

*The 1960s:
A Collection of
Personal Items and
their Stories*

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Museums of Memories*

Münster in the 1960s

Münster/Westfalia is known as a University city, specialised on law and medicine. The conservative academics and the catholic background is opposed by alternative influences of students from all over the world. The mix of traditionalism and progress is typical for Münster and plays a role in all aspects of social and cultural life as well as architecture and politics.

After the second world war Münster's population increased rapidly which lead to an extension of the infrastructure. But there was also a significant change in culture: As many refugees came to Münster it's culture was influenced by the ones from other countries.

Another important aspect is that the emancipation of women made progress. Women stopped staying at home to bring up their children and to run the household but started working. Popular jobs for women were for example tailor, sales assistant, teaching home economics (teaching to cook and to run the household) and especially secretary. Women massively organised groups to represent their political aims and to bring forward the emancipation of women in terms of education and economic and political influence.

In the middle of the 1950s the textile industry had a great success. People asked for new cloths and as fashion changed enormously new products had to be available. The miniskirt and nylon-tights were invented and reflatd the textile industry. But as in the 1960s mass-production in Asian or Eastern European countries arouse the textile industry around Münster decreased a lot which lead to a loss of many jobs.

The change to a service society caused an increase of the entertainment industry. Cinemas, dances and parties played an important role in the post-war generation's life. This was due to the desire to replace the sorrow caused by the second world war but also because of changes regarding music, fashion or lifestyles in other countries which reached and influenced Germany in this time. Münster was controlled by America and with this it was influenced enormously especially regarding life style and culture.

But this cultural change was not regarded as a positive development by everybody. The younger, newly orientated generation strictly refused the traditional values of the older and thus, came into conflict with the conservative Catholics who had exerted a big influence on society before and who were shocked by the cultural development which included the warding off of traditional rules. The new generation started to rethink former social regulations and tried to state their position in society. Kisses in public, nude bathing or going to the disco provoked the older generation and was criticised enormously. The significant change from a regressive type of conservatism to progressive pluralism in culture, religion and politics was not accepted and discussed but often refused and disregarded.

Another aspect of youth's rebellion were occurred in the university. Münster's university was already very big and popular and thus, it was a centre of exchange between students' groups to form rebellious organisation. The student rebellions were for example anarchistic or had feminist tendencies. There were several boycotts of the university, sometimes there even supported by academic professors and tutors. These rebellions were a more physical way of expressing the aim of getting rid of the former values. Newly orientated people became aware of the power of an organisation, they wanted to take part in the change after the second world war. The anti-war movement in America was seen as a role-model and new technologies in communication and media made it easier to bridge greater distances. This was the reason why protests and newly orientated people had such an enormous impact in the development of the society.

All in all the 1960s represent the confrontation of generations which differ in values and aims in Germany. The older generations looked back to their experiences during the two wars whereas the new generations looked forward to a globalised world which should be marked by progress in technology and network. During the 60s the significant changes were on the one hand criticised but on the other hand appreciated a lot. Münster was affected very much as there were many students and as it is a diocese city.

The Hat

The chosen object is a self-generated hat my maternal grandfather received in 1966. After 18 months of military service (1964-1966) some friends gave him the hat on the occasion of his dismissal. At that point in time he was 24 years old. On it some German words or phrases, like "Soldat wider Willen" (engl.: Soldier against one's will), "Endlich ist alles vorbei!" (engl.: Finally everything is over!) or "Ich fühle mich wie neugeboren!" (engl.: I feel like a new man) have been stuck. Next to a small tank a telecommunications tower has been placed on top of the hat, because my grandfather had to work as a signaller during his military service. Therefore he was not only trained in using rifles, but he was also taught the Morse alphabet to communicate with other squads.

The barracks he had worked in were located in Unna, a city in the east of the Ruhr Area, but do not exist today anymore. Due to the proximity of his domicile, he was able to drive home every day. For other persons doing their mandatory military service it was impossible to see their families during the week. Those men spent their free time playing cards together or taking naps. Usually 4 to 6 persons shared a bedroom in the barracks of Unna.

They stuck on the same schedule everyday, beginning with being awoken at 6 am, and for that reason my grandfather had to return to the barracks at the latest at midnight. After his time at military service, my grandfather returned relieved to work.

STORY FROM SPAIN

When I was 25 years old, in 1964, I decided to travel to America and went to the South coast of the country. When I arrived in the State of Louisiana, I went to a small village called Lake Charles. This village is very beautiful because it is located between two marvellous lakes: the Charles Lake and the Prien Lake and the Calcasieu River flows through the town. In that time, I had a tent so, when I arrived at the village, I put the tent up by the river with the idea of spending a few days there. Every morning, I went to have breakfast in a café near the river. After that, I usually went for a walk and visited beautiful places. One day, I went to a street market and I could see a lot of interesting things but there was one which really made me stop and look carefully: It was a very strange, amazing lamp. The shape of the lamp was special..., the base was like a hat and it had some German words written on it. Inmediatly, I decided to buy it; I was sure that the lamp had misterious, interesting stories behind and of course it would be a good souvenir to take back home with me. Now, I have this lamp in a box but every time I see it, I remmeber my trip and the day I bought it. Good memories from an amazing trip.

STORY FROM BELGIUM

It was 1964. It were dark times in Berlin. Fritz W. Schlitzohr was a student at the University of Berlin, whose father died 10 years before. His mother had cancer. Together with his sister, who worked at the hospital, Fritz managed to make ends meet. Fritz liked to read books and he was a very smart person. But one day, the family Schlitzohr couldn't afford to pay the electricity any longer because of the lack of money, so he couldn't read anymore. But he was a very smart person. So he used his father's old hat and some old scrap metal he found and made a lamp with an old battery of a flashlight. He managed to put the lamp on the hat stably so it wouldn't fall down. So, without electricity, he could read books. Because of this invention he was able to study and he passed the exams in a brilliant way. Eventually he became a doctor in the hospital of Berlin. Together with his sister, he found a cure for cancer. So he was able to cure his mother. Later Fritz and his sister cured many other people who had cancer. At the age of 43 he won the Nobel Prize of Science. Today you can still visit a monument for Fritz in Berlin showing his genius invention: the hatlamp.



THE NECKLACE



Original story from Germany

The object is my **grandmother's necklace**. It is **made of gold and an aquamarine**. The necklace was a christmas present from my grandfather but they had got to know each other only three months before. Due to this my grandmother didn't want to accept such an expensive present after such a short time. The reason for that was that she thought that she had to stay with my grandfather when accepting the present but of course she wasn't sure about this after three months. However, my grandfather can be very convincing and he insisted on giving the present and my grandmother had no other choice than taking the necklace. Fortunately, my grandmother decided to stay with him. They have been married for more than 50 years until my grandfather died. The necklace still is my grandmother's favourite one and she wears it almost every time she leaves the house. Someday my mother will inherit it and after her I will inherit it. The necklace means very much to me because I cannot remember my grandmother without it and of course, it is a great memory of my grandfather, too.

Story from Finland

THE CURSED PENDANT

Once upon a time there was a pendant, a cursed pendant. The pendant was cursed by a beautiful enchantress. The enchantress cursed it because of her hatred of humans. Humans betrayed each other, misled each other and fought against each other. The enchantress had been enduring those weaknesses for many years until she decided to pour her hatred into the pendant. The pendant would move on from a generation to a generation drawing life from humans and ultimately relinquish its power creating a new human, a human without weaknesses. The enchantress had accomplished her affair as she stuck a dagger into her heart and faded away.

Story from Spain

1965: THE BLUE PENDANT

Summer holidays in a cruise at the Atlantic Ocean: We had been awarded with a voyage in first class!! We were doing a lot of activities: swimming, watching theatre, dancing and going to big parties at night.. Last Monday, we were fishing and something hooked in my bait. I thought it was a fish but when I took it out, it turned out to be a pendant. The most beautiful pendant I have ever seen.... Later in my room I realized it was the pendant that had disappeared when the Titanic sank.

Story from Belgium

THEY SAID IT WAS HAUNTED

Introduction

16 years ago, there was a lady called Mary. She lived in a townhouse with her daughter Emily. They were the only two because Mary's husband passed away several years before.

CHAPTER 1

The way the body was lying there in a mixture of alcohol and cigarettes made the police think the murderer wasn't conscious that he was killing a human being. Emily's body was abused and treated without any respect. She was the victim of harmless bullies who burned her. Mary felt the most painful sorrow she had never felt before. She was sad and angry and her emotions started to escalate. Mary knew she had no one left and because of her anger she turned into ashes. Only her necklace did not burn, it was lying there on top of the ashes, untouched and locked up for several years.

CHAPTER 2

After 10 years another family moved into Mary's house. The house had been empty the whole time because it was said to be haunted. But the new family didn't know about the family who used to live there. The daughter of the family found the necklace, took it and wore it every day because she thought it was the prettiest thing she's ever seen.

CHAPTER 3

Everything was ready, the house was the best place to celebrate her sweet sixteen and with her beautiful dress and the necklace she was the star of the night. It was getting late and her parents went to sleep. Elisabeth kept drinking and started to take drugs. Drunk as she was she fell on another girl. The fight had begun. While the two girls were hitting each other and throwing alcohol at each other her cigarette fell to the ground and a little fire started. Elisabeth pushed the other girl into the fire and her dress started to burn. She totally lost her mind and killed the girl by burning her. Everybody ran away and Elisabeth was left alone with the dead body of an innocent girl. She told the police it was an accident. The ghost of Mary who still lived in the house got so angry because the girl had killed someone in exactly the same way some boys killed her daughter.

CHAPTER 4

Elisabeth went to bed, sad, scared, feeling guilty... She cried the whole night and what had happened kept playing in her head over and over again in her head. Suddenly her necklace started to lighten up. She tried to pull it off but it started to get tighter. Elisabeth panicked and pulled as hard as she could until it finally got off and she threw it into the corner of her room but when she woke up she was wearing the necklace again. For the second time she tried to get it off but Mary's anger was too big and the necklace strangled her at once. Blood splashed on the walls and Elisabeth smacked on the floor which made everybody wake up. Her parents ran into her room, saw the blood on the walls and as they looked closer they could see that there was something written in the blood. Elisabeth's mother read out loud: "Kind regards, Bloody Mary".

May you all be warned because again, there it was: the necklace in the middle of an empty room. Mary is still waiting for its new owner.

Cuban Rattles

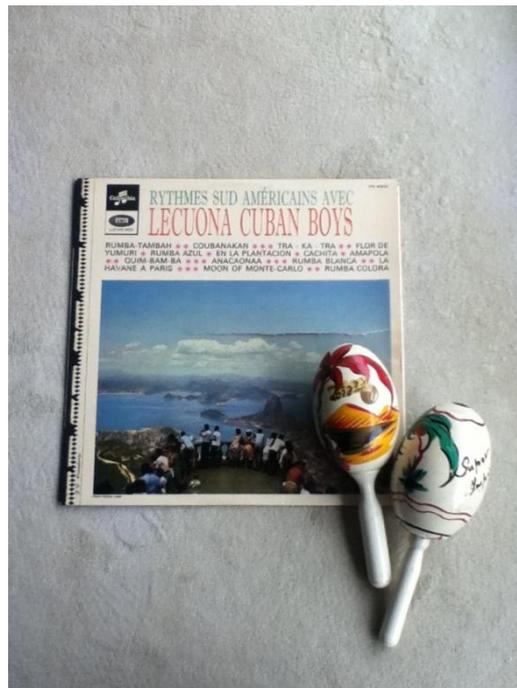
I chose the cuban rattles my grandfather brought from Cuba in the 1960s. On the record, there is some suitable music.

When I was younger, my whole family always came together, played that kind of music and started dancing while my grandfather accompanied us with his rattles.

My family has a big relationship to South America since everyone (apart from me) lived in Brazil for at least three years.

Unfortunately my grandfather died three years ago, so now they are something like a symbol for us, we play the rattles every year on his day of death.





The summer holidays of the year 1964 were my very best holidays... because we went to Cuba! My father's business had prospered a lot that year and we had a lot of money so we went to Cuba for our holidays. Cuba is an amazing country with amazing people! It seems as if you were partying all the time. People smile at you and music can be heard everywhere. One day, I bought a pair of maracas and I started to play in a group in a pub... It was incredible. There was a group that I loved called Leona Cuba Boys. I bought a record of that group which I listen to almost everyday. My summer holidays in Cuba were my best holidays. I enjoyed a lot and more than that, now, Cuba is in my heart.

Mum's Barbie



In 1968, when my mother was six years old, her uncle who worked in a fashion business went to New York and brought her a Barbie as a present. My mum beamed with joy when she held the little brunette plastic doll in her hands for the first time. The Barbie's little blue eyes looked at her and shouted: "Play with me! Dress me up! Brush my hair!" Oh, my mum was so excited and her beautiful present became her best friend. The little Barbie was always with her, she brought her to school, brought her to the playground, brought her absolutely everywhere. Of course all her friends were jealous and wanted to play with my mum's Barbie. And my mum felt proud, proud to be the single girl in town having a Barbie with joints. Additionally she collected everything she could get and spent all her pocket money into clothes and accessories to dress her Barbie up and to give her different roles. My mum cared good for her Barbie even when her mother told her the beloved doll was the most ugly thing ever appeared in this house. But my mother was filled with happiness. Although she got more Barbies, her first one always was her favourite one and she kept all the fascinating clothes and accessories of her dolls in an orange suitcase. One day I climbed to my grandparent's attic and found the little orange suitcase in an old cupboard. Then my grandmother told me the story of my mum's first Barbie and her disgust against this little American plastic doll.

Story from Spain

This suitcase belonged to an orphan boy, called Johnny.

When he was a baby, a woman, probably his mother abandoned him in an orphanage.

The baby was wrapped up in a very big blanket in a suitcase.

When he grew up, he began to dream about the woman that had abandoned him, and he started to draw her.

Eventually, he drew a beautiful doll with the face of the woman he remembered and called her Barbie.

He also designed different clothes for her. People liked it a lot, and started to buy it. It became the most famous doll in the world.

Finish Story

The suitcase

My great mom started this. She put the thing what was important for her. Then she get suitcase (where was the important thing) to her child. It's was the child's turn. When the child died he get the suitcase with content to his child. Now the suitcase with content is on my room. When I always want to commemorate my great mom or my dad, I can look at the suitcase and look at things. This suitcase is very important me!

Belgian Story

Ciao Bella

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Sally Peters. She was 10 years old and she loved her doll collection. She had one special Barbie, with a big value because it used to be her grand-mother's. This doll, named Bella, was the prettiest one to play with and it had her own special box with different outfits for each season. That's the reason why she took it with her everywhere.

"Go take your luggage, Sal, the taxi arrives in 5 minutes!" said Sally's mum. Sally rushed into her room and secretly took Bella and her box with her. She hid it under her sweater because her mum certainly would not see it. Her mum had prohibited her to take it with her because at home it is safer.

<<The next day>>

"The sun is shining, let's go to Santa Maria beach" her mother said cheerful. When they arrived, Sally told her mum she wanted to play in the dunes. "I'm going to make sandcastles" she lied. "I'll see you in a bit" replied her mother relaxed. Sally was playing with her Bella when she heard her mum screaming: "Sally!!! Let's go eat an ice-cream!" Sally didn't know what to do because her mum shouldn't see Bella. She buried Bella in the box in the sand and she hung her headband on the place where Bella was buried. This way she could recognize the place when she would come back the next day. Because of the bad weather, Sally didn't have the opportunity to come back for Bella.

Thirty years later, Bella was found by another little girl called Amy and she took it everywhere! Until the day, she went to the beach...