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Buchenwald concentration camp

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"Buchenwald" redirects here. For other uses, see [Buchenwald \(disambiguation\)](#).

Buchenwald concentration camp (German: *Konzentrationslager (KZ) Buchenwald*, IPA: [ˈbuːxənvalt]; literally, in English: *beech forest*) was a German **Nazi concentration camp** established on the *Ettersberg* (Etter Mountain) near **Weimar**, Germany, in July 1937, one of the first and the largest of the concentration camps on German soil, following **Dachau's** opening just over four years earlier.

Prisoners from all over Europe and the Soviet Union—**Jews**, non-Jewish **Poles** and **Slovenes**, the mentally ill and physically-disabled from birth defects, religious and political prisoners, **Roma** and **Sinti**, **Freemasons**, **Jehovah's Witnesses**, criminals, **homosexuals**, and prisoners of war — worked primarily as forced labor in local armaments factories.^[1] From 1945 to 1950, the camp was used by the Soviet occupation authorities as an internment camp, known as **NKVD special camp** number 2.

Today the remains of Buchenwald serves as a memorial and permanent exhibition and museum.^[2]



Watchtower at the memorial site Buchenwald, in 1983

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History [edit]



Buchenwald's main gate, with the slogan *Jedem das Seine* (literally, "to each his own", but figuratively "everyone gets what he deserves"). The slogan is legible only from inside the camp

In 1937, the **Nazis** constructed Buchenwald concentration camp, near **Weimar**, Germany. Embedded in the camp's main entrance gate is the slogan *Jedem das Seine* (literally "to each his own", but figuratively "everyone gets what he deserves"). The camp was operational until its liberation in 1945. Between 1945 and 1950, it was used by the **Soviet Union** as an **NKVD special camp** for Germans. On January 6, 1950, the **Soviets** handed over Buchenwald to the **East German Ministry of Internal Affairs**.

Originally the camp was named after the *Ettersberg* hill but it was later renamed *Buchenwald* (German for *beech forest*).^{[3][4]} The *Goethe Eiche* (Goethe's Oak), stood inside the camp's perimeter, the stump of the tree is preserved as part of the memorial.^[5]

Between April 1938 and April 1945, some 238,380 people of various nationalities including 350 **Western Allied** prisoners of war (**POW**)s were incarcerated in Buchenwald. One estimate places the number of deaths at 56,000.

During an American bombing raid on August 24, 1944 that was directed at a nearby armaments factory, several bombs, including incendiaries, also fell on the camp, resulting in heavy casualties

amongst the prisoners^[6] (2,000 prisoners wounded & 388 killed by the raid).^[7]

Today the remains of the camp serve as a memorial and permanent exhibition and museum administered by the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation, which also oversees the camp's memorial at **Mittelbau-Dora**.^[2]

People [edit]

Camp commandants [edit]

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- **SS-Sturmabführer**: Jacob Weisborn (1937-1939)
- **SS-Obersturmbannführer**: **Karl Otto Koch** (1939–1942)
- **SS-Standartenführer**: **Hermann Pister** (1942–1945)

Buchenwald's second commandant was Karl Otto Koch, who ran the camp from 1937 to 1941. His second wife, **Ilse Koch**, became notorious as *Die Hexe von Buchenwald* ("the witch of Buchenwald") for her cruelty and brutality. Koch had a **zoo** built by the prisoners in the camp, with a **bear pit** (*Bärenzwinger*)^[8] facing the *Appellplatz*, the assembly square where prisoner "roll-calls" were conducted.^[citation needed]

Koch himself was eventually imprisoned at Buchenwald by the Nazi authorities for incitement to murder. The charges were lodged by Prince Waldeck and Dr. Morgen, to which were later added charges of **corruption**, **embezzlement**, **black market** dealings, and exploitation of the camp workers for personal gain.^[9] Other camp officials were charged, including Ilse Koch. The trial resulted in Karl Koch being sentenced to death for disgracing both himself and the SS; he was executed by firing squad on April 5, 1945, one week before American troops arrived.^[10] Ilse Koch was sentenced to a term of four years' imprisonment after the war. Her sentence was reduced to two years and she was set free. She was subsequently arrested again and sentenced to life imprisonment by the post-war German authorities; she committed suicide in a **Bavarian** prison cell in September 1967.^[citation needed]

The third and last commandant of the camp was **Hermann Pister** (1942–1945). He was tried in 1947 (**Dachau Trials**) and sentenced to death, but died in September 1948 of a heart condition before the sentence could be carried out.^[citation needed]

Female prisoners and overseers [edit]



Dead German female guard from the **Ohrdruf concentration camp**. She was killed either by Allied forces or by the prisoners

The number of women held in Buchenwald was somewhere between 500 and 1,000. The first female inmates were twenty political prisoners who were accompanied by a **female SS guard** (*Aufseherin*); these women were brought to Buchenwald from **Ravensbrück** in 1941 and forced into prostitution at the camp's **brothel**. The SS later fired the SS woman on duty in the brothel for corruption, her position was taken over by "brothel mothers" as ordered by SS chief **Heinrich Himmler**.

The majority of women prisoners, however, arrived in 1944 and 1945 from other camps, mainly **Auschwitz**, **Ravensbrück**, and **Bergen Belsen**. Only one barrack was set aside for them; this was overseen by the female block leader (*Blockführerin*) Franziska Hoengesberg, who came from Essen when it was evacuated. All the women prisoners were later shipped out to one of Buchenwald's many female satellite camps in **Sömmerda**, **Buttelstedt**, **Mühlhausen**, **Gotha**, **Gelsenkirchen**, **Essen**, **Lippstadt**, **Weimar**, **Magdeburg**, and **Penig**, to name a few. No female guards were permanently stationed at Buchenwald.

When the Buchenwald camp was evacuated, the SS sent the male prisoners to other camps, and the five-hundred remaining women (including one of the secret annexe members who lived with **Anne Frank**, "Mrs. van Daan", real name **Auguste van Pels**), were taken by train and on foot to the **Theresienstadt concentration camp and ghetto** in the **protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia**. Many, including van Pels, died sometime between April and May 1945. Because the female prisoner population at Buchenwald was comparatively small, the SS only trained female overseers at the camp and "assigned" them to one of the female subcamps. Twenty-two known female guards had personnel files at the camp, but it is unlikely that any of them stayed at Buchenwald for longer than a few days.

Ilse Koch served as head supervisor (*Oberaufseherin*) of 22 other female guards and hundreds of women prisoners in the main camp. More than 530 women served as guards in the vast Buchenwald system of subcamps and external commands across Germany. Only 22 women served/trained in Buchenwald, compared to over 15,500 men.^[11] Anna Fest was a guard at Ravensbrueck, who was later tried and acquitted.^[12] Ulla Erna Frieda Jürß was a guard at Ravensbrück, who was convicted of her crimes.^[12]

Allied airmen [edit]

*Main article: **Phil Lamason***

Although it was highly unusual for German authorities to send **Western Allied** POWs to concentration camps, Buchenwald held a group of **168 aviators** for two months.^[13] These men were from the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Jamaica. They all arrived at Buchenwald on August 20, 1944.^{[14][15]}

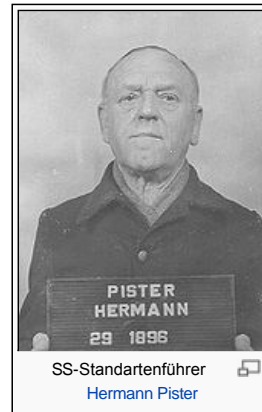
All these airmen were in aircraft that had crashed in **occupied France**. Two explanations are given for them being sent to a concentration camp: first, that they had managed to make contact with the **French Resistance**, some were disguised as civilians, and they were carrying false papers when caught; they were therefore categorized by the Germans as **spies**, which meant their rights under the **Geneva Convention** were not respected. The second explanation is that they had been categorised as **Terrorflieger** ("terror aviators"). The aviators were initially held in Gestapo prisons and headquarters in France. In April or August 1944, they and other Gestapo prisoners were packed into **covered goods wagons** (US: boxcars) and sent to Buchenwald. The journey took five days, during which they received very little food or water. One aviator recalled their arrival at Buchenwald:

“ As we got close to the camp and saw what was inside... a terrible, terrible fear and horror entered our hearts. We thought, what is this? Where are we going? Why are we here? And as you got closer to the camp and started to enter [it] and saw these human skeletons walking around—old men, young men, boys, just skin and bone, we thought, what are we getting into? ”

—Canadian airman Ed Carter-Edward's recollection of his arrival at Buchenwald.^[16]

They were subjected to the same treatment and abuse as other Buchenwald prisoners until October 1944, when a change in policy saw the aviators dispatched to **Stalag Luft III**, a regular POW camp; nevertheless, two airmen died at Buchenwald.^[17] Those classed as *terrorflieger* had been scheduled for execution after October 24; their rescue was effected by Luftwaffe officers who visited Buchenwald and, on their return to Berlin, demanded the airmen's release.^[15]

Buchenwald was also the main imprisonment for a number of Norwegian university students from 1943 until the end of the war. The students, being Norwegian, got better treatment than most, but had to resist Nazi schooling for months. They became remembered for resisting forced labor in a minefield, as the Nazis wished to use them as **cannon fodder**. An incident connected to this is remembered as the 'Strike at Burkheim'. The Norwegian students in Buchenwald lived in a warmer, stone-construction house and had their own clothes.^[18]



SS-Standardführer
Hermann Pister

Causes of death [\[edit\]](#)



Corpses piled up behind the crematorium in Buchenwald concentration camp, April 1945

Although Buchenwald was technically not an [extermination camp](#), it was the site of an extraordinary number of deaths.

A primary cause of death was illness due to harsh camp conditions, with starvation—and its consequent illnesses—prevalent.

Malnourished and suffering from disease, many were literally "worked to death"

under the *Vernichtung durch Arbeit* policy ([extermination through labor](#)), as inmates only had the choice between slave labor or inevitable execution. Many inmates died as



Bodies of Buchenwald prisoners, April 1945

a result of [human experimentation](#) or fell victim to arbitrary acts perpetrated by the SS guards. Other prisoners were simply murdered, primarily by shooting and hanging.

[Walter Gerhard Martin Sommer](#) was an SS *Hauptscharführer* (master sergeant) who served as a guard at the concentration camps of Dachau and Buchenwald. Known as the "Hangman of Buchenwald", he was considered a depraved sadist who reportedly ordered Otto Neururer and Mathias Spannlang, two Austrian priests, to be [crucified upside-down](#). Sommer was especially infamous for hanging prisoners from trees with their wrists behind their backs in the "singing forest", so named because of the screams which emanated from this wooded area.^{[19][20]}

[Summary executions](#) of Soviet POWs were also carried out at Buchenwald. At least 1,000 men were selected in 1941–2 by a task force of three [Dresden Gestapo](#) officers and sent to the camp for immediate liquidation by a gunshot to the back of the neck, the infamous *Genickschuss*.

The camp was also a site of large-scale trials for [vaccines](#) against [epidemic typhus](#) in 1942 and 1943. In all 729 inmates were used as test subjects, of whom 154 died.^[21] Other "experimentation" occurred at Buchenwald on a smaller scale. One such experiment aimed at determining the precise fatal dose of a poison of the [alkaloid](#) group; according to the testimony of one doctor, four Russian POWs were administered the poison, and when it proved not to be fatal they were "strangled in the crematorium" and subsequently "dissected".^[22] Among various other experiments was one which, in order to test the effectiveness of a balm for wounds from incendiary bombs, involved inflicting "very severe" [phosphorus](#) burns on inmates.^[23] When challenged at trial over the nature of this testing, and particularly over the fact that the testing was designed in some cases to cause death and only to measure the time which elapsed until death was caused, one Nazi doctor's defence was that, although a doctor, he was a "legally appointed executioner".^[24]

The local German people insisted that responsibility for the treatment of the inmates fell to the Gestapo and the SS. Even at the end of the war, this attitude was very difficult to counter. On one occasion, after the camp had been liberated, an American officer showed a nurse some photographs showing conditions in the camp. Her initial reaction was one of shock, which soon changed when she realized the identity of most of the prisoners. She said: "but it's only the Jews".^[25]

Number of deaths [\[edit\]](#)

Main article: [Number of deaths in Buchenwald](#)

The SS left behind accounts of the number of prisoners and people coming to and leaving the camp, categorizing those leaving them by release, transfer, or death. These accounts are one of the sources of estimates for the number of deaths in Buchenwald. According to SS documents, 33,462 died. These documents were not, however, necessarily accurate: Among those executed before 1944, many were listed as "transferred to the Gestapo". Furthermore, from 1941, Soviet POWs were executed in mass killings. Arriving prisoners selected for execution were not entered into the camp register and therefore were not among the 33,462 dead listed.^[26]

One former Buchenwald prisoner, Armin Walter, calculated the number of executions by the number of shootings in the back of the head. His job at Buchenwald was to set up and care for a radio installation at the facility where people were executed; he counted the numbers, which arrived by telex, and hid the information. He says that 8,483 Soviet prisoners of war were shot in this manner.^[27]

According to the same source, the total [number of deaths at Buchenwald](#) is estimated at 56,545.^[28] This number is the sum of:

- Deaths according to material left behind by the SS: 33,462^[29]
- Executions by shooting: 8,483
- Executions by hanging (estimate): 1,100
- Deaths during evacuation transports: 13,500^[30]

This total (56,545) corresponds to a death rate of 24 percent, assuming that the number of persons passing through the camp according to documents left by the SS, 240,000 prisoners, is accurate.^[31]

Liberation from Nazi Germany [\[edit\]](#)



On April 4, 1945, the [US 89th Infantry Division](#) overran [Ohrdorf](#), a subcamp of Buchenwald. It was the first Nazi camp liberated by US troops.^[32]

Buchenwald was partially evacuated by the Germans on April 8, 1945. In the days before the arrival of the



US Senator [Alben W. Barkley](#) (D-Kentucky) looks on after Buchenwald's liberation. Barkley later became [Vice President of the United States](#) under [Harry S. Truman](#)





Three emaciated survivors in a barracks in the newly liberated camp

American army, thousands of the prisoners were forced to join the evacuation marches.^[citation needed]

Thanks in large part to the efforts of Polish engineer Gwidon Damazyn, an inmate since March 1941, a secret short-wave transmitter and small generator were built and hidden in the prisoners' movie room. On April 8 at noon, Damazyn and Russian prisoner Konstantin Ivanovich Leonov sent the Morse code message prepared by leaders of the prisoners' underground resistance (supposedly Walter Bartel and Harry Kuhn):

“ To the Allies. To the army of General Patton. This is the Buchenwald concentration camp. SOS. We request help. They want to evacuate us. The SS wants to destroy us. ”

The text was repeated several times in English, German, and Russian. Damazyn sent the English and German transmissions, while Leonov sent the Russian version. Three minutes after the last transmission sent by Damazyn, the headquarters of the **US Third Army** responded:

“ KZ Bu. Hold out. Rushing to your aid. Staff of Third Army. ”

According to Teofil Witek, a fellow Polish prisoner who witnessed the transmissions, Damazyn fainted after receiving the message.^[33]

After this news had been received, Communist inmates stormed the watchtowers and killed the remaining guards, using arms they had been collecting since 1942 (one machine gun and 91 rifles).^[34] (See [Buchenwald Resistance](#))

A detachment of troops of the US 9th Armored Infantry Battalion, from the **6th Armored Division**, part of the **US Third Army**, and under the command of **Captain** Frederic Keffer, arrived at Buchenwald on April 11, 1945 at 3:15 P.M., (now the permanent time of the clock at the entrance gate). The soldiers were given a hero's welcome, with the emaciated survivors finding the strength to toss some liberators into the air in celebration.^[35]

Later in the day, elements of the **US 83rd Infantry Division** overran Langenstein, one of a number of smaller camps comprising the Buchenwald complex. There, the division liberated over 21,000 prisoners,^[35] ordered the mayor of Langenstein to send food and water to the camp, and hurried medical supplies forward from the 20th Field Hospital.^[36]

Third Army Headquarters sent elements of the **80th Infantry Division** to take control of the camp on the morning of Thursday, April 12, 1945. Several journalists arrived on the same day, perhaps with the 80th, including **Edward R. Murrow**, whose [radio report of his arrival and reception](#)^[37] was broadcast on **CBS** and became one of his most famous:

“ I asked to see one of the barracks. It happened to be occupied by Czechoslovaks. When I entered, men crowded around, tried to lift me to their shoulders. They were too weak. Many of them could not get out of bed. I was told that this building had once stabled 80 horses. There were 1,200 men in it, five to a bunk. The stink was beyond all description.

They called the doctor. We inspected his records. There were only names in the little black book, nothing more. Nothing about who these men were, what they had done, or hoped. Behind the names of those who had died, there was a cross. I counted them. They totalled 242. 242 out of 1,200, in one month.

As we walked out into the courtyard, a man fell dead. Two others, they must have been over 60, were crawling toward the latrine. I saw it, but will not describe it. ”

—Extract from [Edward R. Murrow's Buchenwald report](#)^[37]. April 15, 1945.

Soviet Special Camp 2 [\[edit\]](#)

Further information: [NKVD special camps](#)

After liberation, between 1945 and February 10, 1950, the camp was administered by the **Soviet Union** and served as Special Camp No. 2 of the **NKVD**.^[37] It was part of a "special camps" network operating since 1945, formally integrated into the **Gulag** in 1948.^{[38][39]} Another infamous "special camp" in **Soviet occupied Germany** was the former **Nazi concentration camp Sachsenhausen (special camp No. 7)**.^[40]

Between August 1945 and the dissolution on March 1, 1950, 28,455^[41] prisoners, including 1,000 women, were held by the Soviet Union at Buchenwald. A total of 7,113 people died in Special Camp Number 2, according to the Soviet records.^[41] They were buried in mass graves in the woods surrounding the camp. Their relatives did not receive any notification of their deaths. Prisoners comprised alleged opponents of **Stalinism**, and alleged members of the **Nazi party** or Nazi organization, others were imprisoned due to identity confusion and arbitrary arrests.^{[42][43]} The NKVD would not allow any contact of prisoners with the outside world^[44] and did not attempt to determine the guilt of any individual prisoner.^[43]

On January 6, 1950, Soviet Minister of Internal Affairs **Kruglov** ordered all special camps, including Buchenwald, to be handed over to the East German Ministry of Internal Affairs.^[39]

Demolition of the camp [\[edit\]](#)



In October 1950, it was decreed that the camp would be demolished. The main gate, the crematorium, the hospital block, and two guard towers escaped. All prisoner barracks and other buildings were razed. Foundations of some still exist and many others have been rebuilt. According to the Buchenwald Memorial website, "the combination of obliteration and preservation was dictated by a specific concept for interpreting the history of Buchenwald Concentration Camp."

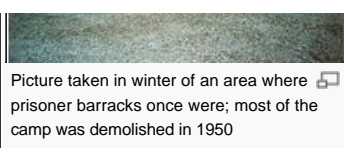
The first monument to victims was erected days after the initial liberation. Intended to be completely



Buchenwald survivors following their liberation. **Elie Wiesel** is in the second row from the bottom, seventh from the left



An emaciated Buchenwald survivor drinking from a bowl following his liberation



Picture taken in winter of an area where prisoner barracks once were; most of the camp was demolished in 1950

temporary, it was built by prisoners and made of wood. A second monument to commemorate the dead was erected in 1958 by the GDR near the mass graves. Inside the camp, there is a living monument in the place of the first monument that is kept at skin temperature all year round.^[45]

Notorious Nazi personnel [edit]

Commandants

[Karl Otto Koch](#) from 1937 to 1941

[Hermann Pister](#) from 1942 to 1945

Medical doctors

[Gerhard Rose](#)

[Waldemar Hoven](#)

[Hans Conrad Julius Reiter](#)

[Dr. Robert Neumann](#)

[Dr. Hans Eisele](#)

[Wolfgang Plaul](#), Born 1909 – Missing, 1945. Also commandant of Buchenwald Female camp (Aussenlager), 1945.

Guards

[Martin Sommer](#)

Nazi head of personnel

[Hermann Hackmann](#)

Well-known inmates [edit]

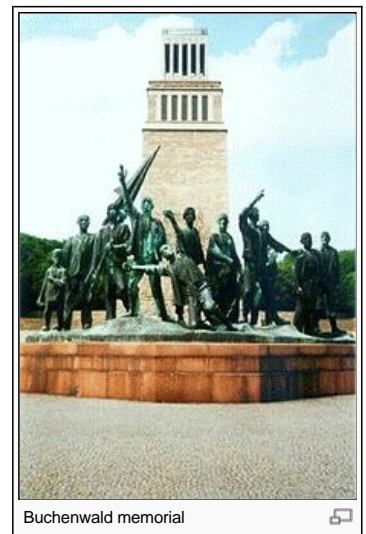
- [Roy Allen](#), American [B-17 Flying Fortress](#) pilot
- [Jean Améry](#), writer
- [Robert Antelme](#), French writer
- [Jacob Avigdor](#), before World War II [Chief Rabbi](#) of [Drohobych](#), after World War II Chief Rabbi of Mexico
- [Conrad Baars](#), psychiatrist
- [Bruno Bettelheim](#), child psychologist
- [Józef Biniecki](#), Polish socialist politician
- [Léon Blum](#), Jewish French politician, pre-and post-war long term French [Prime Minister](#)
- [Dietrich Bonhoeffer](#), Protestant theologian and prominent member of the [Confessing Church](#)
- [Boris Braun](#), Croatian University professor
- [Rudolf Brazda](#), as of 2011 the last known surviving homosexual deported to the camps
- [Rudolf Breitscheid](#), former member of the [SPD](#) and leader of its faction in the [Reichstag](#) of the [Weimar Republic](#) before the Nazi seizure of power in 1933, died in the camp in 1944
- [Christopher Burney](#), British officer and [Special Operations Executive](#) (SOE) operative, wrote about the savage infighting and struggle for power and privileges between the inmates at Buchenwald in *The Dungeon Democracy*
- [Robert Clary](#), French actor, Corporal Louis LeBeau in the *Hogan's Heroes* television series
- [René Cogny](#), French general
- [Seweryn Franciszek Czetwertyński-Światopełk](#), Polish politician
- [Fritz Czuczka](#), Austrian artist/architect
- [Édouard Daladier](#), French politician, former Head of the French government
- [Armand de Dampierre](#), French aristocrat, died in the camp on January 8, 1944
- [Marcel Dassault](#), French aviation entrepreneur who founded the Dassault Group
- [Almeric Lombard de Buffiers de Rambuteau](#), French aristocrat, died in the camp on December 14, 1944
- [Hélie de Saint Marc](#), member of the French resistance, later involved in the attempted [Algiers putsch of 1961](#)
- [Pierre d'Harcourt](#), Travel writer for *The Observer*, member of the French Resistance.
- [Laure Diebold](#), French resistant, [Compagnon de la Libération](#)
- [Willem Drees](#), Dutch politician, [Prime Minister of the Netherlands](#) from 1948 until 1958
- [Ernst Federn](#), Austrian social-psychologist
- [Bolesław Fichna](#), Polish right-wing politician and lawyer
- [Marian Filar](#), Polish Jewish concert pianist and virtuoso. Played at [Carnegie Hall](#) after the war
- [Maria Forescu](#), Romanian film actress, died in the camp in 1943
- [Josef Frank \(politician\)](#), Czech communist
- [August Froehlich](#), German Roman Catholic priest active in resistance movement against the National Socialism
- [Henry P. Glass](#), Austrian Architect and Industrial Designer, released in 1939, moved to the US
- [Albin Grau](#), film producer (*Nosferatu*, 1922)
- [Adolf Grunbaum](#), Austrian physician, released from the camp in 1939 and emigrated to the US. Changed his name to Arthur Grant
- [Walter Gutheim](#), German business man who migrated to America after the war



Waldemar Hoven



Buchenwald inmates



Buchenwald memorial



- **Maurice Halbwachs** French sociologist, died in the camp in 1945
- **Curt Herzstark** inventor of the *Curta calculator*, hand-held, hand-cranked mechanical calculator
- **Harris Hans Hirschberg** German Rabbi, Scholar, & Educator. Released in 1939, and immigrated to the U.S. with his wife & two daughters.
- **Heinrich Eduard Jacob**, German writer
- **Paul-Emile Janson**, Belgian politician, former Prime Minister of Belgium, died in the camp in 1944
- **Léon Jouhaux**, French trade unionist and *Nobel Peace Prize* laureate
- **Józef Kachel**, Scout leader, head of the pre-war *Polish Scouting Association* in Germany
- **Imre Kertész** writer, 2002 *Nobel Prize in Literature* recipient
- **Eugen Kogon**, anti-Nazi activist, later Christian Socialist, professor, broadcaster and author of *Der SS-Staat* ("The SS state"), a significant piece of literature concerning German concentration camps
- **Phillip (Phil) J. Lamason**, *Squadron Leader*, Royal New Zealand Air Force
- **Jan Łangowski**, Polish social worker and politician active among the Polish diaspora in Germany
- **Yisrael Meir Lau** (born 1937), *Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel*
- **Hermann Leopoldi**, Austrian composer and entertainer
- **Parlindoengan Loebis**, *Indonesian physician* and *activist* in the Netherlands
- **Fritz Löhner-Beda**, Austrian lyricist
- **Artur London**, senior Czech communist and writer, future government minister
- **Jacques Lusseyran**, blind French memoirist and professor
- **Georges Mandel** French politician, former Minister of the Interior, died in the camp in 1944
- **Henri Maspero**, French Sinologist, pioneering scholar of Taoism, died in the camp in March 1945
- **Karl Mayr**, **Adolf Hitler's** immediate superior in an Army Intelligence Division in the Reichswehr, 1919–1920; later becoming a political opponent
- **Erik L. Mollo-Christensen**, Emeritus Professor of Oceanography, MIT; former Associate Director of Earth Science, NASA
- Jean Marcel Nicolas, a black Haitian national, he was incarcerated in the Buchenwald and Dora-Mittelbau camps^[46]
- **John H. Noble**, American-born gulag survivor and author; Family owner of the *Praktica* Camera factory, Dresden 1945
- **Andree Peel**, Member of the French resistance
- **Harry Peulevé**, an agent of the SOE who managed to escape Buchenwald with **F. F. E. Yeo-Thomas**.
- **Henri Christiaan Pieck**, Dutch painter and twin brother of **Anton Pieck**
- **Franciszek Myśliwiec**, Polish politician and social worker
- **Count Albert de Nadaillac**, head of a French resistance organisation (ORA-Tours Angers Le Mans). He survived, but his younger brother, count Michel de Nadaillac, also involved in the resistance died in Dora.
- **Paul Rassinier**, considered the father of *Holocaust denial*
- **Jakob Rosenfeld**, minister of health under Mao
- **Baron Otto of Schimidburg**, German nobleman, died in the camp on July 23, 1941
- **Herbert Sandberg**, artist, designer, publisher of *Ulenpiegel*
- **Etta Sapon**, Italian, Dramatic actress
- **Paul Schneider**, German pastor, died in the camp in 1939
- **Jorge Semprún**, Spanish intellectual and politician and culture minister of Spain (1988–91)
- **Jura Soyfer**, Austrian poet and dramatist, died in the camp in 1939
- **Ernst Thälmann**, leader of the *Communist Party of Germany*, died in the camp in April 1944
- **Jack van der Geest**, escapee
- **William Arthur Waldram**, Canadian Lancaster tail gunner, General Motors executive
- **Fred Wander**, Austrian writer
- **Ernst Wiechert**, German writer
- **Elie Wiesel**, Romanian Jewish French-American writer, 1986 *Nobel Peace Prize* recipient
- **F. F. E. Yeo-Thomas**, *Royal Air Force Wing Commander* and *British Special Operations Executive (SOE)* agent, codenamed "The White Rabbit". Returned to England in 1945
- **Petr Zenkl**, Czech National Social Party politician, deputy Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia (1946-1948)



Buchenwald's crematorium

Royalty [edit]










- **HRH The Princess Mafalda of Savoy**, the daughter of **King Vittorio Emanuele III of Italy** and his **Consort, Queen Elena**, died in the camp in 1944.
- **Joachim Ernst**, Duke of Anhalt, died in Soviet custody in 1947.

Modern times [edit]


Today the remains of Buchenwald serves as a memorial and permanent exhibition and museum administrated by Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation, which also administrates the camp memorial at *Mittelbau-Dora*.^[2]

Visit from President Obama and Chancellor Merkel [edit]











In June 5, 2009 **U.S. President Barack Obama** and **German Chancellor Angela Merkel** visited Buchenwald after a tour of **Dresden Castle** and **Church of Our Lady**. During the visit they were accompanied by **Elie Wiesel** and Bertrand Herz, both survivors of the camp.^[47] Dr. Volkhard Knigge, the director of the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation and honorary professor of *University of Jena*^[citation needed], guided the four guests through the remainder of the site of the camp.^[48] During the visit **Elie Wiesel**, who together with Bertrand Herz was send to the **Little camp** as 16-year old boys, said, "if these trees could talk." His statement marked the irony about the beauty of the landscape and the horrors that took place within the camp.^[48] President Obama mentioned during his visit that he had heard stories as a child from his great uncle, who was part of the **89th Infantry Division**, the first Americans to reach the camp at Ohrdruf, one of Buchenwald's satellites.^[47]

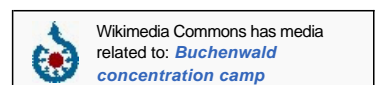
23. [^] Spitz, Vivien. *Doctors from Hell*. 2005, page 213-14
24. [^] Spitz, Vivien. *Doctors from Hell*. 2005, page 209
25. [^] Reagan, Geoffrey. *Military Anecdotes* (1992) p. 82, Guinness Publishing ISBN 0-85112-519-0
26. [^] Bartel, Walter: *Buchenwald—Mahnung und Verpflichtung: Dokumente und Berichte* (Buchenwald: Warnings and our obligation [to future generations]—Documents and reports), Kongress-Verlag, 1960. p. 64, lines 12–23. (German).
27. [^] Bartel, Walter: *Buchenwald—Mahnung und Verpflichtung: Dokumente und Berichte* (Buchenwald: Warnings and our obligation to future generation—Documents and reports), Kongress-Verlag, 1960. p. 203, lines 18–38. (German)
28. [^] Podcast with one of 2000 Danish policemen in Buchenwald.  Episode 6 is about statistics for the number of deaths at Buchenwald.
29. [^] Includes male deaths in satellite camps.
30. [^] Bartel (p. 87, line 17–18) reports that somewhere between 12,000 and 15,000 prisoners died on evacuation transports in March and April 1945.
31. [^] Bartel, Walter: *Buchenwald—Mahnung und Verpflichtung: Dokumente und Berichte* (Buchenwald: Warnings and our obligation [to future generations]—Documents and reports), Kongress-Verlag, 1960. p. 87, line 8. (German)
32. [^] The 89th Infantry Division , United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.
33. [^] Langbein, Hermann; Harry Zohn, translator (1994). *Against All Hope: Resistance in the Nazi Concentration Camps, 1938-1945* (in English translation from German). New York: Paragon House. p. 502. ISBN 1-55778-363-2.
34. [^] Several eyewitness reports of Dutch and German inmates of Buchenwald at the Dutch Institute of War Documentation NIOD in Amsterdam.
35. [^] ^a ^b Wayne Drash (August 14, 2008). "Buchenwald liberator, American hero dies at 83" . *CNN*.
36. [^] U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum article on the US 83rd Infantry Division .
37. [^] "WWII: Behind Closed Doors", Episode 6 of 6. BBC. Broadcast on BBC 2, on Monday 15 December 2008.
38. [^] Butler, Desmond (2001-12-17). "Ex-Death Camp Tells Story Of Nazi and Soviet Horrors" . *The New York Times*. Retrieved 2010-04-27.
39. [^] ^a ^b Kai Cornelius, *Vom spurlosen Verschwindenlassen zur Benachrichtigungspflicht bei Festnahmen*, BWV Verlag, 2004, p. 131, ISBN 3-8305-1165-5.
40. [^] Kinzer, Stephen (1992-09-24). "Germans Find Mass Graves at an Ex-Soviet Camp" . *The New York Times*. Retrieved 2010-04-27.
41. [^] ^a ^b Petra Weber, *Justiz und Diktatur: Justizverwaltung und politische Strafjustiz in Thüringen 1945–1961 : Veröffentlichungen zur SBZ-/DDR - Forschung im Institut für Zeitgeschichte*, Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2000, p. 99, ISBN 3-486-56463-3.
42. [^] Kai Cornelius, *Vom spurlosen Verschwindenlassen zur Benachrichtigungspflicht bei Festnahmen*, BWV Verlag, 2004, p. 128, ISBN 3-8305-1165-5.
43. [^] ^a ^b Petra Weber, *Justiz und Diktatur: Justizverwaltung und politische Strafjustiz in Thüringen 1945–1961 : Veröffentlichungen zur SBZ-/DDR - Forschung im Institut für Zeitgeschichte*, Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2000, p. 100, ISBN 3-486-56463-3—of the Buchenwald inmates, none had faced a Soviet military tribunal, those were concentrated in Sachsenhausen and Bautzen.
44. [^] Kai Cornelius, *Vom spurlosen Verschwindenlassen zur Benachrichtigungspflicht bei Festnahmen*, BWV Verlag, 2004, pp. 126, 133–134, ISBN 3-8305-1165-5.
45. [^] Young, James E.: *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000, p. 105.
46. [^] US Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Blacks During the Holocaust" . *Holocaust Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 26 September 2012.
47. [^] ^a ^b "Buchenwald - The WhiteHouseBlog" . The White House. Retrieved 18 August 2012.
48. [^] ^a ^b "Buchenwald REMARKS BY PRESIDENT OBAMA, GERMAN CHANCELLOR MERKEL, AND ELIE WIESEL AT BUCHENWALD CONCENTRATION CAMP" . The White House. Retrieved 18 August 2012.

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- Matthew Koch *History of a Victim—Etta Sapon* Bulceci ed. Rome 2007.
- The History of Buchenwald Memorial .
- Pierre d'Harcourt *The Real Enemy* Longmans 2007.

External links

- The Buchenwald Boys Documentary 
- Buchenwald Camp Guards .
- My Story  from a Buchenwald Holocaust survivor.
- Film footage from 1945 inside Buchenwald Concentration Camp 
- My Life in the Third Reich: Nightmares and Consequences  by Gisela Cooper, who was a prisoner in Wansleben, a subcamp of Buchenwald.
- Official Memorial Site homepage .
- Information  at jewishgen.org.
- Google maps satellite image  camp at top; see also memorial site  lower down.
- Nuremberg Military Tribunal, Volume I, pp. 508–511 .



- Nuremberg Military Tribunal, Volume II, pp. 69–70 [↗](#).
- Third Reich Ruins page [↗](#) of historic and present day photos.
- Buchenwald Revisted [↗](#) at holocaustresearchproject.net.
- at Buchenwald [↗](#).
- "Sir John Noble and Dresden: An American Survivor of Post-war Buchenwald" [↗](#).
- Processing DE: Notes from Berlin [↗](#) Poet Barrett Watten's notes upon visiting Buchenwald, June, 2007.
- Gelsenkirchen subcamp of Concentration Camp Buchenwald [↗](#).
- Podcast interview of one of the 2,000 Danish policemen interned at Buchenwald [↗](#).
- Was God on Vacation? By Jack van der Geest, 3rd ed 2002, ISBN 0-9649615-2-0.
- Money used in Buchenwald Concentration Camp [↗](#).
- Images of Buchenwald taken during 2006 [↗](#).
- Survivors, academics recall dark episode in Germany's postwar history [↗](#) Deutsche Welle on 16.02.2010
- Guide to the Concentration Camps Collection [↗](#) at the Leo Baeck Institute, New York, NY. Includes extensive reports on Buchenwald collected by the Allied forces shortly after liberating the camp in April 1945.

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