



Letters for Stephen S. Mosbacher



Right: Stephen S. Mosbacher, back: a G.I.'s snapshot of Zeppelin Grandstand from 1945, left: a Jewish soldier's grave visited by a friend 1944 in Italy
(Design: rijo)

In 2015 an initiative has been started to name the street in front of Zeppelin Grandstand on the former Nazi party rally grounds after the Nuremberg born G.I. Stephen S. Mosbacher (for the whole story see links below), supported by a relevant group of people in Germany and the USA. After one year of procrastination the proposal was flatly denied by the Lord Mayor without honoring their differentiated argumentation.

We quote from three letters of support as of November 2015 and a posthumous letter of Stephen's sister written for the play *Reconnaissance mission into memory. Staff Sergeant Stephen S. Mosbacher explores the German-American past and present* in order not to let those voices of reason and empathy be forgotten in the municipality's desks.

The fight for a dignified commemoration of Stephen and his fellow Allied soldiers continues.

Gerhard Jochem

The Honorable Lord Mayor:

I am writing to support the proposal to name the street in front of the Zeppelin Field Grandstand after Stephen S. Mosbacher.

I was stationed at Merrell Barracks from 1959 to 1961, fell in love with the city, adored the Old Town, frequented the Jazz Club, and was deeply moved by the history entombed in Nazi monuments near the barracks. I have returned often to visit.

I am not naïve and understand the potential problems associated with naming a street after a German Jew who fought with the Americans and may have taken German lives. However, I know from the New York Times that Nuremberg is trying to decide what to do with its Nazi monuments and think that naming the street after Stephen would be a positive move regardless of what the city decides to do.

If the city decides to keep the monuments then the visitors will be moved by the dedication, but should the city decide it is time to remove them, then dedicating the street in Stephen's name will help answer those who would accuse Nuremberg of trying to ignore its past.

Thank you for your consideration and I wish you the best as you consider what to do with the monuments.

Very sincerely,

Herbert R. Jacobson PhD, FRES

Instructor Emeritus Butte Community College, and Adjunct Professor California State University, Chico

Dear Lord Mayor of Nuremberg,

I am the son of Rosi nee Mosbacher Baczewski who was born in Nuremberg and lived there until she fled to England because of anti-Semitism. She was Stephen Mosbacher's first cousin.

From the letters my parents wrote to Stephen and he to them, it is clear he was a fine, highly respected young man. Like the entire family, my parents were deeply fond of him and kept a framed photo of him in our home in New York as a way to honor his short life.

Now there is an opportunity for the city where he was born to honor him by naming a street after him. I cannot think of a better way for Nuremberg to honor their native son who fought so valiantly in WWII and gave the ultimate sacrifice of his life. The circumstances of his

death reflect his life - helping and caring for another soldier at the moment he was shot and killed. He could have avoided this act of - what can we call it but love for another human being?

I do not understand the delays to support the proposal [...]. I encourage you to consider this proposal in the manner befitting a young man of Stephen's caliber and move this proposal along as soon as possible.

Thank you very much.

Tony Baczewski

Honorable Lord Mayor,

I am writing you today in support of the initiative to rename the street in front of the Zeppelin Grandstand in honor of U.S. Army soldier and Nuremberg native Stephen S. Mosbacher. I served in Nuremberg with the 3/17th FA at Merrell Barracks in 1971-72. Nuremberg has a very special place in my heart. Reading the story of one of your native sons that gave his life to defeat Nazism makes me even more proud of Nuremberg. What a fitting tribute you can bestow on Stephen by placing his name on a street in his hometown. You will make many United States Veterans proud as well [...].

Please move forward with honoring Stephen Mosbacher. I will look forward to a return visit to Nuremberg and hope I can see his famous *Straße*. I am -

Respectfully Yours,

Tom Spahr

U.S. Army Veteran

April 16, 2016

Dear Stephen,

It is now 71 years since you were killed in action in Neuhaus on April 2, 1945. Your hometown of Nuremberg was liberated by your American comrades just a few weeks later, on April 20. I have been asked to write to you, as your younger sister, to comment on the events that have prevented you from being honored as a representative of the many American sol-

diers, some of whom were also refugees from Nazi Germany, some of whom sacrificed their lives, as you did.

Gerhard Jochem, in his translation of the biography that I sent to him, mentioned that I was your step-sister, but in no way did I feel that we were not totally united as a family. Indeed, I was never told that you were only a half-brother until long after your death! Our dear mother Rose regarded you completely as her own son, and made no distinction in her total love for you. The only separation I experienced was that of age - since you were ten years older than I and spent so much time away from home while I was just a little girl who mostly stayed at home, not even experiencing school in Nuremberg.

I often think of what you might have achieved had your life been spared. You were just as brilliant as your classmate Henry Kissinger who went on to great historical prominence. Even as young teens, however, you had political differences with *Heinz* and perhaps it was your idealism that contributed to your bravery in action, which is so well described in the letter from your commanding officer, Major Elting. You had hopes and dreams for a better world after the war, so well expressed in your many hopeful and articulate letters, both in German and English, to our family.

Now many of those hopes and dreams have been relegated to a less important place in the history of both Germany and the USA. Despite efforts to commemorate your life, as one representative of the American Forces who liberated Germany from an evil dictatorship, no action was taken by the local authorities or the current Lord Mayor, to erect a plaque on the street in front of the Zeppelin Grandstand on the former Nazi parade ground. How fitting it would have been to commemorate someone who fought for justice, freedom, and humanity facing the site where all these ideas were literally trampled by the Nazi jackboots.

You would be saddened, as I am, to see that there is a revival of prejudice and hate worldwide. The ideals for which you gave your life can never be taken for granted. The fight continues as a new, darker age shows signs of taking more control over our lives.

I think of how Germany has benefited from the 1945 liberation. A democratic political entity, a prosperous and creative economy, a high standard of social benefits (much higher than here in the U.S.) has prevailed over these years, to the extent where I believe the Germans now cannot imagine it to be otherwise. You have not been here to share in the benefits of postwar life and to work for further progress, as you undoubtedly would have done.

As your sister, I miss you as a role model, but I also miss your presence as a family member, as a source of further extensions of what had become a very reduced *Familiengruppe* due to the evil of the Holocaust that slaughtered so many of our relatives.

I send you my love and share your hopes for a better world.

Your sister

Marianne Lore Mosbacher Flack

Links

- The story of the initiative:
http://www.rijo.homepage.t-online.de/teriblog_en_03.html#mosbacher
- The documentary play *Reconnaissance mission into memory. Staff Sergeant Stephen S. Mosbacher explores the German-American past and present:*
http://www.rijo.homepage.t-online.de/testimon/pdf/stosstrupp_en.pdf

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