

Margot Bernheimer, born on December 16, 1924 in Göppingen, died on February 16, 2023 in New York

Margot was the third child of Selma, née Simon and Eugen [Bernheimer](#). Her older sisters were Beate (1921-2020) and Anneliese (1922-2021). Margot's parents ran a brandy distillery at Geislinger Str. 3 and a tobacco shop at Marktstraße 4 in Göppingen.



Margot fled with her parents to the USA/New York on 15.07.1939.

Margot with her parents in 1938

(Source: Stadtarchiv Göppingen)

In a letter from 2015 to her former schoolmate Marianne Riedinger, née Schindler, she (now married **Margo Karp**) wrote:

*"Among the few documents I still have, I found the reports of the **Mädchenrealschule Göppingen** (girls' secondary school): On the first page it says 'entered class Ib on April 23, 1935, resigned from class IVb on November 9, 1938'. There is even a report for the 'autumn of 1938' with a summary verdict 'Is diligent and purposeful'. Most of the Jewish children who could no longer go to school attended the **very modest school** that the community maintained with a teacher and a few volunteers in the community hall that was still standing after the destruction of the synagogue. I was one of them. My two older sisters had left Göppingen in the summer of 1938; they could no longer go to school after the eighth grade." (Emphasis: K. M.-R.)*

In another letter, she wrote about the first time in the USA:

"The first few years in New York were difficult; learning a new language was very difficult for my parents; new customs, a big city, very low income [my uncles hired both of them in their small business]; my sisters and I were much better off; both already spoke good English – Bea had a job, and Anne also got one after training at a commercial school – and she started evening studies. Only I was still in school – so I took on some of the housework. The three of us managed to Americanize very quickly. But my parents were worried about the family they had left behind – and felt helpless.

I graduated from high school in 1942; there was no money to send me to college, even though I was offered a scholarship. So I went to business school, found a job, and began evening studies as well. My parents had a social life with relatives and friends from Göppingen – and my sisters and I made new friends and acquaintances among other refugees or even real Americans.

I married my very lovable, handsome real American in July 1945, while he was still in uniform. He was 31, I was 20. It worked out – eventually we got our own apartment, had decent jobs, made new friends, had children; our daughter was born in 1950 and our son in 1953. My parents were financially better off when they received German welfare – I don't remember exactly when, but I think it must have been in the 50s.

We had received sad news from Germany – my mother's aunts in Göppingen and my father's sisters in Munich had been deported. One of my aunts was sent from Theresienstadt to Switzerland at the end of 1944 as part of an exchange program. And although we didn't talk much about it, we felt guilty of survival."

Three Sisters 2010: Margo Karp, née Bernheimer (center), left Ann Schwarz, née Bernheimer, right Bea Kandell, née Bernheimer
(Source: Initiative Stolpersteine Göppingen)

