

Stolpersteine laid in Ostrava

Last week, 27 *Stolpersteine* (“Stumbling Blocks”) were laid in Ostrava, Czech Republic, in memory of Jewish people who were murdered in the Holocaust.

Kingston Synagogue has a *sefer torah* on loan from the Czech Memorial Scrolls Trust which came from Ostrava and a small group from the synagogue has been researching the history of Ostrava and its Jewish Community. They have now made contact with well over 100 Ostravaks worldwide and have amassed a significant archive of material. This archive will be kept in the Jewish Museum in Prague and electronic copies will be available through the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

Members of the Ostrava network wanted to commemorate their loved ones by having *Stolpersteine* laid. These are cobblestone-sized brass plates laid in the pavement outside the door of the houses in which the people lived before being sent off the concentration camps and death. The stone records the name, date of birth, where they were deported to and the date of death.



David Lawson comments that the preparation and laying of the plaques was the easy part. Much more difficult was checking the names, dates and actual locations for the plaques. „Street names and indeed positions have changed over the past 70 years and it has proved very difficult in some cases to identify the correct location. Fortunately, we had the full co-operation of the Ostrava City authorities and the help of the Salomonovič family in Ostrava, who did a huge amount of research on our behalf. Without all this help, the project would not have succeeded.“