



PHOTOS BY PAUL D. KNISKERN SR./TIMES UNION

A HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL, above, is dedicated Sunday in Beth Emeth Cemetery in Colonie. Members of Congregation Beth

Emeth, below, place stones on the monument's base as tributes to the strength of their memories of those who perished.

## Holocaust memories etched in stone

**Colonie** Monument dedicated in Beth Emeth Cemetery

By CATHY WOODRUFF  
Staff writer

In the decades since he lost his entire family at the Auschwitz death camp, David Kay has had no grave to visit, no place to make the meaningful memorial gestures he yearned to offer for the loved ones he lost.

That changed on Sunday, when Kay joined more than 100 other members of Congregation Beth Emeth in the blustery cold, solemnly laying stones on the base of a new Holocaust memorial at the Beth Emeth Cemetery in Colonie.

The memorial, designed by architect and congregation president Steven Einhorn, sits at



the spot where members buried ashes and brick collected from a crematorium site when they visited Auschwitz-Birkenau two years ago. A piece of brick that Einhorn personally removed

from the foundation of an Auschwitz gas chamber is a part of the monument.

"This is very important," Kay said after Sunday's dedication ceremony. "When I want

to say a prayer for my family, I know I have the ashes lying here. That's the only way I can do it."

Kay, now of Albany, spent more than three years at the Birkenau section of Auschwitz when he was a young man. He remembers the dates when his sister, four brothers and other relatives died there, and he now plans to honor their memory on those days at the Holocaust memorial.

"He now has a place to say Kaddish, which is a memorial prayer for the dead," said Shelly Shapiro, director of the Holocaust Survivors and Friends Education Center in Latham. "This memorial is kind of a gravestone among gravestones."

The Bible quotations selected for the granite stone by Please see **MEMORIAL B3** ▶

## MEMORIAL: Dedication ceremony at Beth Emeth

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Einhorn and Rabbi Scott Shpeen were designed to help all mourners pass along the tradition of paying respects at the memorial to ongoing generations.

On the front, the inscription from the prophet Joel reads: "Tell your children of it, and let your children tell theirs, and their children the next generation."

The back carries a quotation from the prophet Habbakuk: "For a stone shall cry out from the wall."

Einhorn said he designed the monument to represent the sights and emotions that he and other members of Congregation Beth Emeth experienced on their trip to Eastern Europe two years ago.

Viewed from the side, the monument's silhouette shows a vertical column connected to a triangular base. The shape is taken from the "forest of chimneys," the remains of the women's barracks in a section of Auschwitz, Einhorn said.

The ragged top of the granite tablet replicates the shape of the broken stones put in place to mark a mass grave outside the Warsaw ghetto, and a black band in the memorial also derives from those grave markers. The chunk of brick from the gas chamber is mounted on a bronze peg within a window in the stone, surrounded by light to signify hope and faith in God.

"It's not simply an abstract design," Einhorn said. "It's rooted in

the feelings and experiences many of us had when we had the privilege of making this trip."

Shpeen called the monument dedication "the realization of a dream" conceived by congregation members who visited Eastern Europe. Shpeen, Einhorn and other supporters of the project removed a sheer white panel of fabric from the monument's face as part of the ceremony, which also included prayers and responsive readings.

The memorial dedication was one of several events coinciding with a regional observance of the 60th anniversary of Kristallnacht, the night of terror in Jewish neighborhoods of Germany and Austria on Nov. 9, 1938, that signaled the start

of the Holocaust.

An annual interfaith commemoration and candle lighting on Thursday is the last scheduled event. It will be held 7:30 p.m. at Page Hall on the University at Albany campus, 135 Western Ave.

A film "Voices of the Children," will be shown, and Holocaust survivor Michael Kraus, who is featured in the film, will speak. Kraus was taken to the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp from the Terezin ghetto as a teenager and was one of 90 boys selected by Dr. Josef Mengele for research. He survived a death march from Poland to Mauthausen camp in Austria and on to a smaller camp in January 1945.