

# OUR GÜNTER BOLL

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**Günter Boll is no longer among us. We have lost a good friend. He was a Mensch!**

**Günter was born in Freiburg in August 1940, just a few months before the massive Aktion in Baden that decimated the surrounding Jewish communities by deportations of its Jews to Camp de Gurs in Southern France. An unusual German, growing up in the ashes of the failing Third Reich, Günter found an affinity for the Jewish communities that once thrived in his area.**

**We came to know Günter in connection with our trips to Breisach, the ancestral home of my Auerbach, Blum Geismar, Günzburger, Uffenheimer, Weil and Wurmser ancestry. We remember how we were touched by his passion in guiding us to the once-functioning Synagogue in Mackenheim and hearing the story of how he miraculously saved a Genizah (hidden storeroom) of irreplaceable historical documents and a remnant of 150 Wimpels (ceremonial torah binders) from final destruction.**

**The tour continued to the nearby centuries-old Jewish cemetery that had served the burial needs of Jewish communities on both sides of the Rhine River. Here we came in direct contact with four-hundred year-old tombstones of our ancestors, found and unearthed, cleaned and deciphered, by Günter who appeared as a sage and scholar having mastered the Hebrew language in order to further his work.**

**The cleansing of the cemetery and the reconstruction work done by Günter and wife Carola was their own undertaking, asking nothing in return but receiving the accolade and admiration of hundreds of surviving Jews who made their pilgrimage to his door.**

**This was the beginning of a long association of collaboration in conducting genealogical research of my Breisgau and Ortenau family history. Günter's scholarly work uncovered numerous data that contributed to the publication of my family history and he has cast light unto bygone eras on behalf of so many others.**

**And Günter's work reached out to our granddaughter Rona Kremer who spent time at the Mackenheim cemetery, learning at the feet of the Master as well.**



**It is no wonder that Günter was recognized in January 2002 by the Obermayer German History Awards during a ceremony held in the Berlin halls of the Abgeordnetenshaus for his unstinting voluntary contributions in preserving Jewish history, culture and material remains in his local community.**

**May the Heavens open up and receive this man of valor who can rightfully join the Tzadikim of Israel in the throne room of the Lord.**

**The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord (Job 1:21)**