

Dear Supporters,

Many thanks for your signatures, messages, comments and encouragement for our project, a permanent memorial for the "persecuted and murdered lesbian women" at the site of the women's concentration camp Ravensbrück.

519 people and organisations in 27 countries have signed our petition! Many emails attached interesting and moving stories and encouragement. Once again, many thanks for this.

On 19.05.2016 the International Ravensbrück Committee (IRK) at their annual meeting in Vienna, supported our application for establishing the memorial.

The long and impressive list of signatures was attached to the official application, as promised.

Excerpt from the official application:

"In accordance with the guidelines of the Sites of Memorial and Remembrance Ravensbrück/Foundation for Memorial Sites in Brandenburg... we apply for a memorial plaque, that is a sign of remembrance, with the inscription as follows:

**In memory of all lesbian women and girls in the women's concentration camp Ravensbrück and Uckermark.
Lesbian women were considered "abnormal" and were persecuted and murdered for being "antisocial", rebellious, crazy and for other reasons.
You are not forgotten!**

A decision was deferred:

The committee of the foundation for Memorial Sites in Brandenburg have deferred a decision. There were very controversial discussions both In the meeting of the International Advisory Council on 14th November 2016 and the Committee of Experts on 6th December 2016.

A final decision is **deferred until 5th May 2017.**

The decision of the Advisory Council states: "No decision for or against the application can be made at the moment, following intensive and controversial discussion. A compromise would be the previous suggestion for consensus or naming names."

The previous suggested wording from 2011 is as follows: "In memory of the lesbian women, who for political, religious, racial or social reasons were imprisoned in the concentration camp Ravensbrück from 1939-1945."

The suggested wording emerged after the LSVD Berlin-Brandenburg and other Associations applied several years ago for the installation of a memorial plaque for lesbian prisoners in Ravensbrück. This was refused by the advisory council in its meeting on 26th November 2012.

We discussed this wording, but continued to apply for the inscription we wrote.

In particular, the former speaker for the LSVD Brandenburg and representative of the homosexual victim group in the advisory council, Alexander Zinn, vehemently opposed our application. He had previously written an open

letter in March 2010, during an argument about the Homo-Monument in Berlin, to prevent lesbian women in national socialism being commemorated.

In his comment to the advisory council he wrote that "the NS powers also rejected female homosexuality" but that these were not persecuted because §175 did not apply to lesbian women. He characterised the desire for a visible symbol of commemoration on lesbian women as the creation of a "Legend of Lesbian persecution" that is based on "questionable individual cases", is "dubious" and "historical misrepresentation" and "a completely unacceptable misuse of history for current political interests".

The initiative "autonomous feminist lesbian women from Germany and Austria" have "demonstrated by their actions" that they are not prepared to accept the decisions of the advisory council ... and have "at the Commemoration on the 70th anniversary of the liberation in April 2015" simply laid a "random memorial". The official application is, on the other hand, an affront to the advisory council.

We are all very disappointed about this decision, and also furious and appalled at the insulting tone of communication and the ignorance and denial of the persecution of lesbian women.

We will campaign for a positive decision on our application at the next advisory council meeting on 5th May 2017. Our continued collective commitment is necessary to establish a permanent commemorative plaque for the "persecuted and murdered lesbians in the former women's concentration camp Ravensbrück."

If you would like to send your own comments or protests to the international advisory council:

By post:

StiftungBrandenburgischeGedenkstätte
z.Hd. internationalerBeirat, Vorsitzender Thomas Lutz
StiftungBrandenburgischeGedenkstätten
Heinrich-Grüber-Platz 1 - 3
16515 Oranienburg
Deutschland

E-Mail: info@stiftung-bg.de

Please send a copy to: Gedenkkugel@gmx.de

Invitation

A symposium will be held directly before the weekend of this annual commemoration of the 72nd anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camp Ravensbrück on the topic of:

Identity politics and commemoration

Gay-Lesbian cultures of commemoration in discussion

A symposium on 20th/21st April 2017 within the context of the 72nd anniversary of the liberation of the women's concentration camp.

Organisers: Sites of Memorial and Remembrance Ravensbrück/Foundation for Memorial Sites in Brandenburg

Patron: Monika von der Lippe, Equality Officer of the State of Brandenburg

On Thursday, 20th April

4 p.m. Welcome and presentation of the project of the German-Austrian initiative: A commemorative plaque for Ravensbrück

Friday, 21st April 2017

Lectures, discussions and podium discussion
(for further information see attachments)

We would be very happy if you could bring to the symposium and to the liberation celebration in the Rememberance and Commemoration Site at Ravensbrück on 22nd/23rd April your commitment and solidarity.

Many thanks,

“Autonomous feminist lesbian women from Germany and Austria”

Email contact: Gedenkkugel@gmx.de