Claus Graf Stauffenberg pursued an officer's career in the cavalry and received general staff training. In the Second World War he was at first assigned to the front with responsibility for supplies and logistics, and later became a member of the General Staff. He lost his right hand, two fingers of his left hand and his left eye in battle in North Africa in 1943. Once he was able to report back to duty, he assumed important military functions in Berlin.

Convalescence leave in Lautlingen: Claus Graf Stauffenberg, with his own children and those of his brother Berthold, 1943

Kindheit und Jugend

Childhood and youth

Family concert in Lautlingen: Berthold and Claus, Counts of Stauffenberg play the violin and the cello, accompanied by their brother Alexander

First communion in Stuttgart: The twins Alexander and Berthold, Counts of Stauffenberg, in 1914

on the roof of the present-day exhibition room

The cello that belonged to Claus Graf Stauffenberg

Im Kreis um Stefan George

In Stefan George's circle

In 1923 the Stauffenberg brothers were introduced into the elite circle surrounding the poet Stefan George, revered as a spiritual leader. He encouraged them to take a critical approach to Western literature, art and history. This awakened their desire actively to participate in the making of a new spiritual Germany.

Im Dienst für den Staat

In the service of the State

The Stauffenberg brothers had successful military and civil service careers. Berthold Graf Stauffenberg became an expert in international law. Between 1931 and 1933 he worked in the administrative division of the Permanent Court of International Justice in The Hague. In 1934 he returned to Germany, and became a leading expert in maritime war law.

Berthold Graf Stauffenberg as advisor on international law for the German Navy Supreme Command, 1940

Stauffenberg

The Stauffenberg Memorial is dedicated to Berthold and Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg. It tells the parallel story of the lives of the two brothers from their childhood and youth in Stuttgart to their violent death in the resistance against the Nazi regime. Clips from a present-day feature film about the events of 20 July 1944 take visitors directly from the present to that fateful day. Original exhibits revive the earlier past and then trace the developments that would lead to 20 July 1944.

An archive alcove provides a visual thematic approach to the controversial way the Stauffenberg brothers have been remembered in history. Sound archives provide another approach: artistic devices integrate the lives of the Stauffenberg brothers into the events of their time and to document their path into the resistance.

Stauffenberg Memorial

An exhibition of the Landesstiftung Baden-Württemberg Foundation, created by the Haus der Geschichte Baden-Württemberg, the State History Museum

Altes Schloß (the Old Castle), Stuttgart

Access from Karlsplatz

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Fotos: Privat
A new Stauffenberg Memorial will open to the public in the autumn of 2007 in Albstadt-Lautlingen. The rooms and gardens of the former family castle, which had always been one of Claus von Stauffenberg's favourite haunts, allow visitors a glimpse into the history and everyday reality of this noble family and into Claus von Stauffenberg's life.

During the Second World War, the Stauffenberg brothers' attitude to National Socialism underwent a profound change. The holocaust, the brutal German crimes against the Soviet population and the refusal of reality on the part of the German war leadership led the Stauffenberg brothers into military opposition. They assumed an important role in the legal and military preparation of an overthrow operation.

On 20 July 1944, Claus Graf Stauffenberg succeeded in setting off a bomb in the Führer's headquarters, the 'Wolfsschanze'. However, Hitler survived, having suffered only slight injuries. Although the Stauffenbergs were able to claim some short-term success, the Third Reich continued under Hitler and Prague had succeeded. The Stauffenberg brothers and many of their fellow conspirators paid for their anti-Nazi commitment with their lives.

Public memory of the Stauffenberg brothers and the fateful date of 20 July 1944 underwent significant change over time. In certain sectors of the population, Nazi propaganda continued its effect long into the era of the Federal Republic. Politicians and public relations specialists reacted, casting a different light on the events by emphasizing the relationship between democracy and resistance. In this process, the Federal Republic tried to claim Stauffenberg as a hero of its own. Gradually, a positive view of Stauffenberg's life and work began to prevail in Germany. Today, the image of the man who made an attempt on Hitler's life is to a great extent tantamount to a symbol of the multiple aspects of resistance against Nazism.