



Jewish cemeteries in Oberstockstall and Waidhofen an der Thaya handed over after renovations

17 Mar 2023

The ceremonial handovers were attended by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Fund for the Restoration of Jewish Cemeteries in Austria (Cemeteries Fund) and National Council President **Wolfgang Sobotka**, the Member of the Austrian National Council **Martina Diesner-Wais** on behalf of Governor **Johanna Mikl-Leitner**, the President of the Federal Monuments Authority **Christoph Bazil**, the State Conservator for Lower Austrian of the Federal Monuments Authority **Patrick Schicht**, the Secretary General for Commercial Affairs of the Jewish Community (IKG) Vienna **Klaus Hoffmann**, and the Secretary General of the National Fund and the Cemeteries Fund **Hannah Lessing**. The Deputy Mayor of Kirchberg am Wagram, **Erwin Mantler**, and the Mayor of Waidhofen an der Thaya, **Josef Ramharter**, took part in the ceremonial handover on behalf of the local authorities.

President of the National Council **Wolfgang Sobotka**: “As Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Fund and the Fund for the Restoration of Jewish Cemeteries, the restoration of the Jewish cemeteries in Austria is a matter of special importance to me: While continuing to be places of remembrance as well as a fitting burial site for Jews, the Jewish cemeteries should also serve as places of mediation and learning for future generations. They are testimonies to an important part of Austrian history that we must not allow to be forgotten. We as a society are responsible for facing up to our history, remembering Jewish life in Austria and keeping remembrance alive in our collective memory – especially with regard to combating antisemitism in the present.”

President of the Jewish Community Vienna **Oskar Deutsch**: “I am very glad that two more Jewish cemeteries have been renovated and could now also be handed over to the local authorities. According to Jewish tradition, graves are intended as places of eternal rest, making it all the more important that the cemeteries have been restored to dignity after many years of decay. The cemeteries are also cultural monuments that remind us of the many Jewish communities. With the help of the Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries, it has been possible to preserve and safeguard this part of our Austrian-Jewish cultural heritage and to increase awareness of it among Austrians.

Secretary General **Hannah Lessing**: “The significance of this major restoration project radiates beyond the borders of Austria: My countless conversations with descendants of Jews expelled from Austria have shown what a strong connection for the second and third generation can have to the homeland of their ancestors, to this day. People often voice the desire to visit the places where their grandparents and great-grandparents once lived and to lay a stone of remembrance on their graves.”

Secretary General for Commercial Affairs of the IKG Vienna **Klaus Hoffmann**: “By successfully restoring two more Jewish cemeteries in Lower Austria, a dignified and fitting environment has been restored to the Jews who lie eternally at peace there, calling back to mind the memory of once flourishing Jewish life in Lower Austria – an important signal to encourage tolerance and mutual respect in our society.”

In his speech, the Deputy Mayor of Kirchberg am Wagram **Erwin Mantler** recalled the eventful history of the Jewish cemetery in Oberstockstall and thanked the citizens who were or will be responsible for the upkeep of the cemetery, together with the local authority. “This particularly successful restoration will hopefully put the Jewish cemetery of Oberstockstall back on the radar of the local community. May this place always radiate only peace and tranquillity from now on.”

Mayor of Waidhofen an der Thaya **Josef Ramharter**: “The Jewish cemetery in Waidhofen an der Thaya is a special place of remembrance that is an important testimony to the history of our town and our region. I am pleased that it has become accessible again thanks to the renovation. On behalf of the municipality, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those involved in the project for the professional realisation of the renovation project!”

Dieses Projekt wur
setzung der jüdischen



FONDS
DER JÜDISCHEN

Oberstockstall

The cemetery, founded in 1887 and listed since 2005, served as a burial place for the Jewish community of Kirchberg am Wagram and the surrounding villages. There are around 40 gravestones in the cemetery, it is surrounded by a pillared wall and lies in the forest, somewhat hidden.

The Fund for the Restoration of Jewish Cemeteries in Austria subsidised the restoration of the cemetery in 2021/22 in two sub-projects with federal means of **145,000 euros**. The Province of Lower Austria co-funded the restoration of the Jewish cemetery in the amount of approx. **54,000 euros**. The renovation comprised master builder, stonemason, locksmith and gardening work, including the clearing of overgrowth, the renovation of the wall and erection of a wrought-iron gate, the static renovation of gravesites including cleaning and securing measures as well as planning work and general planning services. In addition, the graves were recorded in a database.

Further information on the cemetery and the restoration work.

Waidhofen an der Thaya

The Jewish cemetery in Waidhofen an der Thaya, built at the end of the 19th century and listed since 2009, was established opposite the municipal cemetery. The former Tahara house was also used for a long time as a burial hall for the Christian cemetery. The more than 170 graves are mainly large granite stone tombs.

The Fund for the Restoration of Jewish Cemeteries in Austria subsidised the restoration of the cemetery in 2021/22 in two sub-projects with federal means of **340,000 euros**. The Province of Lower Austria co-funded the restoration of the Jewish cemetery in the amount of approx. **125,000 euros**. The renovation comprised master builder, stonemason, locksmith and gardening work, including the clearing of overgrowth, the renovation and construction of enclosure walls and entrance gates, the static securing and renovation of gravesites including cleaning and securing measures as well as planning work and general planning services.

Further information on the cemetery and the restoration work.

Restoration of Jewish cemeteries in Austria

The Fund for the Restoration of the Jewish Cemeteries in Austria was established in December 2010 in implementation of Austria's international legal obligation set out in the "Washington Agreement" to restore and maintain known and unknown Jewish cemeteries in Austria. For this purpose, the Fund, established under the auspices of the National Council, is allocated an annual sum of one million euros over a period of twenty years by the Federation. The organs of the Fund for the Restoration of Jewish Cemeteries in Austria are the Board of Trustees, the Secretary General and the Advisory Board.

Since the Fund was established in 2010, its Board of Trustees has dealt with 56 applications for the **restoration** of 15 Jewish cemeteries and approved grants amounting to approximately 9.2 million euros for the restoration of Jewish cemeteries. The restorations make an important contribution towards preserving the Jewish cemeteries for the future as valuable cultural assets.