

Priest of the Saint Nicholas Cathedral in Vienna holds a short memorial service for the prisoners of Mauthausen concentration camp.



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Those who took part in a mass escape from the execution block of the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria were remembered on 2nd February. Events taking place in several towns in the Mühlviertler region for the first time in many years were attended by relatives of the prisoners in the death block and a number of groups of participants of public initiatives in the region.

Among those attending at the Mauthausen memorial complex by the execution block wall that has survived were representatives of the Russian embassy in Austria, the permanent representatives at the ministry of defence to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Vienna, the Saint Nicholas Cathedral of the diocese of Vienna and Austria of the Russian Orthodox Church, members of the Anti-Fascist Society, participants in the resistance and

victims of fascism active in Upper Austria and the Pamyat Research Centre, reports the diocesan website.

Archpriest Igor Chistyukhin from the Saint Nicholas Cathedral held a memorial service.

Eighty years ago on 2nd February 1945 more than five hundred prisoners from the execution block, mainly Soviet officers, attempted an unprecedented escape from the Mauthausen concentration. The escape had been meticulously planned by the senior officers. Some of them were executed before the escape could take place. Only a few participants of the escape managed to survive, the figures being put at between eight and nineteen.

Gudrun Bloberger, head of educational programs at the Mauthausen Memorial Complex, presented a group of compatriots with a virtual Mauthausen Hall of Names, handed over Books of memory with the names of their relatives and extracts from the archive of the memorial complex describing the fate of the prisoners to the relatives of the victims. The relatives of those others who did not live to see the escape of prisoners from the execution block were able to watch a live broadcast of the ceremony at block 20.

Ceremonial events were held in Schwertberg, Reed in der Ridmark where participants in the event met with representatives of various public initiatives and Hannah Hackel, the youngest daughter of the Langtaller family who played a direct role in the rescue of Mikhail Rybchinsky and Nikolai Tsemkalo.

The Future of Mauthausen public organization held a walking tour from block 20 to Reed following the approximate route used by part of the escapees. Flowers and wreaths were placed by the monument which relates how the remains of those prisoners killed within the vicinity were gathered here by the school.

On 3rd February the Russian Centre of Science and Culture in Vienna will host a memorial evening dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the escape of Soviet officers from the Mauthausen concentration camp.

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