

Millions, they said, don't forget it
 Millions, I am but one
 I am one who was here
 I am one who left
 Amongst millions one is soon forgotten
 I am one
 Take my name and uphold it

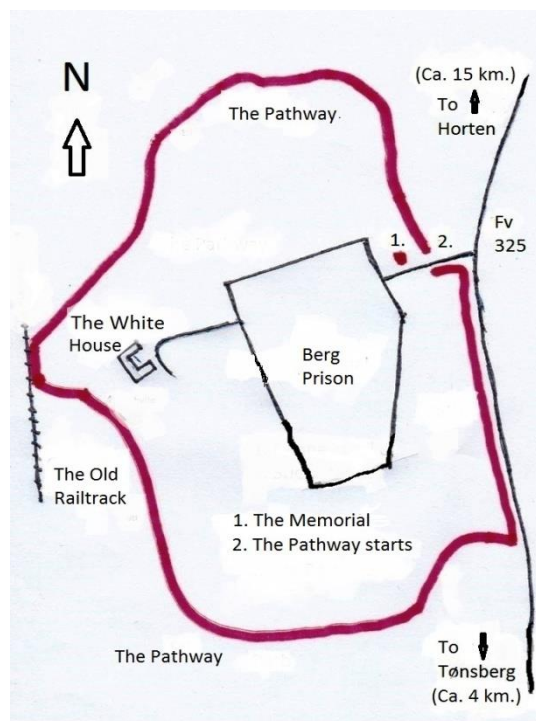
Margaret Skjelbred, 2012



The Memorial
 (Architecture: Sabina E. Markussen)

The Memorial, which stands at the entrance to Berg Prison, was unveiled 26 October 2012 exactly 70 years after the first Jews arrived there. The Memorial consists of two stones which face each other at a short distance. Each bears information tablets. The railway track in the middle symbolizes the Jews' journey to and from Berg and the last journey to Auschwitz.

In the cellar of the kitchen quarters (one of three buildings which are from the war days) punishment cells remain as they were and are intact. They house a small museum but being inside the prison grounds this is not open on a daily basis. Guided tours for groups may, however, be arranged.



Berg Prison Camp's Interest Group
 Søndre Berg 30
 3125 Tønsberg, Norway



Berg Prison Camp



26 October 1942 - 8 May 1945

Berg Prison Camp is unprecedented in Norway's history of German occupation. It was the only prison camp under Norwegian administration, reporting directly to the nazified Norwegian Police department.



The first steps towards the gas chambers

On National Day, 17 May 1942, the "jøssinger" (Norwegian patriots) wore chicken leg rings in national colours in silent protest against the Nazis. This instigated Quisling's (Norwegian Nazi leader) raging outburst against the chicken-brained mentality of the resistance. "I have borne the consequence", he said in his speech, "and built a chicken farm for them at Berg near Tønsberg." Thereby, the camp became known as "**Quisling's chicken farm**".

The “jøssinger” were not, however, the initial inmates. Jewish males were the first. Sixty arrived on 26 October 1942 and around 290 more came during the following days. By then three barracks were erected, and that was all. Neither heating nor bunk bed - much less bedding. No tin plate, no food dish, no kitchen, no water, no toilet, no stool, no table. Just three bare barracks.

772 Jews were deported as prisoners from Norway during the Second World War. They came from the whole country and approx. 230 of these were deported through Berg. Only 34 of the 772 came back alive.



Illegal photograph from Berg during the war

On 26 November 1942 around 230 prisoners were taken out from Berg, stowed into freight cars and transported to Oslo. From there the journey continued by the slave ship “Donau” to Stettin and

then by train to Auschwitz. Only seven of them survived and returned to Norway. Around 60 Jews remained at Berg until the end of the war because they were married to non-Jewish women.

The first political prisoners (“jøssinger”) came to Berg on 27 January 1943. According to prisoners who were moved from Grini Prison Camp in Oslo the transfer to Berg was horrendous - comparable to a journey back into the darkest Middle Ages. Berg was planned for 3000 prisoners but had, at the most, between 500 - 600.



A punishment cell

Two of the Norwegian commanders at Berg Prison Camp were prosecuted under the legal purge after the war. Under decrees concerning treasonous acts they were condemned to death but the sentences were later reduced to lifelong hard labour.



Along the Berg pathway

When the Vestfold railway line was reconstructed permission was granted to keep a piece of the old railtrack on which Jews arrived at Berg and from whence the journey to Auschwitz started one month later. A pathway has been created from this starting point which circumferences the prison grounds and finishes at a memorial. This memorial was inaugurated 8 May 2015 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of the war. Information posts have been erected along the pathway which tell more about Berg and what happened there during the war. The length of the pathway is approx. 3 kilometres.

The author Margaret Skjelbred has contributed with poetry which appears on one of the tablets of the memorial. This is translated into Hebrew and stands alongside the Norwegian text.