

# THE JERUSALEM POST

## New exhibition shares stories of Jews who fled Nazi-Germany for New York

By the early 1940s, 20,000 Jews fled Germany for Washington Heights, New York.

By JERUSALEM POST STAFF FEBRUARY 23, 2020 06:05



A man sits in the shade at Riverbank State Park during very hot weather in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan in New York City, New York, U.S.  
(photo credit: REUTERS)

A new exhibition in Chelsea, [New York](#), details the story of Jews who migrated from [Nazi-Germany](#) to New York, in the upper Manhattan neighborhood Washington Heights neighborhood, and how they adapted there.

The “Refuge in the Heights: The German Jews of Washington Heights” exhibition explores how Jews from Germany adapted to life in America, built a community of their own and managed to overcome the struggles they had to face, *amNY*, a daily local newspaper, reports.

“We try to show in our exhibit what happened to this immigration wave,” told Magdalena Wrobel, project director of the exhibition, to *amNY*.

The exhibition shares the memories of those who lived in the Heights during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Many of them struggled to find work and faced discrimination, both as a Jew and as a German. While some were working professionals in Germany, many had to start over in trying to build a career once in New York.

“Usually the poorest of the immigrants were deciding to go to Washington Heights,” Wrobel said, arguing that the neighborhood offered “a chance for newcomers to thrive and find a new home.”

“There are many stories where people really struggled and tried to improve their situation,” she added.

Passports, photo albums, movies, artifacts, extracts from local newspapers allow visitors to better understand the life of those Jewish immigrants.

"Washington Heights is a neighborhood of voices and stories—those of immigration, refuge, inclusion, exclusion, Americanization, differentiation, conflict, harmony, and reinvention," writes the exhibition's website.

"Located near the upper tip of Manhattan, with Inwood to its North, and Harlem to its south, the Heights is perhaps best known for its ethnic enclaves, including those of Irish, Jewish, Armenian, Greek, Cuban, African-American, Puerto Rican, and Dominican newcomers that called it home throughout the twentieth century," it adds.

By the early 1940s, 20,000 Jews fled Germany for Washington Heights, representing 37% of the neighborhood. Today, however, Jews account for only 12% of Washington Heights.

The [exhibition](#) opened on February 3 at the Center for Jewish History, at 15 West 16th St, and will run until July 31.