

The Ninth Fort (Devintas Fortas in Lithuanian) is a part of the Kaunas Fortress, constructed in the late 19th century. When the city was controlled by the Soviets, the stronghold was used as a prison and way-station for prisoners being transported to the Gulag. After the Nazi occupation of Lithuania, the fort was used as a place of execution for Jews, captured Soviets, and others.



Prison cell.

At the end of 19th century, the city of Kaunas was fortified, and by 1890 it was encircled by eight forts and nine gun batteries. The construction of the Ninth Fort began in 1902 and was completed on the eve of the First World War. From 1924-on, the Ninth Fort was used as the city of Kaunas' prison.

During the years of Soviet occupation, 1940-1941, the Ninth Fort was used by the NKVD to house political prisoners on their way to the gulags of Siberia.

During the years of Nazi occupation, the Ninth Fort was put to use as a place of mass murder. At least 5,000 Lithuanian Jews of Kaunas, largely taken from the city's Jewish ghetto, were transported to the Ninth Fort and killed. In addition, Jews from as far as France, Austria and Germany were brought to Kaunas during the course of Nazi occupation and executed in the Ninth Fort. In 1944, as the Soviets moved in, the Germans liquidated the ghetto and what had by then come to be known as the "Fort of Death", and the prisoners were dispersed to other camps. After the Second World War, the Soviets again used the Ninth Fort as a prison for several years.

Museum

In 1958, a museum was established in the Ninth Fort. It contains collections of historical artifacts related both to Soviet atrocities and the Nazi genocide, as well as materials related to the earlier history of Kaunas and Ninth Fort.

A 32-meter high memorial to the victims of fascism was designed by sculptor A. Ambraziunas and erected in 1984.

The mass burial place of the victims of the massacres carried out in the fort is a grass field, marked by a simple worded memorial: "This is the place where Nazis and their assistants killed more than 30,000 Jews from Lithuania and other European countries."

Photos

exterior

<http://fcit.usf.edu/HOLOCAUST/photos/ninth1/ninth1.HTM#NINTH102>

interior

<http://fcit.usf.edu/HOLOCAUST/photos/ninth2/ninth2.htm>

Museum

<http://fcit.usf.edu/HOLOCAUST/photos/ninth3/ninth3.htm>



Resistance Fighter (Partisan) Songs

<http://fcit.usf.edu/HOLOCAUST/arts/muspart.htm>



Of all the songs of all the ghettos, the one which spread like wildfire, was the Song of the Partisans by Hirsh Glik, "Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn vet" ("Never Say that You Are Trodding the Final Path").

It used a tune by the Soviet brothers Pokras, and it became the official resistance hymn of all the Eastern European partisan brigades. It was translated into Hebrew, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Romanian, Dutch, and English. It was well known in all the concentration camps.