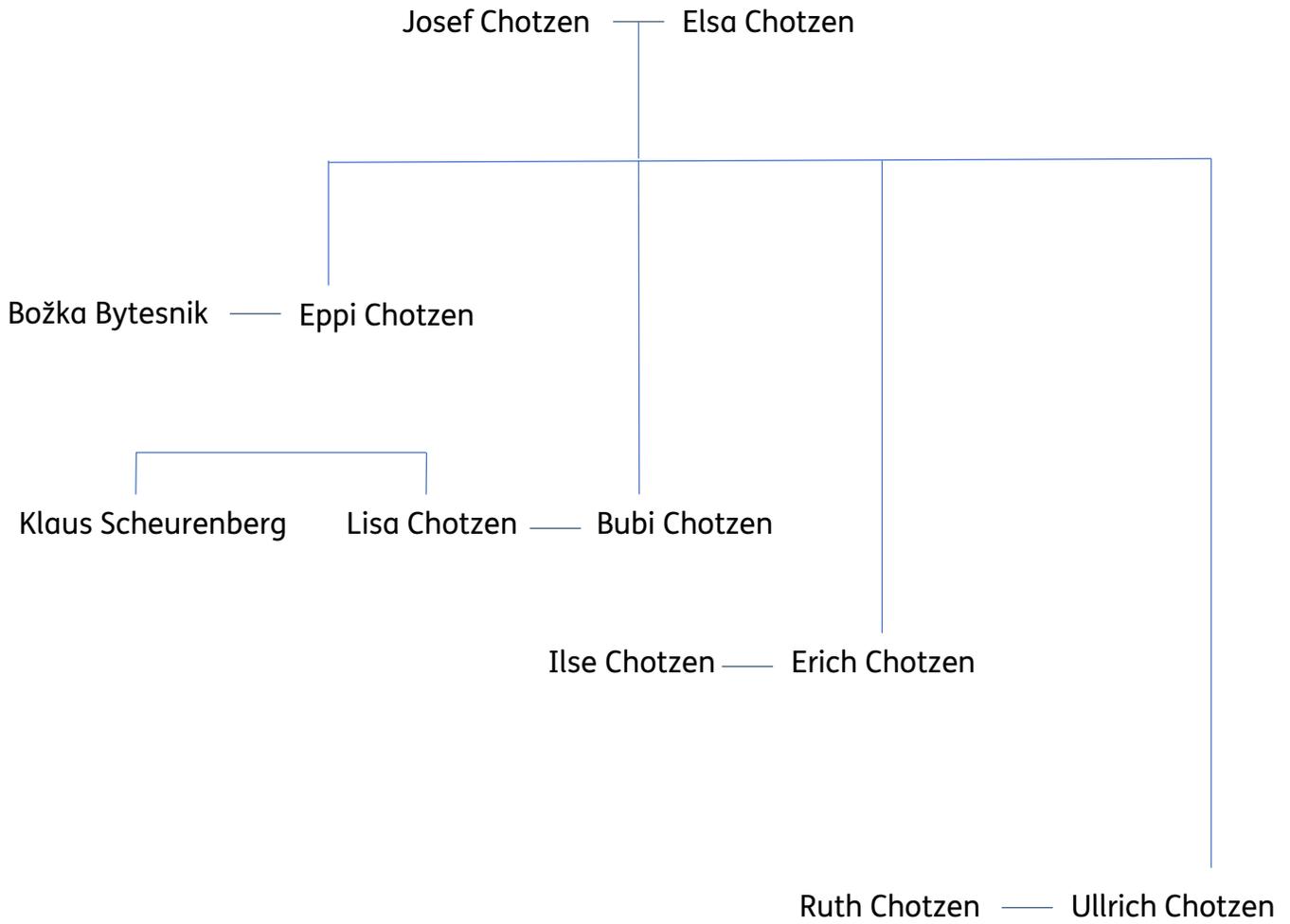


The Family Tree of the Chotzen family



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E-Mail:	info@ghwk.de
Project Lead:	Monika Sommerer
Author:	Svea Hammerle
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Elsa Chotzen née Arndt
(31/10/1887 – 15/04/1982)



(1887-1982)

Elsa Arndt was born in Cottbus on 31 October 1887. Her parents were Protestant farmers. When she met Josef Chotzen, both families forbade the marriage between a Christian and a Jew. As a result, their first son Eppi was born out of wedlock in 1907. Elsa and Josef were not able to marry until 1914. Elsa converted to Judaism at the wedding.



(1887-1982)

In 1914, Elsa and Josef Chotzen moved with their 7-year-old son Eppi to Johannisberger Strasse in Berlin-Wilmersdorf. Elsa worked in her husband's linen business. They had three more sons: Hugo-Kurt, Erich and Ullrich. The family was not religious, but celebrated the major Jewish and Christian holidays.



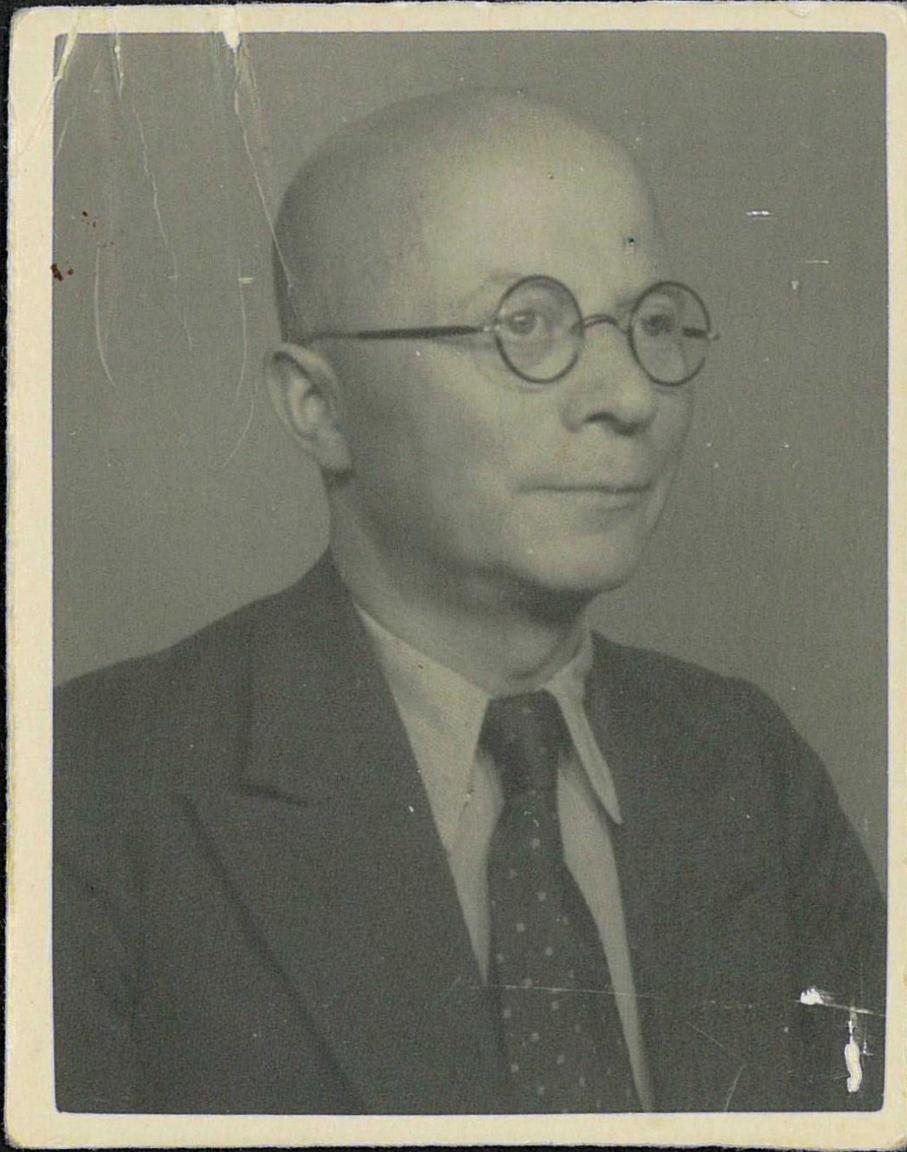
(1887-1982)

Elsa Chotzen was considered an "Aryan" under Nazi law. Her husband Josef was defined as a Jew and their sons as "half-Jews". They were discriminated against and persecuted. Josef had to do forced labour and died of its after-effects in 1942. Elsa used her status as an "Aryan" to tirelessly help her family. But she could not save them. Three of her four sons were murdered.



(1887-1982)

After the Second World War, Elsa Chotzen mourned her murdered sons. After so many years of deprivation and worry, her health was not good. For years she tried to get financial compensation from the Reparations Office, and was eventually successful. She and her son Eppi continued to live in Berlin, where she died in 1982.



Josef Chotzen
03/07/1883 – 27/01/1942



(1883-1942)



Josef Chotzen, the son of a rabbi, was born on 3 July 1883 in Oberglogau (Glogówek) in Upper Silesia. Josef moved to Cottbus for professional reasons and met Elsa there. Both families were opposed to the marriage between a Christian and a Jew. As a result, their first son Eppi was born out of wedlock in 1907. Josef and Elsa were not able to marry until 1914.



(1883-1942)



Josef Chotzen was a merchant by profession. In 1914, he moved to Berlin with his wife Elsa and son Eppi and opened a linen shop. They had three more sons: Hugo-Kurt, Erich and Ullrich. Josef served as a soldier in the First World War from 1917 to 1918. He had to close his linen business in 1929. He became an employee of the Mitteldeutsche Textil-Einkaufsgesellschaft (Mitex).



(1883-1942)



During the Nazi era, Josef Chotzen was discriminated against as a Jew. In 1936, the company where he worked dismissed all its Jewish employees. He was unable to find new work and was thus required to do forced labour as of 1938. He performed physically demanding work in track construction and in a tar factory. The work caused his health to deteriorate rapidly, leading to his death on 27 January 1942.



Josef (Eppi) Chotzen
27/09/1907 – 17/04/1992



(1907-1992)



Josef Chotzen, called Eppi, was born out of wedlock on 27 September 1907. He spent the first years of his life with his grandparents in Cottbus. In 1914, he moved with his parents to Berlin, where he went to school and was enthusiastic about sports. He was politically active and joined the Communist Party in 1929.



(1907-1992)



Eppi Chotzen, like his father, was a merchant and worked in a silk department store. He was forced to resign from his job in 1933 because of his Jewish origins and political convictions. He continued his political activities secretly and was arrested by the Gestapo several times, but released each time.



(1907-1992)



The Nazi's discriminatory laws against people defined as "half-Jews" placed massive restrictions on Eppi Chotzen's life. He was unable to find good employment. He also wasn't allowed to marry his girlfriend Božka because Christian-Jewish marriages had been forbidden since late 1935. From 1941 he had to do forced labour. Eppi was not deported and worked tirelessly with his mother in Berlin to help his deported brothers.



(1907-1992)

After the war, Eppi Chotzen was finally able to marry his girlfriend Božka. He supported his mother as she mourned the loss of his brothers and he became politically active again. After his mother's death, he began writing his memoirs. He donated his family's estate to the House of the Wannsee Conference Memorial. Eppi died in Berlin in 1992.



Bohumila (Božka) Bytesnik
1900 – 05/06/1959



(1900-1959)



Bohumila Bytesnik, called Božka, was born in Tišnov in Moravia (now: the Czech Republic) in 1900. She moved to Berlin with her mother and worked as a housekeeper for the Danish embassy. In 1928, she met Eppi Chotzen. She was also close friends with his mother Elsa.



(1900-1959)



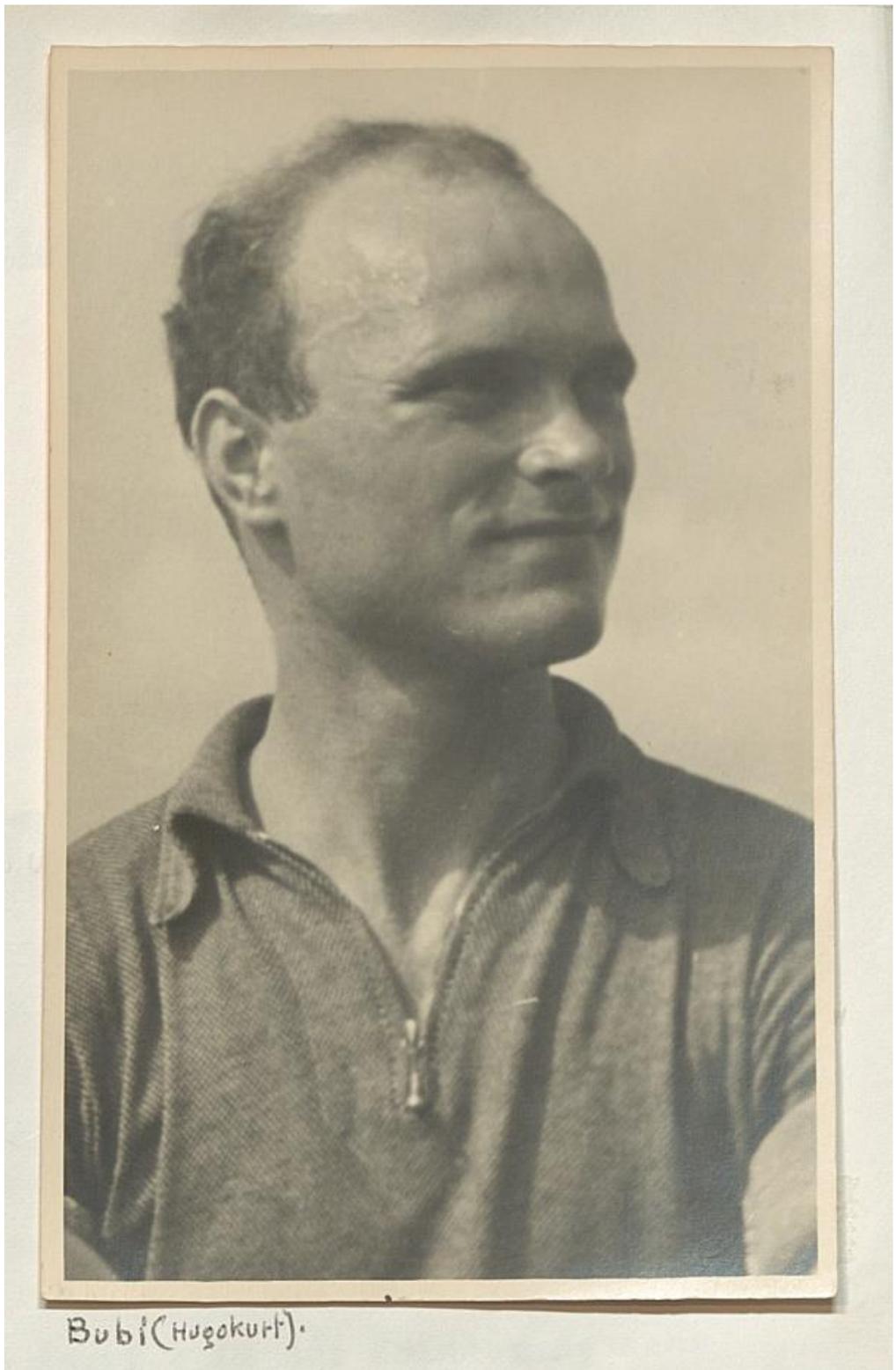
The Nazi anti-Jewish laws prevented Božka Bytesnik and Eppi from marrying. In late 1935, the Nuremberg Laws banned Christian-Jewish marriages. Božka was able to use her employment at the Danish embassy to support the Chotzen family. She mainly helped by procuring food.



(1900-1959)



On 8 June 1945, just shortly after the war ended, Božka and Eppi Chotzen got married. Due to his poor health, Eppi had to stop working in 1948 and she supported them both while also caring for him. Božka Chotzen died on 5 June 1959. She was only 59 years old.



Hugo-Kurt (Bubi) Chotzen
29/03/1915 – 20/02/1945



(1915-1945)



(1915-1945)



(1915-1945)



Hugo-Kurt Chotzen, called Bubi, was born on 29 March 1915, the second son of Elsa and Josef. He spent a lovely childhood in Berlin-Wilmersdorf and was an enthusiastic athlete. He had planned to become a sports teacher, but was denied admission to university because of his Jewish origins.

Bubi Chotzen was defined as a “half-Jew” by the Nazis. He trained as a warehouse clerk and salesman. In 1938, the Jewish owners had to sell the company and he lost his job. Bubi had to do forced labour, including rubbish collection, well construction and work in a sandblasting factory. He married Lisa Scheurenberg in November 1941.

Bubi Chotzen and his wife Lisa were deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto in 1943. His mother Elsa sent food parcels almost daily. In September 1944, he and his brother Ulli were deported to Auschwitz and then on to a subcamp of the Dachau concentration camp. Massive abuse by an SS guard there led to his death in February 1945.



Liselotte (Lisa) Chotzen née Scheurenberg
19/12/1920 - 1944/1945



(1920-1944/45)

Liselotte Scheurenberg, called Lisa, was born in Letschin in Brandenburg on 19 December 1920. She had a younger brother named Klaus. In 1927, the family moved to Berlin. At the age of fourteen, Lisa began an apprenticeship as a corset seamstress. She enjoyed sports and joined a Jewish sports club, where she met Bubi Chotzen.



(1920-1944/45)

Lisa Scheurenberg married Bubi Chotzen in November 1941. The couple moved into a building that belonged to the Jewish community in Elsässer Strasse. Lisa worked as a dental assistant; Bubi had to do forced labour. Despite the difficult circumstances, they tried to build a normal life for themselves.



(1920-1944/45)

Lisa Chotzen and her husband Bubi were deported to Theresienstadt in July 1943. Her mother-in-law Elsa sent them food parcels almost daily. In October 1944, she was deported to Auschwitz. At the end of 1944 or in early 1945, she was deported to Bergen-Belsen, where she was murdered.





Klaus Scheurenberg
20/09/1925 – 14/06/1990



(1925-1990)

Klaus Scheurenberg was born in Berlin on 20 September 1925 and was the younger brother of Lisa Scheurenberg. He attended primary school in Reinickendorf. When he was 12, he had to switch to a Jewish school. He was interested in Zionism and hoped to immigrate to Palestine.



(1925-1990)

In 1941, Klaus Scheurenberg had to abandon his apprenticeship as a carpenter and do forced labour. He was deported with his parents to Theresienstadt in 1942. Klaus and his parents survived and returned to Berlin in 1945. He advocated on behalf of Jewish-Christian cooperation and wrote a book about his life. Klaus died in Berlin in 1990.





Erich Chotzen
28/01/1917 – 25/03/1942



(1917-1942)

Erich Chotzen, born in 1917, was Elsa and Josef's third son. Like his brothers, he too was an enthusiastic athlete and a member of the Berlin sports club 1892. He went to the Heinrich von Kleist high school and was a gifted pupil. Erich planned to study, but when the Nazis came to power, he was advised to leave school.



(1917-1942)

Erich Chotzen was defined as a “half-Jew” by the Nazis and discriminated against. He began a commercial apprenticeship in the textile industry. When the Jewish owners had to sell the company, he became unemployed. Beginning in September 1938, he had to do forced labour. He shovelled snow, delivered coal and worked in a rubber factory.



(1917-1942)

Erich Chotzen and Ilse Schwarz got married on 7 November 1941. They moved in with Ilse's mother in Schöneberg. When she was called up for deportation, Erich and Ilse volunteered to accompany her. The three of them were deported to the Riga ghetto in Latvia in January 1942. Erich died shortly after their arrival, on 25 March 1942, presumably of pneumonia.





Ilse Chotzen née Schwarz
24/03/1923 - 1942



(1923-1942)



(1923-1942)



Isse Schwarz was born in Berlin on 24 March 1923, the daughter of Josef and Käthe Schwarz. She was only 18 years old when she married Erich Chotzen in November 1941. The young couple moved in with Isse's mother Käthe in Schöneberg. When Käthe Schwarz was called up for deportation, Isse and Erich volunteered to accompany her.

In January 1942, Isse Chotzen was deported to the Riga ghetto in Latvia with her husband Erich and her mother. Erich died shortly after arrival. Isse had to do forced labour in soldiers' quarters. A soldier helped her send letters to the Chotzen family. It is not known where and when she and her mother were murdered.



Ullrich (Ulli) Chotzen
02/08/1920 – 23/12/1944



(1920-1944)

Ullrich Chotzen, called Ulli, was born on 2 August 1920 as the youngest son of Else and Josef. He grew up with his brothers in Berlin-Wilmersdorf and, like them, was an enthusiastic athlete. He played hockey, handball and football. The Nazis defined Ulli as a “half-Jew”. He had to stop his schooling and instead began an apprenticeship as a well digger.



(1920-1944)

In November 1939, Ullrich Chotzen met Ruth Cohn, whom he married in December 1941. In 1940, the Jewish owners had to sell the well construction company and he became unemployed. He was conscripted into forced labour and worked with his brother Eppi in a sandblasting factory. In 1943, he was deported to Theresienstadt with his wife Ruth. His mother Elsa sent them food parcels almost daily.



(1920-1944)

In September 1944, Ullrich Chotzen was deported with his brother Bubi from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz. A few days later they were deported to a subcamp of the Dachau concentration camp in Landshut where they had to do forced labour. Ulli died there on 23 December 1944 under unknown circumstances.





Ruth Chotzen née Cohn
21/05/1922 – 1/11/2007



(1922-2007)

Ruth Cohn was born in Berlin on 21 May 1922. She attended a Jewish school in Grosse Hamburger Strasse until 1936. After that she trained as an office clerk. When the Jewish owners were forced to sell the company in 1939, she was required to do forced labour in a mica factory. She met Ullrich Chotzen through mutual friends in 1939.



(1922-2007)

Ruth Cohn and Ullrich Chotzen married in December 1941. Ruth's family was deported to Theresienstadt in early 1942. Ruth moved in with the Chotzen family and developed a close relationship with her mother-in-law Elsa. In July 1943, she and Ulli were also deported to Theresienstadt. Elsa sent them food parcels almost daily.



(1922-2007)

In October 1944, Ruth Chotzen volunteered for deportation to Auschwitz so that she could join her husband. After three weeks, she was taken to a subcamp of the Groß-Rosen concentration camp in Silesia to do forced labour. After the war, she returned to Berlin on foot and lived with Elsa. After learning of Ulli's death, Ruth immigrated to the United States. She died in New York in 2007.

