



Werner F. Gossels and C. Peter R. Gossels (ABOVE AND OPPOSITE)

Born in Germany, the Gossels brothers were saved by the heroism of their mother, Charlotte Lewy Gossels, who somehow arranged for them to escape to France on July 4, 1939, when they were only five and eight years old. Kind strangers first moved them from Quincy, near Nazi-occupied Paris, to rural Chabannes in unoccupied Vichy, France. Then, in September 1941, they left France through Spain and Portugal to safety in the United States. Peter (above right and opposite at right) was first taken in by the Singal family in Brookline, Massachusetts, but was moved to a group home in Mattapan after a few years. He attended Boston Latin School before graduating from Harvard College and Harvard Law School. Peter and his wife, Nancy, arrived in Wayland in 1961, and raised their three children there.

Werner (above left and opposite at left) was taken in by the Glaser and Gordon family, who raised him and made it possible for him to go through the Brookline School system and on to Yale University. In 1964, he settled in Wayland with his wife, Elaine, and five children. During their 50-plus years in Wayland, both men and their families have involved themselves in the evolution of the town. Peter served on the Finance Committee, was town counsel for 11 years, and moderator of town meetings for 30 years. Werner served on the Planning Board, was a longtime leader on business zoning matters in the Wayland Business Association, and served on both the Intertown Committee with Sudbury that designed and built the Joint Septage Facility and later on the Operations Committee that ran the facility. He was one of the founders of Wayland Beautification, which for the past 16 years has worked to improve the appearance of public spaces in town. Elaine Gossels served as president of the Committee for Advancement of Performing Arts in Wayland Public Schools and as treasurer on the Board of the Wayland Public Schools Foundation, which has done much to keep Wayland Schools on the cutting edge of public education. In 1990, after their children had graduated, they endowed the Gossels Family Fund for Academic Excellence in the Wayland Public Schools, to provide Wayland's children with the quality of education their children had received, equal to that normally available only in private preparatory schools. At the Wayland Public Library, Werner and Peter established the Gossels Family Fund for Human Dignity in honor of their mother, aunt, and grandmother who were murdered by the Nazis in the Holocaust. (All, courtesy of the Gossels families.)

