

## History of the Rimbach Synagogue

### Inauguration of the new synagogue in 1840

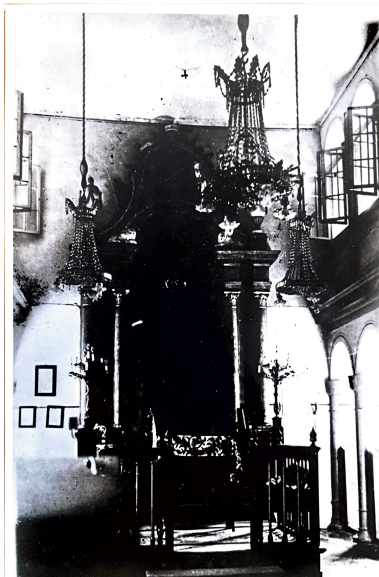
As the Alte Schule (old school) at Brunnengasse 6 had become too small for both teaching and religious services, the Jewish community acquired the property on Schloßgasse/Heinzenwiesenweg in 1834. The new synagogue was inaugurated in 1840 and provided seating for 120 men and 84 women. School rooms and accommodation for teachers were rented nearby.

On 30 August 1890, the Jewish community of Rimbach celebrated the 50th anniversary of the synagogue, an occasion marked by strong public participation and the attendance of Mayor Jakob Trautmann III.

### November Pogrom in Rimbach

In the night of 9 to 10 November 1938, the citizens of Rimbach destroyed the interior of the synagogue using axes and clubs. The benches were doused with petrol and set on fire. The three large crystal chandeliers were torn from the ceiling. Valuable sacred objects, including the Torah scroll, disappeared during the night and were never recovered. Later, members of the SS from Bensheim arrived with the intention to burn down the synagogue. The order was not carried out only because doing so might have endangered the homes of “Aryan” neighbours.

After the pogrom night, the Jewish community was instructed to pay for the repairs of the synagogue themselves.



The only surviving image of the interior of the synagogue.

On 10 November 1938, the board members of the Jewish community, who had been assaulted the previous night, were forced to sell the synagogue for **zero**

Reichsmarks. The municipality used the synagogue as a fire brigade equipment depot for almost a year. On 19 October 1940, it sold the building for 2,600 Reichsmarks to Adam Schuster from Rimbach, who used the premises as a warehouse for “motor vehicles.”



Photo: Alemannia Judaica (ca. 1953)

### Post-war period

On 20 March 1951, the parish of Mörlenbach, which was responsible for Rimbach, acquired the former Rimbach synagogue for a total of 4,450 Deutsche Marks from the New York Jewish organisation JRSO, into whose ownership the building had passed following a compensation procedure. In 1952/53, the building was converted into a Catholic church and significantly enlarged after the adjoining grocery store was acquired in the 1980s. The main entrance was relocated to Schloßstraße, a bell tower was added, new church windows were installed and a second-hand pipe organ was purchased.

#### Image and information sources:

- *Rimbach in the Odenwald – A journey through local history* edited by Karl-Ludwig Schmitt

- *History of the Rimbach Jews* by Wolfgang Gebhard

[www.juden-in-rimbach.de](http://www.juden-in-rimbach.de)

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