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## **Nashua's Holocaust Memorial rapidly taking shape**

By *DEAN SHALHOUP*

*Staff Writer*

NASHUA – A 4,000-pound vertical monument bearing the brief yet soberingly poignant phrase “Never forget” became the latest addition to Nashua’s unique Holocaust Memorial on Thursday afternoon.

The ambitious project was launched by former Alderman Fred Teeboom and his wife, Jan, four years ago.

“This is really something, isn’t it?” Teeboom said, standing on a soft patch of loam that soon will be green with shrubs and grass. “I call it a classic example of a public-private partnership.”

Teeboom smiled often Thursday, and with good reason. When complete, the memorial will be the first of its kind in New Hampshire, and likely will rival some of the finest shrines in the Northeast.

A similar monument is scheduled to be installed Monday, Teeboom said.

Then will come six granite benches, a solar ground-lighting system, landscaping and – one of the most fascinating features – coal ash that will lie symbolically on the ground around the brick chimney that is central to six large granite monuments, each bearing the name of a Nazi extermination camp.

Teeboom said the memorial was inspired by an overseas trip several years ago during which he visited the Dachau concentration camp in Germany.

“It’s a memory that I will never forget,” Teeboom said in 2009, shortly after he launched the project. “You smelled death going into that place. Walking through the gate, somehow, it triggered something in me.”

The horrors of the holocaust are ingrained in Teeboom, who grew up in Nazi-occupied Amsterdam and lost dozens of family members at the hands of the murderous regime.

Upon completion, which Teeboom hopes will be celebrated this fall, the memorial will grace the southern end of Rotary Common, the park on the west side of Main Street between Lake and West Allds streets that flanks Salmon Brook.

Although the site isn’t large in area, Teeboom, with assistance from people such as local sculptor John Weidman, found ways to represent almost every aspect symbolic of the Holocaust.

The camp names on the six monuments, for example, were etched how they appear, or appeared, on the camp gates. Examples are some of the B's, which appear upside down, and other letters that aren't quite right.

"That's because of one of two things," Teeboom said. Either the prisoners forced to create them "were trying to send a message, or they had to work with substandard equipment."

Likewise, bent brackets top each stone, symbolic of the camps' fence tops. Each also is etched with images of four-point barbed wire, the kind the Nazis used.

Equally compelling is the set of railroad tracks – donated by Pan Am Railways – that has been installed near the center of the memorial. When finished, pavers and stones will fill the gaps between the ties, allowing easier walking access.

The rails represent the mode of transportation that many Holocaust victims rode to their deaths.

"We're so grateful to everyone who's making this possible," Teeboom said, gesturing toward pavers bearing the names of businesses and individuals who support the project with monetary or material donations.

Home Depot donated the cedar fencing and is handling the landscaping, Teeboom said. The monuments come from Milford Granite, represented Thursday by Tim Hall, who worked with an installer from Garside Granite Products, of Westford, Mass. to set the monolith.

City public works director Lisa Fauteux said once the memorial is dedicated, city crews will maintain the site.

"It's quite a memorial," Fauteux said. "It's pretty incredible. And it's a great thing for Nashua."

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