




## individuals

<b>Bartels, Heinrich</b>	Commander Heinrich Bartels was a naval officer in his mid-50's when put in charge of logistics for <i>Operation Hannibal</i> . Stationed in Gotenhafen (Gdynia), he reported directly to Admiral Burchardi who in turn reported to Admiral Dönitz.
<b>Bertram, Heinrich</b> 	<p>The third officer to captain the <i>Gustloff</i>. Bertram was chosen as the successor to the first captain, Carl Lübke, after he died of a heart attack on the bridge during the official maiden voyage to Madeira (Friedrich Petersen was the temporary captain to complete the cruise).</p> <p>Bertram was the longest serving captain aboard the <i>Gustloff</i>, seeing it through the majority of its cruise years, one year as a hospital ship and until February 20, 1944 in command of the "floating barracks".</p>
<b>Bonnet, Max</b>	Head Steward on the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i> who, while still clad in his white jacket, served senior members of the crew cognac well after the torpedoes had struck the ship on the night of January 30, 1945.
<b>Brickmann, (Commander)</b>	Commander of the <i>TS-2</i> torpedo recovery vessel, which apparently reached the scene of the <i>Gustloff</i> sinking at approximately 3:00AM on January 31st, 1945 to perform rescue operations (according to the book <i>The Cruellest Night</i> by Dobson, Miller, & Payne, but questions remain on the accuracy of this fact).
<b>Brinkmann, Woldemar</b> (1890-1959)	The architect, designer and professor from Munich who created the interior design of the <i>Gustloff</i> and <i>Robert Ley</i> . He was a preferred interior designer of Adolf Hitler, and co-worker/master student of Paul Troost. His first major ship projects were the <i>Scharnhorst</i> and <i>Gneisenau</i> for Norddeutschen Lloyd in 1934.

	Brinkmann was born in Hamburg and eventually returned there after the war before his death in 1959.
<b>Burchardi, Theodore</b>	Admiral Burchardi was put in charge of the Eastern Baltic and Prussian coast for <i>Operation Hannibal</i> . A hard-liner, he was prone to make numerous "fight to the last man" speeches. Burchardi reported directly to Admiral Dönitz.
<b>Dankel, (Lieutenant)</b>	An officer with the 2nd Submarine Division on board the <i>Gustloff</i> , who attempted to coordinate rescue efforts as the ship sank. Held back tides of desperate people and fired warning shots at fellow officers who tried to save only themselves.
<b>Diewerge, Wolfgang</b>	Prolific Nazi author whose works included two anti-Semitic books on the assassination of Wilhelm Gustloff. The first in 1936 was <i>Der Fall Gustloff</i> (The Gustloff Case), followed by <i>Ein Jude hat geschossen</i> (A Jew Has Shot) in 1937.
<b>Dönitz, Karl</b> (1891-1980)	<i>Grossadmiral</i> of the German <i>Kriegsmarine</i> (Navy), Dönitz ordered <i>Operation Hannibal</i> , the largest marine-based evacuation in history - of which the <i>Gustloff</i> was a participant. Serving in the Navy during both world wars, he rose through the ranks swiftly and commanded the famous U-boats during the Battle of the Atlantic in World War II. Following Hitler's suicide and through instructions in his will, Dönitz was appointed President of Germany (it lasted only twenty days). Ironically, Dönitz had never been a member of the Nazi Party.
<b>Ehrenburg, Ilya</b> (1891-1967)	Russian writer and journalist who became most famous for his articles in <i>Krasnaya Zvezda</i> , in which he pronounced a fierce hatred of the German enemy. Soviet soldiers loved his work, and many historians feel that he intensified the brutal Red Army revenge for the invasion of Russia - a revenge that forced many East Prussians to scramble for escape to the West aboard ships like the <i>Gustloff</i> .
<b>Fick, Werner</b>	Petty officer aboard the <i>VP-1703</i> , an old naval dispatch boat. Found the very last survivor of the <i>Gustloff</i> at dawn after the ship had sunk. It was a baby that was blue from cold and barely alive among frozen corpses in a lifeboat. He adopted the child when the parents could not be located.
<b>Frankfurter, David</b> (1909-1982)	Struggling Jewish medical student who assassinated Swiss Nazi leader - Wilhelm Gustloff on February 4th, 1936 in Davos, Switzerland. Frankfurter willingly admitted to the deed, and after a brief trial was incarcerated for the duration of the war.





As the tides of war changed, he was pardoned and released at the end of World War II. He relocated to Palestine, where he eventually gained employment with the Ministry of Defense when the state of Israel was created.

In his youth, Frankfurter was afflicted with tuberculosis of the bone (osteomyelitis). Between the ages of six and twenty-three, he had five operations - one leaving him with a large pit behind one of his ears as a treatment for for mastoid disease. Ironically, years later his health would dramatically improve during time spent in a Swiss prison for the murder of Gustloff.

While a young man, he aspired to be a doctor and studied sporadically in medicine at numerous educational institutions. The last school he attended was Bern University, where he hoped to write his doctoral thesis on cancer. Health matters, internal strife, and his continuing alarm over the Nazi menace compromised his efforts and ability to focus on his studies.

David Frankfurter died in 1982 of natural causes at the age of seventy-three, leaving a wife and two children.

#### **Frankfurter, Moritz**

David Frankfurter's demanding father and Rabbi for the town of Daruvar in Yugoslavia (today's Croatia). Even though he denounced his son's assassination, Rabbi Frankfurter would eventually be made to suffer for his son's deed. As the Nazis invaded Yugoslavia, the Frankfurter family was on the SS list of enemies. On April 6, 1941, Moritz was captured and publicly tortured.

#### **Galitsky, K.N.**

General in charge of the Soviet 11th Guards Army - responsible for the Red Army's first drive into Germany's pre-war borders at Nemmersdorf.

#### **Gustloff, Hedwig**

Wife of slain Swiss Nazi Leader Wilhelm Gustloff. Hedwig was on the platform during the launching of the ship named for her husband, the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, and officially christened the ship.

Paradoxically, despite her husband's position as Swiss Nazi Leader, she had occasionally worked for Jewish lawyer Moses Silberroth in Davos early in their marriage.

#### **Gustloff, Wilhelm** (1896-1936)

German leader of the Swiss Nazi Party, Gustloff was shot to death in his study by David Frankfurter, a Jew alarmed by the grip Nazism held in Europe. Both Frankfurter and Gustloff suffered from forms of tuberculosis. Gustloff's condition targeted his lungs. This prompted his doctor to order him in 1914 to Davos, Switzerland - known for its sanatoriums and clean mountain air. Gustloff would have preferred to serve in the German armed forces but his health would simply not allow



this. Instead, he took a job as a weather-chart clerk at a German meteorological post in Davos.

In 1923 on a trip to Munich, he became one of the first members of a then largely unknown Nazi party. He took these messages back to Davos and aimed to further the Nazi cause in Switzerland. He rose quickly to the title of *Landesgruppenleiter* (ie: Leader). He often surreptitiously reported back to Germany on expatriate citizens living in Switzerland - or those simply visiting from Germany. Those who were not members of the Nazi party, or made derogatory comments about it were particularly subject to his attention.

After his assassination, Gustloff was treated as a martyr and hero in the Nazi cause and was given a full state funeral in Schwerin. It was at this funeral that Hitler decided to change the name of the *KdF* ship that was to originally bear his own name to that of *Wilhelm Gustloff*.

#### **Hanefeld, Helmut**

A lieutenant in the naval reserve and captain of the aging naval dispatch boat *VP-1703*. This was the last boat to rescue anyone from the *Gustloff*. In fact it was only one, an infant who miraculously survived for hours amongst frozen corpses in a lifeboat.

#### **Henigst, Hans**

Captain of the heavy cruiser *Admiral Hipper*, which unsuccessfully contemplated a rescue at the site of the *Gustloff* sinking. He ordered the ship to leave the area to avoid exposure to additional Soviet submarine attacks.

#### **Hering, Robert**

Captain of the *T-36*, which arrived just as the *Gustloff* sank below the waves. Hering was originally escorting the *Admiral Hipper*, until its captain ordered him to the scene of the *Gustloff* to pick up survivors.

#### **Hitler, Adolf** (1889-1945)


Leader of the NSDAP (Nazi) party in Germany from the early 1920's and when it gained complete control over Germany on January 30, 1933. On April 30, 1945, he committed suicide in his bunker in Berlin as the Soviet Red Army closed in.



Hitler called Alexander Marinesko (captain of submarine *S-13*) his "personal enemy" after the Soviet commander torpedoed the *Gustloff*. Years earlier, Hitler had personally delivered the eulogy at Wilhelm Gustloff's funeral. At this time the superstitious Führer took an opportunity to rename the *KdF* ship which had been planned to carry his own name on the bow.

#### **Jeissle, Eugen**


Head printer on the *Gustloff* in January 1945. Was responsible for printing out the coveted passes for admittance onto the




	<p>ship. He used the same printing presses that created the 'Speisekarten' (daily agendas) during happier pre-war cruise days.</p>
<p><b>Kaufmann, Karl</b> (1900-1969)</p> 	<p>Reich Commissioner for Shipping and Gauleiter of Hamburg. Kaufmann controlled merchant shipping until Admiral Dönitz took control to ensure smoother cooperation with the Navy during <i>Operation Hannibal</i>.</p>
<p><b>Koch, Erich</b> (1896-1986)</p>	<p>Gauleiter of East Prussia for the Nazi Party, Koch was an ultra-racist Nazi hardliner responsible for sending hundreds of thousands of people to their deaths in extermination camps. As the Red Army closed in, the cowardly Koch publicly commanded that all Germans fight until the end, while he secretly planned his escape westward with all his possessions (most of which had been looted). According to Albert Speer, in the dying days of the war Koch arrived in Flensburg to demand a submarine so he could escape to South America. Karl Doenitz, Hitler's brief successor outright denied this blatant request.</p> <p>He evaded capture by the Allies until 1949 in Hamburg. Sent to Warsaw for his war crimes trial in 1958, he was convicted and imprisoned until he died many years later in November 1986.</p>
<b>Köhler, (Captain)</b>	<p>One of two merchant marine captains on the bridge of the <i>Gustloff</i> the night of its sinking. He was one of the four captains on the night of the disaster – all of whom survived.</p>
<b>Knust, Walter</b>	<p>Second Engineer on the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i>. Walter's wife Paula was on board with him during the night that the ship went down. Both survived.</p>
<b>Kurochkin, Vladimir</b>	<p>Torpedo gunner's mate aboard the <i>S-13</i> who discovers torpedo #2 ("For Stalin") stuck in its tube and fully primed (the torpedo was intended for the <i>Gustloff</i> along with the other three which struck their mark). With a little luck and smart thinking, he was able to render the torpedo inert after some anxious moments. Burly and strong, Vladimir was well known to the crew for his love using very "colourful" language.</p>
<b>Lange, Rudi</b>	<p>Twenty-one year old radio operator on the <i>Gustloff</i> on the night it went down. His SOS did not reach shore because the ship's main radio had been knocked out after the torpedoes hit. The <i>Löwe</i> - providing the one and only escort - had to re-transmit</p>

	Lange's SOS to shore.
<b>Ley, Robert</b> <i>(1890-1945)</i> 	<p>Dr. Robert Ley (doctorate in Chemistry from the University of Bonn), was head of the <i>Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF)</i> from 1933 through 1945. The <i>DAF</i> was ordered by Hitler to replace all trade unions in Germany through intimidation, confiscation of funds and arrest of union leaders.</p> <p>The <i>DAF</i> was the parent organization of the popular <i>Kraft durch Freude (KdF)</i> 'Strength through Joy' division - responsible for the commission of the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i>.</p> <p>Ley managed to become an "undisputed dictator of labour" in building a mass organization of 25 million members, but was also notorious for his public drunkenness and womanizing.</p> <p>Fleeing to Berchtesgaden, Austria after the war, Ley was captured by the American 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne division in mid-May 1945. He was due to stand trial as a war criminal (particularly for mass organization of slave labour) at Nuremberg, but committed suicide by hanging himself in his cell before the trial began.</p>
<b>Löbel, Franz</b>	Chief Engineer on the <i>Gustloff</i> January 1945.
<b>Lübbe, Carl</b> <i>(?-1938)</i> 	<p>Captain Lübbe was the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff's</i> first captain, an honour he would only enjoy for just over one month. After captaining the newly minted <i>KdF</i> ship for its test run, two early cruises, and its voyage to England as a floating polling station, he died on the bridge during the <i>Gustloff's</i> "official" maiden voyage to Madeira.</p> <p>Lübbe previously captained another <i>KdF</i> ship, the <i>Monte Sarmiento</i>.</p>
<b>Ludwig, Emil</b> <i>(1881-1948)</i>	<p>A Swiss-German author noted for his biographies who wrote <i>Ein Mord in Davos</i> ('The Davos Murder' - English translated version). Written immediately after Gustloff's murder in February 1936, Ludwig pens his interpretation and implications of David Frankfurter's assassination. He makes it clear that he does so in a quest for justice - particularly in light of German government policies. Ludwig detested National Socialism and emigrated to the United States to write anti-fascist pamphlets for the U.S. Government during the war.</p>
<b>Lyssy, Rolf</b>	<p>Writer/Director of <i>Konfrontation</i>, a 1975 film about the Wilhelm Gustloff assassination and trial of David Frankfurter. Extremely difficult to obtain a copy, but is known to be available with English subtitles under its alternate titles of <i>Assassination in</i></p>



	<i>Davos and Confrontation.</i>
<b>Luth, Gerhardt</b>	Purser on the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i> January 1945.
<b>Marinesko, Alexander I.</b> <i>(1913-1963)</i> 	<p>Declared a "personal enemy" by Hitler for sinking the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i> and the <i>Steuben</i>, Marinesko was Captain of Soviet submarine <i>S-13</i>.</p> <p>Thoroughly professional, daring and resourceful at sea, Marinesko's shore-leave habits would cause him great trouble during his career - impeding recognition from his own commanders for the largest submarine score in history and ultimately sending him to the dreaded Gulag Kolyma.</p> <p>Born January 15, 1913 in Odessa to a Ukrainian mother and Rumanian father, Marinesko grew up during the city's years of turmoil as civil war and Soviet rule gripped the region. He learned to rely on instincts and opportunity to survive.</p> <p>After leaving school at the age of fifteen, he got a job as a cabin boy on a cargo ship. An official spotted his talent and within a year Marinesko was given a place at the Odessa Naval Institute. He progressed to first mate on the <i>Black Sea</i>, a coaster which supplied regional ports.</p> <p>After news circulated about a dramatic rescue Marinesko had participated in to save the lives of a torpedo boat that had capsized, he was ordered to transfer to the Navy. After a year of navigational courses, he found his true calling when switching to submarines. After tours of duty in submarines <i>SC-306</i> and by 1941 the <i>M-96</i>, Marinesko secured command of the <i>S-13</i> in 1943.</p> <p>After sinking the <i>Gustloff</i> and <i>Stueben</i>, Marinesko was denied official credit by the Soviet Navy. Only after many years did the impact of his contribution get officially recognized. In 1963, and after time in a Gulag, he finally received the honours due to him, largely thanks to loyal sailors and peers who never forgot him. He succumbed to cancer only 3 weeks after the ceremony.</p> <p>Before his death, Marinesko had been awarded every major honour EXCEPT "Hero of the Soviet Union", exemplified by the solid gold star with red ribbon. Finally in 1990, Gorbachev posthumously bestowed this honour upon him.</p>
<b>Oryel, Alexander Y.</b>	Captain First Rank in the Soviet Navy and Marinesko's commanding officer. He was instrumental in protecting (or at least delaying) Marinesko's troubles with the NKVD after indiscretions delayed the <i>S-13's</i> departure from Hangö in early January 1945.

<b>Petersen, Friedrich</b> 	<p>An aged and weathered seaman, Petersen had the unique experience to captain the <i>Gustloff</i> at both the height of its career and the depths of its demise. In 1938, he completed a pleasure cruise after the <i>Gustloff's</i> first captain died of a heart attack. On January 30, 1945 at sixty-seven years of age, he was on the bridge as "official" captain of the vessel.</p> <p>He officially took over for Captain Bertram in February 1944 while the ship was docked in Gotenhafen. Near the beginning of the war, he had been captured by the British and held as a prisoner of war. Considered too "old" to be of any danger to the Allies, he was returned to Germany with a written promise not to be in command of any ship. Captaining the relatively permanent docked <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i> used as U-boat barracks seemed to be a perfect compromise.</p> <p>Surviving the sinking, Petersen never again went to sea and died not long after the war.</p>
<b>Pikhur, Andrei</b>	<p>Twenty-eight year old Petty Officer on the <i>S-13</i>. He was the submarine's torpedo expert and was on the aft look-out during the initial pursuit of the <i>Gustloff</i>.</p>
<b>Porsche, Ferdinand</b> <i>(1875-1951)</i>	<p>Founder of the company and famous car that bears his name (actually designed under his son in the 50's), Porsche designed the Volkswagen Beetle (known as the <i>KdF-Wagen</i> in Nazi Germany) after receiving a rough sketch from Adolf Hitler.</p> <p>Ferdinand Porsche was a guest on one of the <i>Gustloff's</i> cruises around Italy.</p>
<b>Prüfe, Paul</b>	<p>Lieutenant Captain and commander of the torpedo boat <i>Löwe</i> that was escorting the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i> on the night it sank.</p>
<b>Redkobodrov, Nikolai</b>	<p>Twenty-four year old navigator from Leningrad aboard the <i>S-13</i> in January 1945.</p>
<b>Reese, Louis</b>	<p>Captain Petersen's first officer and friend aboard the <i>Gustloff</i> on January 30, 1945 .</p>
<b>Reitsch, Wilhelmina</b>	<p>Frau Reitsch, stationed in Gotenhafen, was in command of 10,000 Women Naval Auxiliaries. It was her decision that the <i>Gustloff</i> would be the first official evacuation ship for her "girls". Most of the almost 400 who were selected to be on board were killed when the second torpedo hit the empty swimming pool area (where most were situated).</p>



<b>Richter, Hellmut Dr.</b>	<i>Marine-Oberstabsarzt</i> (Major - Naval Medical Corps) and Ship's Doctor, <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i> , January 1945.
<b>Richter, Heinz</b>	Radio operator on the escorting torpedo boat <i>Löwe</i> that received and retransmitted the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff's</i> SOS call.
<b>Rickmers, Henry</b>	Lieutenant Commander who was captain of the <i>M-341</i> , a minesweeper vessel that rescued 37 survivors from the <i>Gustloff</i> on the night of the disaster.
<b>Schön, Heinz</b> (1926- )	Noted author and <i>Gustloff</i> historian who was a 17 year old assistant purser on the ship when it sank on January 30, 1945.  Herr Schön maintains the Gustloff-Archive in Bad Saltzlufen, Germany.
<b>Schnaptsev, Ivan</b>	Petty officer on the <i>S-13</i> in charge of the hydrophones. Twenty-three years old and slimly built.
<b>Segelken, Friedrich</b>	Captain of the freighter <i>Göttingen</i> that rescued 28 survivors from the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i> on the night of the disaster.
<b>Silberroth, Moses</b>	The Jewish lawyer in Davos, Switzerland for whom Wilhelm Gustloff's wife, Hedwig, did occasional typing to supplement their income.
<b>Steffen, Linnie</b>	Ran the Jewish boarding house where David Frankfurter lived in Bern, Switzerland.
<b>Streicher, Julius</b> (1885-1946)	Fanatical in his hatred of Jews, this Nazi leader was considered extreme (and perhaps even insane) by some of the party's own members. He was responsible for the publication of the viciously anti-Semitic newspaper <i>Der Stürmer</i> , cited by David Frankfurter as a major contributor toward his decision to assassinate Wilhelm Gustloff.  Convicted at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial after the war, his final words were "Heil Hitler" just before he was hanged from the gallows.

<b>Toropov, Nikolai</b>	Helmsman on Soviet submarine <i>S-13</i> .
<b>Vinogradov, Anatoli</b>	Petty officer on the <i>S-13</i> who first spotted the <i>Gustloff's</i> running (navigation) lights from the conning tower. At first, he believed them to be from lighthouses on the Hela Peninsula until it became clear that they originated from the <i>Gustloff</i> .
<b>Vollmers, Heinz</b>	Captain of the <i>Gotenland</i> , a 5,266 ton freighter that arrived at the site of the <i>Gustloff</i> tragedy about 3 hours after the first torpedo struck. Unfortunately, he managed to take on only 2 remaining survivors.
<b>Vollrath, Paul</b>	Senior second officer of the <i>Kriegsmarine's</i> 2nd U-boat Training Division and aboard the <i>Gustloff</i> on the night it was torpedoed. Thirty-five years later, Captain Vollrath wrote a well-detailed account of his experience in the April 1981 issue of "Sea Breezes" magazine.
<b>Weichel, Walter</b>	Commander of the German minesweeper that rescued approximately 50 survivors from the <i>Gustloff</i> during the night of the tragedy.
<b>Weller, Harry</b>	One of the two merchant marine captains on the bridge of the <i>Gustloff</i> during the fateful voyage.
<b>Wendt, Ralph</b>	Medical Officer on board the <i>Gustloff</i> .
<b>Wisbar, Frank</b>	German-American writer and director of <i>Nacht fiel über Gotenhafen</i> , a 1959 film about the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i> tragedy. Difficult to find and only available in German (no English subtitles).
<b>Wulff, Paul</b>	Official representative of the <i>KdF</i> on board the <i>Wilhelm Gustloff</i> during its years as a cruise ship. Wulff's activities included coordination of the daily routine/schedule and ensuring that the passengers received a healthy dosage of Nazi propaganda.
<b>Yefremenkov, Lev</b>	Captain Lieutenant, second in command on the <i>S-13</i> and friend of Alexander Marinesko. Drafted a petition to have Marinesko rejoin his crew after he disappeared on a drinking and brothel



	bender when supposed to be leaving port. Tall and of reserved demeanor - was a good counterbalance to his captain.
<b>Zahn, Wilhelm</b> (1910-?)	<p>Commander of the <i>Kriegsmarine's</i> 2<sup>nd</sup> U-boat Training Division housed on the <i>Gustloff</i>, the thirty-three year old Zahn was one of the four captains on the bridge the night of the disaster. Although Friedrich Petersen was the "official" maritime captain of the <i>Gustloff</i>, Zahn's military rank and personality ensured his influence rivaled that of the aging Petersen.</p> <p>After a disappointing "at sea" naval career (one that even caused him to go into a deep depression), Zahn took over command of his U-boat division on the Gotenhafen-based <i>Gustloff</i> in early summer 1942. The temperamental disciplinarian Zahn ran a strict and rigorous program for his young recruits. On board, his Alsatian dog <i>Hassan</i>, accompanied him almost everywhere.</p> <p>Like Petersen and the two other merchant marine captains, Zahn survived the sinking. Because he had been the senior naval officer on board, he was called before an official naval inquiry to testify for his actions. His degree of responsibility was never resolved since naval command had far greater problems as the war drew to a close. Regardless, his naval career was finished. The bitter Zahn spent the rest of his life as a salesman.</p>

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