, and in addition established their own hospitals in buildings made available to them. At Silverstream the buildings nearing completion for a convalescent depot were handed over to them for 6 US Naval Mobile Hospital,

(while at Hobson Park, [Auckland](#), 4 US Naval Mobile Hospital of 1000 beds was established. Also, 39 General Hospital of the [US Army](#) established a 1000-bed hospital at Green Lane, [Auckland](#), and construction was begun on a building for a naval hospital to accommodate 2000 patients at Middlemore, [Auckland](#).)

The hospitals were used for the reception of invalids from the South [Pacific](#) as well as for cases of sickness from the local American forces.

The policy of the New Zealand Army Medical Service was to co-operate with and assist the United States Medical Services wherever possible. Thus 12 Field Ambulance supplied motor ambulance transport in the [Auckland](#) area and 13 Field Ambulance acted similarly in the [Wellington](#) area.

For its part the [US Navy](#) made itself responsible for the whole of the transport of New Zealand personnel and equipment between New Zealand and the South [Pacific](#) bases.

\*\*\*\*\***WHEN Eleanor Roosevelt** came to visit at the invitation of Peter Fraser, then PM of New Zealand 28<sup>th</sup> August 1943 she was reported as below.

Eleanor Roosevelt's visit to Silverstream Hospital on the 29<sup>th</sup> August was reported in her daily diary in The Evening Post August 30<sup>th</sup> 1943. "Started out at 9.15am and visited an American Naval Base hospital. It is called Silverstream and is on high ground overlooking a stream and surrounded by hills. A few wounded men are there but the majority are cases of malaria. We went first to the chapel and attended the 10 am service. The

chaplains read the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians Chapter 13 both among my favourites. I could not help thinking that these men, many of them scarcely more than boys in years but back from experiences in Guadalcanal and other islands which have made them old before their time, must wonder whether an era of love will really rule the world.” Another day she commented on the local food and had been served mussel soup and delicious whitebait “smaller than any she had ever seen at home”.

Aims were to visit the US forces, inspect the work of the American Red Cross (she wore the grey uniform) and to study the contribution of the women of NZ to the war effort.

\*\*\* Quote “Great minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events and small minds discuss people.” Eleanor Roosevelt.

The most seriously wounded were sent back to US as soon as they were stable, or back to their units if they recovered. In that case they were given 2 weeks leave in New Zealand.

#### **THE AMERICANS.**

1<sup>st</sup> division arrived June 1942, 2<sup>nd</sup> division marines arrived in New Zealand in November 1942 and on December 28<sup>th</sup> they were shipped to Guadalcanal. Described as a hellhole by those who returned which was in February 1943.

The **DOCTORS** according to Dr. J V Cable were largely from Massachusetts General Hospital, which was closely associated with Harvard Medical School. They had a considerable influence in Wellington. Previously the medical profession had aligned itself closely with British medical research, but was interested in the American medical science.

**THE NURSES HOME** was built with the best view and heavily guarded with barbed wire. The nurses were American nurses.

**Florence Luxford** was one of the few NZ staff members. She had done a Diversional Therapy course in Australia, very similar to Occupational Therapy. Said had all the facilities and all the money needed. Could ask for anything. “You couldn’t feel that penny pinching thing then” The wealth wasn’t in the buildings but in the food and the equipment.

**COLOURED STAFF** had their own segregated area on the flats below the main hospital.

**The CINEMA (known as the camp Theatre,)** there were concerts and plays from early times. Not just for staff, these were for the patients too.

The backdrop to the hall featured a large mural which was said to have been painted by an unnamed GI. Rumour has it that he returned to the war zone after completing the painting and was

subsequently killed in the closing stages of the war. Part of that mural has been retained by the current owners of the complex, who use that hall as a banquet room.

**THE COCKROACHES** were notorious. Big and black and definitely an import they were said to have come either with the Americans in the crates of medical equipment, or from the Islands. They were being studied by the National Museum. Final decision is outside the scope of this paper. Stan Dobson.

From Paperspast we know

\*\*\*\*\*Photo at Silverstream Hosp. Evening Post 31 Jan 1943 staff reporter.

Colonel JH Nankivell United States Military Attache in Wellington handing citation orders to US Marines receiving the Purple Heart for Gallantry. Taken at US Naval Base Hospital in Silverstream Upper Hutt.

The Purple Heart Award is a US Military Decoration awarded in the name of the President to those who were wounded or killed while serving on or after April 5 1917 with the US Military.

\*\*\*\*EV Post 17<sup>th</sup> April 1944 Nordmeyer announces US Forces vacate Silverstream Hospital and return it to Wellington Hospital Board.

Two books from the library helped flesh out the era.

BRIEF ENCOUNTER written by Jock Phillips with Ellen Ellis

“Wellington Ngati Poneke Young Maori Club made regular visits to the hospital at Silverstream to entertain the patients with waiata.”

A STRING OF PEARLS by Joan Ellis. Stories of the American Marines and New Zealand Women Remembering World War 11 Published 2006

It tells the stories of the day to day as remembered many years later. A large reunion was held in 1993. Silverstream Hospital by then was closed.

\*\*\*\*\*Note Many of the marines had Cerebral malaria . Symptoms seemed to be exacerbated by alcohol and women so often had relapse when out on the town. As we heard about malaria from Ron Easthope in February I have digressed to show this map, and to talk about treatment. Quinine in daily doses was being used. Some were treated at the camps, only the most serious in hospital.

They Were YOUNG! Even only 15. One had surgery to leg and then to family in Christchurch to recuperate. Many had malaria.

Page 67 one remembers Silverstream Hospital where he spent several weeks recovering from a cerebral malaria attack. Rabbi in uniform at his bedside! No way of knowing if a Rabbi was with the division. Some did attend the Wellington Synagogue and there is a plaque on the wall there thanking Rabbi Solomon Katz who was the local rabbi. He had come from America 10 years earlier and was, as the official representative of the National Jewish Welfare Board of America, the official Chaplain to American Jewish servicemen in New Zealand during World War Two (Dorothy Moses, his daughter, in the Standard for the People.)

Still on the subject of malaria William Ednie, the Pharmacists mate said that in 1943 Don Adams a young marine who was part of the force who landed in Guadalcanal aged 16 (he lied about his age) found himself under constant fire in a malaria infested foxhole. Back in New Zealand he fell victim to blackwater fever, usually precipitated by malaria). When the ship docked in Wellington he was in a coma, his body was swollen and racked by violent spasms. He spent 5 weeks in Silverstream Hospital fighting for his life. He attributed his miraculous recovery to the power of prayer.

**Blackwater fever** is a complication of malaria in which red blood cells burst in the bloodstream (hemolysis), releasing hemoglobin directly into the blood vessels and into the urine, frequently leading to kidney failure.

Now better known as the actor who played Maxwell Smart.

Also several talked of the **earthquake** while they were in Silverstream Hospital. The region suffered two quakes while they were here, one in June 1942, the Wairarapa quake 6.7 and the February 1943 Wellington quake 5.8 which was just after they returned from Guadalcanal. They were terrified. Thought a new war had started.

The Americans brought with them aftershave, popcorn, good manners, enthusiasm, the jitterbug, music, and many formed lasting relationships here.

They are still remembered in an annual service at Old ST. Pauls Cathedral where the flag of the Marines proudly hangs. There is also a memorial to them at Mackay's crossing Paekakariki.

When I was at Silverstream Hospital we would sometimes meet old Marines with family revisiting the place which they remembered so vividly. They would be crying. They often sat in the Chapel to recover.

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..Hadassah Medical Centre has a synagogue

Chagall windows

The synagogue was dedicated in the presence of the artist on February 6, 1962 as part of Hadassah's Golden Anniversary Celebration.

## **THINGS WERE VERY DIFFERENT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD.**

In October 2015 I was in Berlin. A friend took me to visit to visit the Jewish Hospital there to view a travelling exhibition which showed the history of the hospital.

The travelling exhibition had 22 sections. Developed in Potsdam in 2006 Went to Shaare Zedek, Hospital, Tel Aviv, Haifa , all in Israel, and New York at Mt. Sinai hospital, now back in Berlin before it makes the next move.

. With my friend Barbara Boehm-Tettelbach I had the opportunity to be shown round by Gerhard Nerlich, the Public Relations Officer for the hospital. When he showed me the synagogue which is at the end of the Administration Block I knew I had to tell the story in parallel with that of Silverstream Hospital. It was rebuilt for the sake of previous patients who came back, often from the US, needing a quiet place to reflect on the horror days of World War 2.

The hospital started 1756 in Oranienburgerstrasse to cater for the growing number of Jews in Berlin.

In 1857 as it grew it was moved to Auguststrasse , where in 1884 a Nursing School was added as it was difficult for young Jewish women to study nursing.

3rd and final premises were at Iranische Strasse , Wedding a suburb of Berlin where cheap land was available. It opened in 1913 just before 1<sup>st</sup> world War. Later it was described as 7 separate buildings in beautiful surroundings. The buildings were



connected by underground tunnels used to transport goods and patients, Later these served as bomb shelters (Jews not allowed in the other bomb shelters).

Today`s entrance is on Heinz-Galinski-Strasse (called "Schulstrasse" before 1945)

Heinz G (1912-1992). Deported to Auschwitz in 1943, back to Berlin after the war (rare). 1942-92 was Chair of the Jewish Congregation in Berlin, later head of the Central Council of Jews.

It was a large hospital with over 200 beds. It became one of the city`s premier medical institutions –a source of medical care for Jew and non Jew alike, a Centre not only of medical treatment but also of teaching, research and medical progress.

We will talk about the war years shortly, but you might be interested to know that now it is still a full working hospital. It is run by a Foundation which was established in 1963. It employs 71 doctors, 400 other employees. It treats an average of 11,000 inpatients and 9,000 outpatients of all religions and backgrounds each year. It includes Emergency, Surgery, Internal Medicine, Neurology, Psychiatry, Vascular Surgery, addiction and other Centres.

The information from the EXHIBITION, which is the history of the Hospital during World War 2, is enhanced by my reading of the book Refuge in Hell, How Berlin`s Jewish Hospital outlasted the Nazis, written by Daniel B. Silver, an American attorney who read about the hospital and couldn`t get it out of his head. He interviewed many survivors, all women.

He had met Ernie Mayerfield who as a 19year old GI in Berlin had gone to the Hospital for news of an old family friend. She was still there!

He also met In US Klaus Zwilsky whose father had been Pharmacist at the hospital and who was a child there, having his BarMitzvah there after the war in 1945. Ernie died after the first 3 interviews had been done but Dan battled on.

My thanks are due to Corinna Lothar, a Washington critic who reviewed and summarised the book, and also to Frieda Lefebber a Graduate nurse who survived to tell her story of working in the hospital. She emigrated to the US after the war and later visited back to Berlin.

**WHEN THE RUSSIANS** entered Berlin in May 1945 to liberate it they were astonished to find that this hospital had survived, that it still had patients and staff, and that by and large the buildings were intact. There were 800 Jews on the hospital premises, of whom at least 163 were orthodox Jewish. There was barbed wire round the Pathology Department.

**DURING** the war there were approximately 350 beds, but at it's height there were 600.

In charge of the hospital from 1941-1945 was Dr. Walter Lustig Jewish, married to a non Jew, described variously as brilliant and notorious. He headed the hospital not out of choice but because it was his ticket to survival after the Nuremberg laws stripped his right to serve at non Jewish Hospitals and the other Jewish hospitals were closed.

Occasionally, however, he shut his eyes to conduct which warranted severe punishment. He seduced many of the young nurses and was generally disliked by his staff.

Among his duties was deciding on behalf of his Nazi overlords who among his staff and patients would live and who would die.

No photo of him.

"His inhibitions in dealing with colleagues and subordinates, particularly women, suggest a difficulty communicating with people. In an extreme power structure that constantly focussed on matters of life and death it was, however, neither necessary nor desirable to open up on a personal level and establish relationships. Instructions or ( implied ) threats replaced communication, just as orders replaced relationships."

He was charged with the onerous task of picking staff members for deportation. When ordered to put half the staff on a deportation list he spread the impact among various medical departments to keep the hospital running. The mass deportations began in 1941

When ordered in 1943 to liquidate the entire remaining staff, he played on the bureaucratic rivalry between the RSHA and the Gestapo until the order was rescinded. He assured teh Gestapo that he could not act as the papers had not been authorised by Eichmann. Mr. Silver concludes that Lustig saved the hospital with his courage and tenacity.

As 1943 drew to a close the protected status of mental patients came to an end and they were deported East.

**THE HOSPITAL** was divided into 4 main departments each with its own category of survivor. Underneath were the long corridors which had been used to move staff and equipment. These became bunkers and air raid shelters and in the late stages of the war when there was heavy bombing all the patients were moved underground.

\*\*There was the bona fide hospital. This included an Old People's Home as it was called at the time. It had been there before the war

\*\*There was the "Extrastation" special ward where healthy privileged Jews were allowed to live in peace. Some of these had been admitted after Kristallnacht November 1938. At that time many Jewish men were beaten up and taken to Concentration Camps. Others were admitted to the Hospital not necessarily with any injuries. They were given false names, put on total bed rest, had charts showing alarmingly high temperature at the end of the beds, and were said to be seriously infectious. ( from Frieda Lefebber)

\*\* There was the "Polizeistation" where a handful of sick Jewish prisoners were allowed to convalesce for reasons unclear to anyone but their captors. Some of these were the attempted suicides. Nearly 7 thousand succeeded but those who failed were taken to hospital to recover and then deported. It is noted that at that time in an effort to stem the tide of suicides no obituaries were posted.

\*\* There was the deadly "Samellager" where Jews were imprisoned before being exiled to the east. A survivor of this department was Dr. Ernst Eichengren who was working for the Bayer Company who invented aspirin. After his expulsion to Theresienstadt Bayer set up a laboratory there for him to continue his research for their benefit.

"Other Jews in the hospital were kept on ice in order to be exchanged for German nationals interned by the British in Palestine.

And completing the list of survivors were 60 orphans who somehow made it to the end of the war. KINDERUNTERKUNFT.

**FEAR** hung heavy over the corridors and wards: fear of deportation, of beatings, of summary execution, of separation from family; of being stopped in the streets on the way to or from the 12-hour shifts at the hospital; of being assigned to forced labour in factories; of imprisonment or deportation on the whim of an officer or clerk.

Many who were put on lists to be "resettled" killed themselves. "Going underground" meant that someone else would go instead. The courage and self-sacrifice of the hospital staff under these circumstances was extraordinary.

Yet, it was the bizarre Nazi notions and arbitrary conduct that saved many lives. Jews too ill to be transported to Auschwitz for extermination were sent to the hospital for surgeries and to recover sufficiently for the journey east where they would be murdered.

All the while, Nazi zeal to exterminate the Jews continued. When the advance of the Russian army precluded transportation to the extermination camps in Poland, Jews were shipped to camps in Germany. The last human shipment left Berlin as late as March 1945, only a month before the surrender.

Mr. Silver attributes the hospital's survival to a number of reasons, pragmatic and theoretical, and concludes that "the two most important factors were bureaucratic convenience and ambition." The hospital served the Gestapo in connection with the deportations, and the various branches of the Nazi regime coveted the hospital grounds.

Or the survival of the hospital may have been luck, happenstance — or divine intervention. Despite the continuous Allied bombing of Berlin, there were no fatalities in the hospital. The neighbours noticed, and requested permission to seek refuge there. These Jews were, perhaps, God's chosen people, after all.

**THE ANOMALIES.** There were many.

The doctors. Sometimes were deported but Lustig saw to it that the departments could be kept running, so selection was careful and across the board.

The Nurses.(from Frieda Lefebvre) "All nurses were asked to work 16 hour shifts and remain in uniform at all times on high alert in case of fire. Once during the night a fire started in the adjacent building which housed Nuns who worked in a Geriatric Centre down the street. Apparently the Nazis had set the Nun's home on fire instead of ours."

Also the nursing education continued until late 1941. These nurses could still get the German State Registration.

The Jews. Several ways of deciding who was and who wasn't. Some preferential treatment for those with Christian spouses.

Then there were the Jews who actively collaborated with the Nazis. A report to the Jewish World Congress in Geneva in summer of 1943 states "the saddest things Jews experienced relates to those Jews who did not have to wear the yellow Star and truly became the right hand man of the Gestapo. Indeed they were sometimes quite rightly feared more than the Gestapo

Several dates of note. Kristallnacht

Then in 1942 a Psych Ward was established for Jews from all over Germany to admit those mentally ill who had escaped euthanasia. The following year they were deported to death camps from [www.blankgenealogy.com/hist](http://www.blankgenealogy.com/hist)

The Russian advance.

36,000 Berlin Jews killed 1941-45

Judische Gemeinde in Berlin in 1933 186,000 in 1945 5,100

# The CHARITE HOSPITAL BERLIN

At least 7 Nobel Prizes

In October 2015 a new temporary exhibition started telling the story of Eugenics and Euthanasia as practised by the National Socialist (Nazi) regime.

## GeDenkOrt.Charité – Science and Social Responsibility

### Statement of intent

As the applied science of human beings, medicine carries with it an extraordinary responsibility - not only for today's society, but more importantly for future generations. No other time in history illustrates the absolute necessity for shared accountability than the National Socialist period – when right here in Berlin and at the Charité – the medical community turned its back on colleagues and patients in the name of an inhuman ideology.

The aim of the 'GeDenkOrt.Charité' initiative is to create places of historical contemplation on our historic Charité Campus in Berlin-Mitte. As such we hope to set a precedent that affirms the principles of a humane and responsible attitude to science.

First I want to remind you of how things were in New Zealand.

**(FROM Evening Post) 1912 EUGENICS** is a philosophy that advocates controlling reproduction to produce better offspring. It flourished in the early 1900s but lost credibility after the Nazis' horrifically extreme version of eugenics in the Second World War. **Organised New Zealand eugenics groups in the early 1900s advocated sterilising those who were 'unfit' to breed.** They urged upper-class and middle-class women to stop using contraception and to breed more, to stop the country being dominated by 'defectives'.

This exhibition starts with the words of Leo Alexander, a neurologist (1905-1985) who stated (SOURCE Medical Science under Dictatorship, New England Journal of Medicine, 241 (1949) 2, p.39-47, p.44

“The beginnings were merely a subtle shift in emphasis in the attitude of the Physicians.

It started with the acceptance of the attitude, basic in the Euthanasia movement, that there is such a thing as life not worthy to be lived.

This attitude in its early stages concerned itself merely with the severely and chronically sick. Gradually the sphere of those to be included in this category was enlarged to encompass the socially unproductive, the ideologically unwanted and finally all non Germans.

But it is important to realise that the infinitely small wedged-in lever from which this entire trend of mind received its impetus was the attitude toward the nonrehabilitable sick”

The exhibition tells of Medical Sciences and Politics; of Human experiments and medical research and of some of the famous Doctors and Scientists who allowed, sometimes encouraged, this to happen.

Enough for now. There is much more to tell.

The **Hadamar Euthanasia Centre** ([German](#): *NS-Tötungsanstalt Hadamar*) was located at a [psychiatric hospital](#) in the German town of [Hadamar](#) near [Limburg](#) in [Hesse](#) from 1941 to 1945.

Beginning in 1939, the [Nazis](#) used this site as one of six for the [T-4 Euthanasia Programme](#), which performed mass sterilizations and mass murder of "undesirable" members of German society, specifically those with physical and mental disabilities. In total, an estimated 200,000 people were killed at these facilities, including thousands of children. These actions were in keeping with the eugenics ideas about racial purity developed by German researchers. While officially ended in 1941, the programme lasted until the German surrender in 1945. Nearly 15,000 German citizens were transported to the hospital and died there, most killed in a gas chamber.<sup>[1]</sup> In addition, hundreds of forced labourers from Poland and other countries occupied by the Nazis were killed there.

Hadamar and its hospital fell within the [American occupation zone](#) after the war. From October 8–15, 1945, United States forces conducted the Hadamar Trial, the first mass atrocity trial in the years following World War II. They prosecuted doctors and staff on charges of murdering citizens of allied countries, namely, forced labourers from Poland and other countries. The US had jurisdiction for these crimes under international law. Several people were convicted and executed for these crimes. After the German courts were reconstructed under the occupation, in 1946 a doctor and nurse were prosecuted by Germans for the murders of nearly 15,000 German citizens at the hospital. Both were convicted.

The hospital continues to operate. It holds a memorial to the euthanasia murders, as well as an exhibit about the Nazi programme.