

The Window Shop: Safe Harbor for Refugees

Ellen Miller



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From its beginning in 1939, the Window Shop of Cambridge, Massachusetts, provided a safe harbor for hundreds of German and Austrian refugees who fled from Hitler to America. It was founded by concerned Cambridge residents who were guided only by their desire to help the refugees. Together they created a non-profit enterprise that was unparalleled in its success and influence."By the time the Window Shop moved to 56 Brattle Street in 1947, it had become a favorite haunt for the diverse community of European intellectuals who fled to Cambridge, such as architect Walter Gropius. The continental food and atmosphere provided a welcome link to their past. 'It makes people feel at home to find here in Cambridge goodies they had in their childhood,' Alice Broch told the Christian Science Monitor in 1955."-The Boston Globe, Jan. 4, 1995"I shall never be at a loss where to take one of my grandchildren for a delightful meal if I find myself in Cambridge So many happy faces greeted me there-these women who had been in concentration camps or had spent long years waiting to find themselves able to begin life again in a new country, and now actually at work helping their husbands or their children to start again. You are glad you live in an America which can be a land of hope."-Eleanor Roosevelt, My Day, May 30, 1950

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