

## Nazi Party rallies at the Zeppelin Field



Nazi party rally in city of Nürnberg in 1927

[YouTube video shows footage of 1927 rally in Nürnberg](#)

Although many travel guidebooks say that the Zeppelin field was first used in 1927 for a Nazi party rally, the picture above clearly shows that it was held in the city of Nürnberg that year. In this photo, taken during the August 19-20, 1927 rally, Georg Halberman and Pfeffer von Salomon stand in the front, wearing Bavarian lederhosen (leather shorts) and knee socks as part of their uniform while Hitler and his right-hand man, Rudolph Hess, who is smiling in the background, salute the parade of Sturmabteilung (SA) troops from the back seat of a convertible.

Hess was Hitler's strongest supporter and his personal secretary until 1941 when Hess took his life in his hands to pilot a plane to Scotland, some say at the behest of Hitler, in an attempt to negotiate with the British for peace and an end to World War II. Hess was imprisoned by the British until the end of the war; then he was tried and convicted by the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal on charges of participating in a "common design" to commit Crimes against Peace. As Hitler's secretary, Hess had signed some of the orders given by Hitler, which made him a war criminal. Hess allegedly committed suicide at the age of 93 in Spandau prison after serving a life sentence.



Nazi SS troopers hold back crowd at 1938 rally

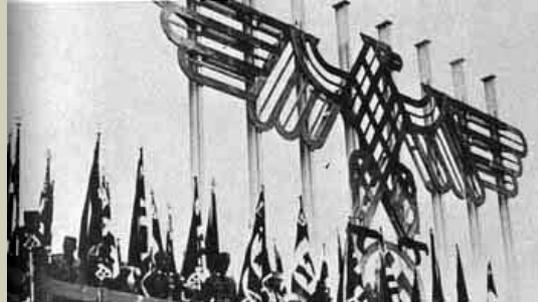
One of the obsessions of the Nazis was the desire to return to the past and to bring back the ancient German culture. The medieval city of Nürnberg, with its castle dating back to the reign of Kaiser Frederick Barbarossa, was a favorite of Adolf Hitler because it is rich in German history. It was because of the historical significance of Nürnberg that Hitler selected the city as the site of the annual Nazi Parteitag (Party Day). The first official party rally was held in 1927 in the city itself with speeches given at the Hauptmarkt, the main town square. Before 1927, there had been rallies in Nürnberg on German Day

which Hitler and other party members attended.

Every Nazi party rally began with a performance of "Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg," an opera by Richard Wagner, which was Hitler's favorite. The cult of the Nazis had its origins in the music of Wagner which glorified the German past. To this day, the music of Wagner is banned in Israel because it is a reminder of Hitler.

In 1933, an airfield called the Zeppelin Field, outside the city center, was first used for the party rally because it offered a huge space for party members to gather and listen to the nationalistic ranting of their leader.

According to Albert Speer, Hitler's architect, in his Memoirs entitled "Inside the Third Reich," the first Party Rally to be held at the Zeppelin field was in 1933 after Hitler was appointed Chancellor of the Reich. As Hitler's official architect, Speer was commissioned to design a temporary reviewing stand at the Zeppelin Field. He designed a gigantic eagle with a wingspread of over 100 feet. "I spiked it to a timber framework like a butterfly in a collection," Speer wrote.



Eagle designed by Albert Speer for 1933 rally

The photo above shows the eagle behind the temporary reviewing stand which was replaced in 1934 by the marble structure that still stands today.

The Nazi party rallies in Nürnberg were designed to impress the rest of the world with Germany's military might and the party's solid support of Hitler. To people who were alive before World War II started, the name Nürnberg immediately evokes images of the spectacular Nazi rallies. The speeches were broadcast around the world by radio, and films of the event were shown in the newsreels that preceded movies in theaters, the 1930ies substitute for television world news. In 1935, Hitler commissioned the beautiful and talented movie actress, Leni Riefenstahl, to produce the film "Triumph des Willens (Triumph of the Will), which is still frequently shown on the History Channel on cable television; it is a propaganda documentary of the 1935 annual party rally at the Zeppelin Field.

In 1934, Albert Speer was commissioned to design a permanent stone structure for the party rallies at the Zeppelin Field. According to Speer, his design was "a mighty flight of stairs topped and enclosed by a long colonnade, flanked on both ends by stone abutments. Undoubtedly it was influenced by the Pergamum altar." He added that "The structure had a length of thirteen hundred feet and a height of eighty feet. It was almost twice the length of the Baths of Caracalla in Rome."

Speer wrote that he designed the Tribüne at the Zeppelin Field so that it would still look beautiful even "after generations of neglect, overgrown with ivy, its columns fallen, the walls crumbling here and there, but the outlines still clearly recognizable." Speer was tried by the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg in 1945; he was convicted and served 20 years in Spandau prison for his part in the "common plan" of the Nazis to commit war crimes. Speer was the man in charge of the forced labor camps in Germany during the war. In a footnote in his book, Speer mentioned that the Palace of Justice was repaired in preparation for the IMT by the forced labor of the defeated Germans.

In 1938, Germany annexed Austria and the Sudetenland (part of Czechoslovakia) into Grossdeutschland (Greater Germany). As a result, membership in the Hitler Youth increased to 8.7 million boys. At many of the Nuremberg rallies, the Hitler Youth was prominently represented.

In September 1938, the last peacetime rally took place at Nuremberg. This was the largest Nazi rally ever held; there were around 700,000 members of various Nazi organizations which took part in the festivities which lasted for a week.

On Saturday, September 10, 1938, over 800,000 members of the Hitler Youth marched into the Nuremberg stadium and performed military style maneuvers which they had been practicing for a whole year. In the grand finale, they spelled out the name Adolf Hitler. Hitler gave a speech in which he said, "You, my youth, are our nation's most precious guarantee for a great future, and you are destined to be the leaders of a glorious new order under the supremacy of National Socialism. Never forget that one day you will rule the world."

Hitler was an amateur architect who had many grandiose plans for classic buildings that would leave a

lasting legacy for his "Thousand Year Reich." Many of the major Nazi concentration camps were located near quarries, brick factories or gravel pits to provide building materials for proposed new buildings designed by Speer and Hitler himself. The [Natzweiler-Struthof](#) camp in Alsace was originally opened because it had a quarry with red granite, suitable for new buildings in Nürnberg.

[Heinrich Himmler](#) was the second in command in the Nazi party and the man behind Hitler, literally and figuratively as the photograph below shows. It was taken on the reviewing stand at the 1938 Party Rally at Nürnberg. Himmler was the man responsible for all the concentration camps and for carrying out Hitler's systematic plan to exterminate the Jews. He was captured by the British soon after the war, but allegedly committed suicide before he could be put on trial. Hitler also escaped Justice at Nuremberg when he committed suicide on April 30, 1945 just before the surrender of Germany to the Allies on May 7, 1945.

The medal pinned to Hitler's uniform is the diamond-encrusted Iron Cross, First Class, Germany's highest medal for military bravery, which was awarded to him when he was a soldier in World War I. Himmler is wearing the black uniform of the SS; he was born in 1900 and just missed serving his country in World War I.



Heinrich Himmler behind Hitler at 1938 Party rally

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