

GEDENKSTÄTTE FÜR DIE IN DER SHOAH ERMORDETEN
JÜDISCHEN KINDER, FRAUEN UND MÄNNER
AUS ÖSTERREICH

מצבת זכרון לקדושי יהודי אוסטריה

MEMORIAL TO THE JEWISH CHILDREN, WOMEN AND MEN
OF AUSTRIA
WHO WERE MURDERED IN THE SHOAH

Project information

The Year of Remembrance 2018 gave rise to the occasion for the Republic of Austria to intensively deal with even the darkest chapters of its history. With the planned memorial for the Jewish children, women and men from Austria murdered in the Shoah, a visible sign of remembrance of the victims of National Socialism is now being sent. The Shoah Wall of Names Memorial is intended to provide a central and quiet place where the fate of the more than 64,000 murdered people can be remembered and their lives honored.

The National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism has for years supported efforts to create a place where people could be remembered by name. On the initiative of the Austrian Holocaust survivor Kurt Yakov Tutter and the *Verein zur Errichtung einer Shoah Namensmauern Gedenkstätte* ("Association for the Creation of a Shoah Wall of Names Memorial"), the implementation of this important remembrance project was able to be started in 2018.

It is of particular importance for the association to be able to implement this remembrance project together with the Federal Government, the Federal Provinces, the City of Vienna and the Austrian National Bank under the patronage of the President of the National Council. The majority of the financing is provided by the Federal Government, following a commitment by Federal Chancellor Sebastian Kurz in 2018. In addition, the Federal Provinces and the Federation of Austrian Industry (Fundraising Dinner) have contributed to the realization of the project.

The project costs of around 5.3 million euros are being financed with contributions from all the bodies involved:

Contributors	Euro
Federal Chancellery – resolution by the Council of Ministers, March and November 2018 ¹	4,460,000
Provinces – resolution of the Conference of Provincial Governors, November 2018 ²	600,000
Donations from the Industrialists' Association Fundraising dinner, September 2018	230,000
Total amount	5,290,000

¹ 34/17 Speech before the Council of Ministers, GZ 351.000/0051-MRD/2018, GZ BMöDS 11220/0018-1/A/5/2018, accessible at https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/dam/jcr:9ac0bcfb-79b4-40e3-9e9c-d28564b72601/34_17_mrv.pdf and 11/12 Speech before the Council of Ministers BKA-351.000/0014-MRD/2018, accessible at https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/dam/jcr:4a83e7d2-c561-4ef8-a77d-23bef3d04591/11_12_mrv.pdf.

² In November 2019 the Vienna Municipal Council unanimously resolved to subsidize the construction of the Shoah Wall of Names Memorial in the amount of 100,000 Euro. Session report of the Vienna Municipal Council, 20th legislative period, 59th session of 19 November 2019, p. 4, <https://www.wien.gv.at/mdb/gr/2019/gr-059-s-2019-11-19.pdf>.

Wehofer Architekten ZT GmbH is responsible for the design planning and realization of the memorial. The *Bundesimmobiliengesellschaft m.b.H.* (Federal Real Estate Company) was commissioned with the construction management for the project. The National Fund of the Republic of Austria was entrusted with the administration of finances including public subsidies, donations and expenses.

The memorial will be built on the grounds of Ostarrichi Park in front of the Austrian National Bank. The design for the new memorial envisages an elliptical shape consisting of several stone walls into which the more than 64,000 names of the Austrian Jews murdered in the Holocaust will be engraved.

On 9 November 2018, a symbolic ceremony for the realization of the memorial took place in Ostarrichi Park in the presence of Kurt Yakov Tutter. The importance of this moment was underlined by the presence of representatives from public life, including Federal Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, President of the National Council Wolfgang Sobotka and Vienna City Councilor for Culture Veronica Kaup-Hasler.

The coordination of the contractual basis on a technical and legal level was completed at the end of 2019. In the course of the planning process, all authorities, the district and the residents were involved and all steps were coordinated. The association and all the authorities involved are very pleased with the Ostarrichi Park site.

Parallel to the contract coordination, the submission planning was finalized, work was carried out on the tenders and specialist planning was carried out on the site (statics, surveyors and geotechnics). The tendering process for the stonemasonry and engraving work started in December 2019, and after completion of the tendering process, the stonemasonry and engraving work was awarded to the company *Breitwieser* at the beginning of 2020. The tender for the master builders was carried out in May 2020. Construction work is scheduled to start in summer 2020 and the memorial is scheduled for completion in late autumn 2021.

Due to the historical significance of this memorial, the City of Vienna and the National Fund will assume joint responsibility for the preservation and ongoing operation of the Shoah Wall of Names Memorial.

Initiator Kurt Yakov Tutter and the association

Initiator and author of the Shoah Wall of Names Memorial is Kurt Yakov Tutter, born in Vienna in 1930. He fled to Belgium with his family in 1939, where he survived the Holocaust together with his younger sister Rita with the help of a Belgian family. In a video for the Federal Chancellery he described himself as a “real Viennese kid”.

In May 2000 Kurt Yakov Tutter founded an initiative group to promote and realize the Wall of Names Memorial project. In the following years, prominent Austrians assured the project of their support. In May 2006, the “Association for the erection of a Wall of Names Memorial to the Jewish children, women and men from Austria murdered in the Shoah” was founded together with the initiative group.

The Association for the Shoah Wall of Names Memorial in Ostarrichi Park:

“The Nazis and their numerous supporters relentlessly persecuted various groups of victims and cruelly murdered many people. They became victims of typical Nazi injustice for political reasons, because of their descent, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, physical or mental handicap, or the accusation of so-called asociality, or for other reasons.

These name plaques are intended to keep alive the memory of the more than 64,000 Jewish children, women and men who lived in Austria and were murdered in the Shoah, and also to send a visible signal that Austrian society today – after many decades of repression and denial – is acknowledging the darkest aspects of its history, the years of Nazi tyranny, and is taking responsibility for the victims of this regime, which was also supported by many Austrians.

Self-critical remembrance work is an integral part of a liberal parliamentary democracy, and every generation should face up to this discussion process.”³

Design of the Memorial

The architectural design idea for the memorial was prepared by Univ.-Prof. Dr. John Cirka in an elliptical form of natural stones. The Viennese architect Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Wolfgang Wehofer further worked on the final design of the memorial.⁴ The elliptical form was inserted into the existing Ostarrichi Park, in the form of a design derived from two interlocking hands. In the middle of the memorial there is a “green island”, which is planted with nine trees.

The memorial extends over a total area of about 2,500 m² and consists of natural stone walls with an arch length of about 187 running meters, in which the names of the Austrian Holocaust victims will be engraved. The memorial is accessed from the south via Alser Straße and from the north by the Austrian National Bank. The architectural design allows a protected retreat for remembrance. A constant “passing through” is prevented by the “green island” in the middle of the memorial.

The wall segments each consist of five walls, each 101 cm wide. These are lined up at a distance of approx. 57 cm in an elliptical shape. The 235 cm height of the walls allows a height of 190 cm for the engraving area. The distance from the edge is 5 cm from the upper, left and right side. In the lower area, engraving is possible from a height of 40 cm, measured from the adjacent floor covering. The very high number of individual letters and numbers (over 1 million characters) has a fundamental influence on the dimensions of the individual walls.

The memorial is located in the fabric of the inner city, in the middle of the Ostarrichi Park, above two underground car parks on a formerly unplanted green area. As far as possible the existing park paths around the memorial are to remain unchanged.

For the natural stone walls, granite with a polished surface was chosen. The names of the Shoah victims are engraved with a font height of 14 mm using Computerized Numerical Control (CNC) milling. The engraving of one letter takes about 3-5 minutes. The weight of the stone slabs is about 780 kg/rm.

The names of the Shoah victims – data source

The data basis for the Wall of Names Memorial is the Shoah Victims Database of the Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (DÖW). Within the framework of the project “List of names of Austrian Holocaust Victims” initiated by the Israeli Yad Vashem Memorial and commissioned by the Austrian Ministry of Science and co-financed by the National Fund, the DÖW recorded the biographical data and circumstances of death of around 62,000 Austrian Holocaust victims from 1992 to 2001. After years of intensive research, the DÖW's Shoah victims' database contains data on 64,259 persons (as of 28 May 2020).

³ Association for the Creation of a Shoah Wall of Names Memorial for the Jewish children, women and men from Austria murdered in the Shoah, Shoah Wall of Names Memorial in Ostarrichi Park, May 2020.

⁴ The following statements are in keeping with the presentation Shoah Wall of Names Memorial in Ostarrichi Park by *Wehofer Architekten ZT GmbH* as per 16 April 2020.

Additional plaques – remembrance of all Nazi victims

In addition to the stone walls with the data on the Shoah victims, an additional plaque commemorates all other groups of victims and persecutees under National Socialism. In addition, the idea for the memorial site and the history of its creation should also be described on an additional plaque; on this plaque, the project supporters will also be named.

Location Ostarrichi Park

In the original plans the memorial was to be erected on Schmerlingplatz in the 1st District of Vienna. After negotiations between the Federal Government, the City of Vienna and the Association, the authorities involved agreed on the new location at Ostarrichi-Park in the 9th District of Vienna. The memorial will be situated on a green area in front of the Austrian National Bank, which on 2 May 1996 was named, according to the municipal committee for culture, after the oldest name for Austria, Ostarrîchi, which was documented on November 1, 996. The green area is bordered by the building of the Austrian National Bank, the campus of the University of Vienna (former General Hospital), Alser Straße and the Vienna Provincial Court, as well as by Otto-Wagner-Platz, Haulerstraße and Frankhplatz.

The association commented on the new location as follows: “In order to do justice to the Shoah Wall of Names Memorial, it was necessary that it be erected at an important location in the city center of Vienna, where it is easily accessible to a broad public. But the location should also convey the tranquility that a place of worship requires. The Ostarrichi Park meets these important requirements in an excellent way”.⁵

In the immediate vicinity of the future memorial at Ostarrichi Park there are other memorials in memory of the victims of National Socialism. On 21 April 2015, the memorial “369 Weeks” was unveiled at the Vienna Provincial Court, which is intended to commemorate the victims of Nazi justice who were executed by the Nazi regime at the Vienna Provincial Court.⁶ On the campus of the University of Vienna, the former Jewish Prayer House, which was desecrated by the Nazis in 1938 and used as a transformer station after the war until 2000, was reopened on 20 October 2005 as a walk-in memorial “Marpe Lanefesch”. The naming was carried out in cooperation with the Jewish Community. In Hebrew, “Marpe Lanefesch” means “healing for the soul”. Since 2009 the “Memorial Book for the Victims of National Socialism at the University of Vienna 1938” has been kept there.⁷ In addition, numerous “stones of remembrance” have been laid in the streets in the immediate vicinity of the memorial site.⁸

Project Organization

Client: Association for the Creation of a Shoah Wall of Names Memorial for the Jewish children, women and men from Austria murdered in the Shoah

Landowners: City of Vienna, represented by MA 42; Austrian National Bank

Building committee: represented by the Association, the Federal Chancellery, the Office of the President of the National Council, the National Fund and the City of Vienna

Construction project management: represented by the *Bundesimmobiliengesellschaft mbH* (BIG)

Project group: represented by the Association, BIG, National Fund and the City of Vienna

⁵ <https://www.shoah-namensmauern-wien.at/der-schmerlingplatz/>.

⁶ https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/Denkmal_369_Wochen.

⁷ https://www.geschichtewiki.wien.gv.at/DENK-Mal_Marpe_Lanefesch.

⁸ <https://maps.nationalfonds.org/stgis>.

General planning: represented by *Wehofer Architekten ZT GmbH*

Landscape planning: represented by DI Karl Grimm

Local construction supervision: N.N.

Municipal departments: represented by the departments of the City of Vienna

Building trades: master builder (N.N.), stonemason (represented by *Breitwieser*), paving work (N.N.), outdoor facilities (N.N.), electrical installations (N.N.)

HONORARY PATRON

Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the National Council of the Republic of Austria

THE PROPONENTS COMMITTEE

Dr. Erhard Busek, David Ellensohn, DI Dr. Franz Fischler, University Professor Dr. Eric R. Kandel, Abg. z. NR Kai Jan Krainer, Dr. Robert Menasse, Dr. Ernst Löschner, University Professor Dr. Anton Pelinka, Dr. Johanna Rachinger, Ari Rath (1925-2017), University Professor DDr. Oliver Rathkolb, University Professor Dr. Anton Zeilinger.