

German Jewish history rescuers honored

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BERLIN (JTA) -- A farmer, a social worker, two school teachers and a lawyer who helped rescue German Jewish history were recognized.

The annual Obermayer German Jewish History Awards, which honor five non-Jewish Germans, were presented in ceremonies Monday in the Berlin Senate, kicking off a week of ceremonies and programs marking International Holocaust Remembrance Day in Germany.

Planned events include an address by Israeli President Shimon Peres at the German Parliament on Jan. 27, the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Peres also was a guest of the Berlin Jewish community on Jan. 25.

This year's Obermayer awardees, nominated by Jews of German background around the world, are:

* Walter Ott, a retired farmer from Buttenhausen who had been in the Hitler Youth, reconstructed the history of the local Jewish community and helped establish a Jewish museum.

* Angelika Brosig, a social worker from Schopfloch, helped restore a local Jewish cemetery and developed an online archive about the region's former Jewish community.

* Heidemarie Kugle Weimann, a teacher from Lubeck, reconstructed personal histories of local Jews and developed close relationships with Holocaust victims' families.

* Helmut Gabeli, a lawyer from Haigerloch, discovered that the local town market once housed a synagogue and ultimately established a Jewish museum there.

* Barbara Greve, a teacher from Gilserberg, researched local Jewish family trees dating back 400 years and helped uncover the local history of persecution of Jews during the Nazi era.

The award was created by Arthur Obermayer, a Boston-based businessman and philanthropist who was inspired after exploring his own family's roots in Creglingen.