



June 21, 2014

The Budapest mayoral decree of June 16, 1944 obliged all the city's residents defined as Jews — over 220,000 people who also had to wear the yellow star— to move into designated “yellow-star houses” by June 21. This meant that almost 2,000 buildings across the city were marked with a yellow star, and for half a year, until the establishment of the Budapest ghetto, every passer-by could see exactly who the persecuted Budapest Jews were, and where they lived.

On June 21, 2014, the seventieth anniversary of this forced mass relocation, OSA Archivum is planning commemorations in front of the remaining 1,600 former yellow-star houses in our city. These commemorations will involve the people of Budapest, the artists and directors of cultural institutions, theatres, and public organizations which are today housed in former yellow-star buildings—and of course the houses themselves.

We therefore invite you to join in these commemorations, or to register as a volunteer to organize commemorative events at one or more former yellow-star houses. We anticipate that the commemorations would take place from the early afternoon until late evening on June 21, and preferably with the participation of the houses' residents. We would like to leave the planning of fitting commemorative events to the volunteer organizers, and their imaginations.

A short public commemoration might take many forms: reading aloud the text of the original yellow-star houses decree, a short musical performance, singing, reading aloud a literary text, holding a few minutes' silence, or placing a simple commemorative plaque on the building.

The central aim is for this 70th anniversary, which affects all of us, to be made clearly visible, if not unavoidable, for everyone who lives in Budapest today.

June 21 also coincides with this year's annual “Night of the Museums” festival. We are working together with many prominent museums and cultural institutes to commemorate the 70th anniversary as an integral part of the museums' public events on the day. Our partners include the Hungarian National Museum, Budapest History Museum, Petőfi Museum of Literature, Capa Contemporary Photography Center, National Archives of Hungary, Budapest City Archives, Goethe Institute, Cervantes Institute, and the Polish Institute in Budapest. Our plans also include a special memorial concert by the Budapest Festival Orchestra at the end of the day, on Heroes' Square.

We would like every single house to be part of the program: let none of the yellow-star house residents or their tragic fates be neglected!