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Jewish Cemetery in Klosterneuburg handed back to local authority following restoration

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Today, 8 November 2021, the newly-restored Jewish cemetery in Klosterneuburg was handed back to the local authority, which has committed to maintain the cemetery for the next 20 years.



Among those present at the handover ceremony were National Council President Wolfgang Sobotka as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Fund for the Restoration of Jewish Cemeteries in Austria, Member of the Lower Austrian Parliament Christoph Kaufmann on behalf of Provincial Governor Johanna Mikl-Leitner, the Mayor of Klosterneuburg, Stefan Schmuckenschlager, the President of the Federal Office for the Preservation of Monuments, Christoph Bazil, the President of the Jewish Community Vienna, Oskar Deutsch, the Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Community Vienna, Jaron Engelmayer, the Administrator of Klosterneuburg Abbey, Prelate Maximilian Fürsinn, and Heinz Schratt from the Committee for the Preservation of the Jewish Cemetery in Klosterneuburg.

The Secretary General of the Fund for the Restoration of Jewish Cemeteries in Austria, Hannah Lessing stated that, “By taking on this cemetery, the town of Klosterneuburg has demonstrated that it recognizes the Jewish cemetery as an integral part of its own history and will care for it accordingly. Because Jewish history is part of our shared history. It is valuable and should be remembered, communicated and preserved in the collective memory of the community.”

The cemetery was opened in around 1873 and contains 652 graves situated on an area of around 4,000 m². The restoration began in 2017 and was carried out in three stages at a cost of approx. 600,000 euros. The Jewish Cemeteries Fund provided three quarters of the funding, the Province of Lower Austria financed the other quarter.

The restoration encompassed clearing work, arboricultural measures, the renovation of the perimeter walls and the cemetery building, an aerial survey to map the grounds, the restoration of the gravestones and grave sites and a static renovation of the graves.

Educational work

In the future, the cemetery will not only be a place of remembrance but also a place of learning: In October 2021, the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria and the Committee for the Preservation of the Jewish Cemetery in Klosterneuburg, launched a pilot project with teachers to encourage educational work at Jewish cemeteries. The project is supported by the City of Klosterneuburg and the Municipal Archives.



In cooperation with Klosterneuburg high schools, the history of the Jewish cemetery will be introduced to students in the classroom and on guided tours. By visiting the graves and examining historical documents, the students will gain a better understanding of the life stories of Klosterneuburg's Jewish residents. In this way, Jewish history can be understood as part of regional history and find a place in the collective memory.

Links

- [Restoration work at the Jewish cemetery in Klosterneuburg](#)
- [Municipality of Klosterneuburg](#)
- [Jewish Community Vienna](#)
- [Committee for the Preservation of the Jewish Cemetery in Klosterneuburg](#)