Gerda Brender (also called Gerti Waszkutner-Brender) was born in Austria in December 1934. She fled with her family to Shanghai, where she stayed from 1939 to 1949.

On April 14, 2005, Gerda returned to Shanghai with her husband, son, daughter, and niece and reclaimed the passport that she had lost in the Hongkou District over half a century before. The passport turned up after a local resident purchased the document from a flea market.

In late 2004, the management of former Ohel Moshe Synagogue began hunting for the rightful passport owner. After a thorough search, they posted a "Lost and Found" ad on the Rickshaw Reunion website. Before long, the management found Steven Brender, the son of Gerda Brender. Comparing an original photo of Gerda provided by Steven with the passport photo, the management officially confirmed that the passport was indeed Gerda's. With her family, Gerda returned to Hongkou District for the 60th anniversary of the victory of the world's Anti-Fascist War. There, she reclaimed her lost passport.

After the passport reclamation ceremony, Gerda visited the apartment where she had lived for nearly ten years at the intersection of Tangshan Road and Gongping Road. She recalled that, from the second floor window, she would look out every morning. She also remembered playing games with Chinese children in the alley of Lane 305 on Gongping Road. “The Chinese accepted us when we were in misery, and we’ll never forget it,” said Gerda. “World peace has not come easy, and we should cherish it.”

Gerda was overcome by emotion when she recalled a family dinner in the Ghetto at her Chinese friends’ home on Chinese New Year’s Eve, the most significant day in China for friends and relatives to get together. Several decades have passed but Gerda has a happy memory of that evening.

The Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum commissioned Mr. Cui Junpei to paint an oil painting named "The Eve of Chinese New Year," which tells Gerda’s wonderful story: In July 2010, Gerda and her husband visited Hongkou once again and took a photo with the oil painting.

Gerda Brender

Gerda in front of the oil painting The Eve of Chinese New Year in 2010