



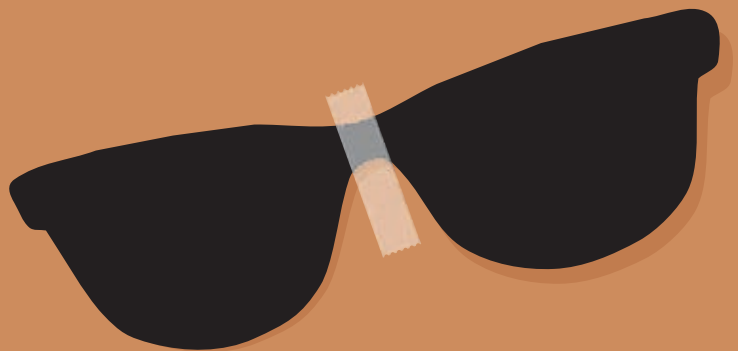
TRAVELER'S DIARY



I WAS THERE!



Jewish culture
in Wroclaw



DAY FIRST Passage

Dear Diary,

This is my first note here. Now I'm starting a wonderful trip to Wrocław. I've always wanted to see that city because of its beauty and historical past. I thought that it would be great to write about everything I see there. There's one thing I would like to pay special attention to. I've read about it a lot and I'm very into it. This thing is... Jewish culture! I know that it's very unusual and weird, but let's say it all loud: I am unusual and weird! And I'm proud of it!

MEMO:

Never get out of the plane during the flight! ;)



DAY SECOND

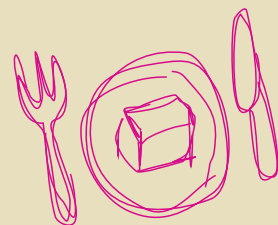
Dear Diary,

In the morning I thought that I can't get to know everything about Jewish culture without trying their cuisine. So I asked some people where I can find a restaurant with typical Jewish food. Everyone recommended me a place named "Sarah" - restaurant located on the Włodkowica street. The first thing that threw into my eyes when I walked in was the decor. Lots of antiques candlesticks, pictures, wooden hangers. On the table was the lace tablecloth. And it whole in the conjunction with the adequate light gave an pleasant atmosphere. You can find there dishes like spinach soup with feta cheese, potato pancakes, werniszki (mushroom in sauce), fishes, Kreplech, varnitches and lots of deserts... I really enjoyed Jewish food! I ordered werniszki, tee called "sarah" and the cheese cake. It was simply

delicious! I'm happy that people in Wrocław still want to promote Jewish culture and they make places where you can taste it (literally!).



I totally have to go there next time I'll visit Wrocław (maybe soon?)



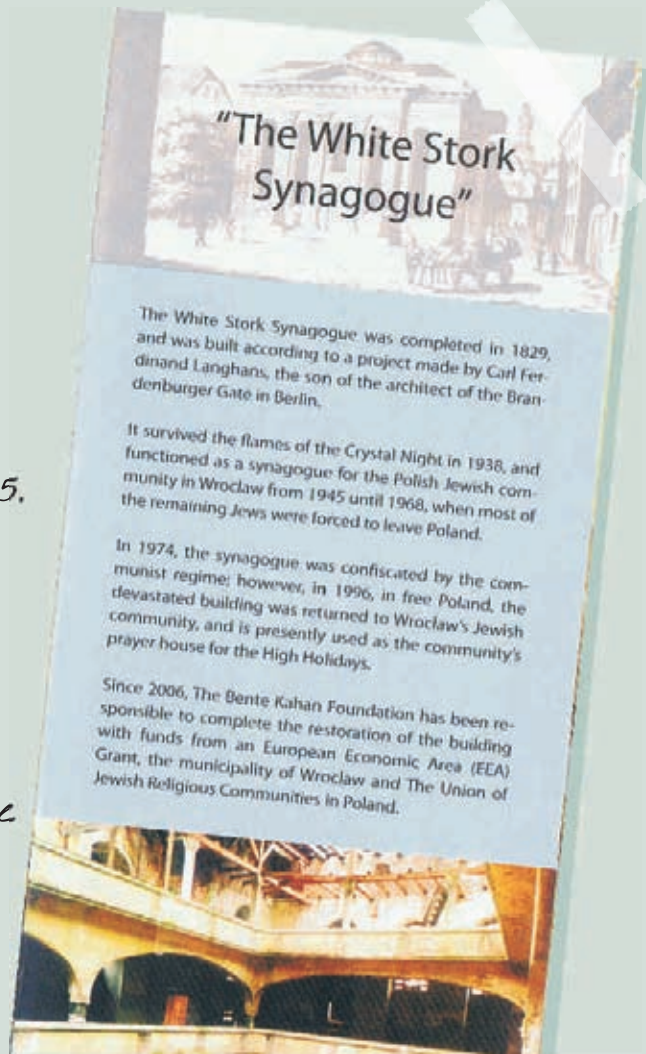
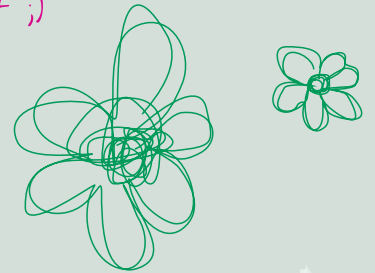
DAY THIRD *Synagogue*

Dear Diary,

There are only two Synagogues in Wroclaw. One of them, the White Stork Synagogue, we can find on WlodKowica Street. It has been the largest and the main synagogue in our city since the Jewish Community of Wroclaw Got it back in 1996. The services, however, are held there only on holidays and other important occasions. The Jewish Community of Wroclaw had the idea of building the synagogue in 1790, but it was only in 1820 that they could finally afford it. The seats were sold in advance and the money was collected to fund the building of the synagogue. The plans were approved and negotiations with the owner of the ground started. The name of the synagogue comes from the White Stork Inn, which had stood there before. In 1821, due to the organisational issues the building had been postponed until 1826. On 23rd April 1829 - the synagogue was finally opened. During the World War II the synagogue was destroyed and Torah scrolls were torn into pieces. The synagogue was turned into a garage by the Germans. The services have been held again since 1996 and the first attempts to renovate it were made in 2005. The synagogue has been totally refurbished and now it is open for the visitors. Nowadays many cultural events take place there. Visitors are encouraged to explore not only the history of Wroclaw Synagogue but also the history and culture of Wroclaw Jewish community.



*Quick sketch of the sunagogue.
Big art ;)*



DAY FOURTH Famous Jews

Dear Diary,

Today, I've done something really great, I think. I went on the amazing trip and I had a lot of fun. I hadn't expected that I could learn so much about Jewish history during one excursion. Let me start from the beginning.

Yesterday I saw the movie: "The Courageous Heart of Irena Sandler", directed by John Kent Harrison. It's about a woman who helped Jewish children to get out of the Warsaw Ghetto. I'm not the kind of girl who is moved by such films, but this was an exception. I felt sorry for the suffering of these children, so I started to read about Jews living in Wroclaw. I found it very interesting! There are many traces of Jewish history and tradition in our city. We can see it almost on every corner. I undertook this challenge and decided to learn more about famous Jews from Wroclaw.

Edith Stein is for me the most interesting person of Jewish origin, who was born in our city. Edith came from a rich Jewish family. She was well educated. She studied German, history and psychology. During her education Edith found the way to Catholicism. She went to the cloister and became Saint Teresia Benedicta of the Cross. In 1942 Edith Stein was captured by Gestapo and sent to Auschwitz concentration camp. She died in the gas chamber together with other Jews. I visited her house on Nowowiejska Street. Now there is Edith Stein Society. People who work there want to show the connection between Christians and Jews. In my opinion their work is very important. Thanks to such initiative people become more tolerant of one another.

The second person I read about was Max Born, a physicist and mathematician. He was born and raised in Wroclaw. Science was the real sense of his life. He studied in Wroclaw, Heidelberg and Zurich. Then he worked as a University lecturer in Frankfurt and Edinburgh. In 1954 Max Born won the Nobel Prize in Physics. In Wroclaw you can go to the square named after him, but I recommend visiting his home. It's a very old house with a memorial plaque. When you look carefully you can see a spirit of this place. It's really hard to describe. What a day! This excursion was an incredible adventure. I learned a lot! Now I'm going to get some sleep. Goodnight Diary!

Off course two hours later I'm still up.
I'm looking for my phone.. Where is my phone?
Oh My God! I've lost it! Where is....
Oh, FOUND IT!



Irena Sandler
is my new
role model!



Edith Stein



Max Born

DAY FIFTH Cementary

Dear Diary,

Today, on sunny warm spring Sunday I went to the old Jewish cemetery at Slezna Street. Passing through the main gates, I found myself in a world of exotic gravestones and luxuriant vegetation. Time didn't exist here - it stops just at the entrance. I lost my mind and soul in the architectural beauty of that cemetery. The necropolis is crossed by many small avenues. The main avenue is wilder and it is an extension of the chestnut trees. I was walking up and down while being moved to another world..

The first burial took place here in November 1856. In the following year still the Second World War many famous and respected people were buried in this cemetery. I found some of them. The grave of Ferdinand Lassalle is one of the most often Visited. He was the founder and leader of the first labour party in German. I saw also a gravestone of distinguished botanic Ferdinand Cohn and parents of Edyta Stein, Known since 1987 as blessed. Along the wall extend the big tombs.

They are made of different materials and styles. The tomb of Kauffmann's family, follow Mauritanian style, drew my attention. It was colorful and very exotic. In turn, Schottlander's family tomb was made in Egyptian style. They were one of the wealthier families in Wrocław. They founded, among other things, "Southern Park". But not all the graves look nice and beautiful. There are still many devastated gravestones, broken sculptures and faded inscriptions. It happened shortly after the war when the place started to be demolished. It is painful. I hope they'll renovate all of them.

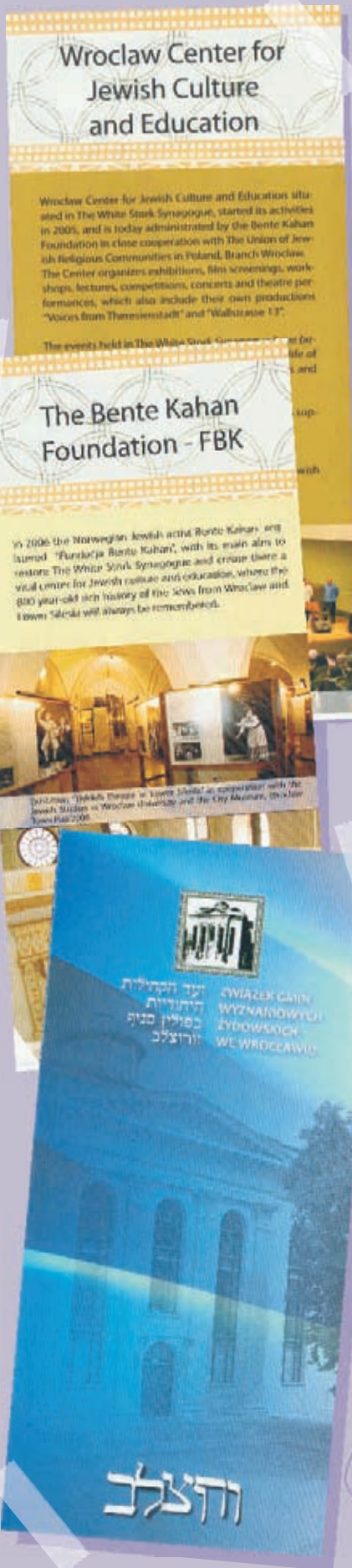


This visit was a very good lesson, especially that I had a guide. He answered all my questions, sometimes very detailed. My attention drew the symbolic and extraordinary decoration of matzevas. I've never seen something like that. The nice old man explained me what they mean. Hands are the symbol of Aaron's descendant. The book was placed on the gravestone of learned human who studied Tora. I found also pigeon, pitcher, butterfly and much more. What was very interesting. The Jewish cemetery is a magic and incredible place. I spent there over three hours. There were three wonderful hours!



DAY SIXTH

Jewish Information Center



The last point of my trip was Jewish Information Center. I've decided to do research and I've asked about some things that I didn't get the answer for in my trip

Me: -What are the tasks of Jewish Information Center?

J.I.C.: -Our Information Center takes round trips in the White Stork Synagogue. We are also get along with District of Mutual Respect. We sell books, magazines, CDs and judaics. We mainly answer about questions about "How we can find old documents?". People want also know about burial of their family members.

M: -What are the main questions, that tourists ask and what kind of attractions can they visit?

J.I.C.: -Tourists can visit The White Stork Synagogue from Monday to Friday. Many people also ask about Jewish Cemetery, on Ślężna street, which is open everyday, including weekends, from 10 am to 6 pm. Tourists also ask about the Kosher cuisine. Unfortunately, we don't have any Kosher shops or restaurants, except our canteen. It is open from 12 am to 1:30 pm everyday. Everyone can come there and buy hot, Kosher meal.

M: -What kinds of tourists and how much of them visit this Information Center?

J.I.C.: -Seasonally a huge number of them come here. Season lasts from April to October. But typical tourist season starts in May and lasts till August. However, in September and October we organized lots of school trips. At least four times a week different schools visit us and we conduct educational activities. Tourists around the world come to us, for example from: Germany, The United States, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

M: -Is it the only Jewish Information Center in Wrocław?

J.I.C.: -No, there is also Bente Kahan Foundation, but main task is to organize concerts and things like that. We work with Jewish Community.

M: -What can be Wrocław proud of?

J.C.I.: -Very special, as you know, is District of Mutual Respect. It is actually the only one organization like that in Europe. We conduct, as I've already mentioned, different workshops for young people and other activities.

M: -What's the District of Mutual Respect?

J.C.I.: District of Mutual Respect - this is borough which we can find on Kazimierza Wielkiego street in Wrocław. In this place are 4 creeds of faith: Roman, Jewish, Evangelical and Orthodox Church.

This Information Center is really helpful. This was a great end of my wonderful trip round "Jewish Wrocław". I'm really happy I came here. I'm sure that I'll never forget it!

