January 27 is a day to remember Holocaust victims

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Remembering the victims at the the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.

Prince Frederick, MD - The world remembers and Friday, Jan. 27 marks the 72nd anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz. An estimated 1.1 million people, most of them Jewish, were murdered over a five year period at the Nazi death camp. The Nazi and German concentration and extermination camp was actually a network of camps built in areas of Poland that were annexed by the Nazis during World War II.

The camps were staffed by 7,000 members of the German SS. Twelve percent of the 7,000 were later convicted of war crimes.

Several countries have Holocaust memorials. In the USA, 25 states and the District of Columbia have Holocaust memorials—including the Baltimore Holocaust Memorial and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.

According to writer Ariane Mandell of the Jerusalem Post, this year’s international day of remembrance will be highlighted by the unveiling of artifacts recovered from the camp. The artifacts were originally discovered in 1967 during excavations around the camp’s crematorium and gas chamber. The items include jewelry, watches, brushes, keys, empty medicine and perfume bottles, buttons and other personal objects.

Alicja Wojcik, the head of exhibitions at the Auschwitz memorial, is quoted by the Jerusalem Post as saying the salvaged artifacts are "extraordinary documents of extermination carried out in camp by the Germans." Wojcik said the discovery is "a moving testimony to the victims. In most cases these were the last personal belongings retained by the Jews who were referred immediately after selection at the ramp to death in the gas chambers."

For more information on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, visit their web site www.ushmm.org/

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