

The residential villa areas in Wannsee 1870 – 1945.

Pleasure ground of the upper middle class and the location of the Wannsee Conference.

Special exhibit May 2000 – January 2006

The Langenscheidt Publisher family

In 1856, Gustav Langenscheidt (1832-1895) founded the famous dictionary publisher, which employed the best philologists of his time. After his death, his son Carl headed the company.

In 1901, Carl Langenscheidt (1870-1952) and his family moved into a country house on Colomierstraße which had been designed by the Master Builder of the imperial court and Castle Master Builder (*kaiserlicher Bau- und Burgenbaumeister*) Bodo Ebhardt. Later, Ebhardt made his mark as the architect of the Nazi castles of the Teutonic Order. The Langenscheidt family is one of the few families in the old villa colony that has managed to keep most of its property until today. The house and the garden are under a preservation order. The terrain that belongs to the rowing club today, was once part of the Langenscheidt property. In 1952, it was sold to the Berlin Senate by division of the estate. Carl and Frieda Langenscheidt (1874-1958), née Biermann, had three daughters and a son. The Langenscheidt ladies were members of the Literary Association of the Alsen Colony.

While the neighbours Liebermann and Langenscheidt were rather distant with each other, the publisher associated with the factory owners Nelson Faßbender and Ernst Marlier.

In 1933, Ruth Langenscheidt married Ernst Alex Flechtheim who was baptized a Catholic, and whose father, the university teacher Julius Flechtheim, was influential in the shaping of the company and business law of the Weimar Republic. Like his father, Ernst Alex Flechtheim also took up a career as a jurist. On the basis of the law to "*Restore Professional Bureaucracy in Germany*" of 7th April 1933, both jurists were excluded from their occupation since they were considered "non-Aryan". The young couple left Germany and tried to get a foothold in America for one year and then in England for six months, but returned to Berlin eventually.



Carl Langenscheidt (1870-1952)



Ruth Langenscheidt

From 1943 onwards, Ruth Langenscheidt hid the ten-year old Jewish motherless boy Berti Busch. At times, she also gave shelter to his father who tried to survive the Nazi era in the Berlin underground. After the war, Mr. Busch made sure that Ruth Langenscheidt was honoured for her courage.

After the end of the war, Ernst Alex Flechtheim briefly held the office of Deputy Mayor of Zehlendorf. After being checked by the Allies, he was considered to have a clean record. He was, however, abducted by soldiers of the Red Army and has been missing ever since.



Ernst Alex Flechtheim